

Esther Steenbergen

Classical guitarist Esther Steenbergen is internationally recognized for her fresh approach to the repertoire. Renowned as a soloist, ensemble player and accompanist of singers and instrumentalists, she works with musicians and artists from numerous styles and disciplines. Occasionally she takes part in theater productions.

While still a student, Esther Steenbergen won the first prize at the International Music Competition Maria Canals in Barcelona (Spain) and was then overcome by doubts about life as a classical guitarist. She started her journey, sometimes desperately, other times with great pleasure, along many twisted and unusual paths. She studied musicology, art and culture management, produced radio programs and concert series. For a while she even worked at an employment agency for stage artists but eventually she returned to playing the guitar. Esther Steenbergen travels the world as a concert artist. Previously as a soloist, member of the highly acclaimed Amsterdam Guitar Trio and accompanist for the well known bass-baritone Maarten Koningsberger. In recent years mainly with her own trio, consisting of guitar, bass and percussion.

Besides playing the guitar, Esther is also active as a producer and programmer of concerts, series and festivals, among which the Meesters op de Gitaar series in The Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. (1998-2023)

Education

Esther Steenbergen studied musicology and art policy at the University of Utrecht (The Netherlands) as well as classical guitar with Hubert Käppel at the *Musikhochschule Köln*, (Germany). She took lessons with the Czech guitarist Pavel Steidl and participated in master classes with the Cubans Manuel Barrueco and Leo Brouwer. While still a student, she won the first prize at the *Concurs International de Música Maria Canals de Barcelona*. (Spain).

Instrument

Esther Steenbergen plays an instrument made by her husband, luthier Otto Vowinkel.

Critical Acclaim

Villa Lobos

'Light as a feather, extraordinary virtuous and with an astonishing naturalness, she presented five preludes full of musical ingenuity.'

Bach

'Her playing is not indoctrinated by 'the authentic concert practice' nor influenced by guitarists pretending to know better based upon rigid laws. Her performance flows, ripples, winks, seduces, holds back and accelerates, always following the music and always as if it has never been different.'

Mozart

'Although she was still a school girl when the Amsterdam Guitar Trio celebrated its first triumphs, she soon proved to be the most brilliant guitarist of her generation. Now she seems to have found her place as a member of the Amsterdam Guitar Trio, breathing new life in to this ensemble.'

Ginastera

'She, being the sole guitarist not from Ibero-America, was nevertheless able to give the most memorable concert of the series. Someone who is able to perform, in a masterpiece like Ginastera's Sonata opus 47, with the capriccioso Scherzo and the dizzying Finale, with such a splendid clearness but nevertheless so free and easy, straight and as a matter of course, knows magic'.

Schubert

'And now we have a truly magnificent adaptation which exceeds many versions with piano accompaniment, as far as transparency, warmth and richness of colour are concerned.'

Discography

Papas Calientes

Musica Rioplatense, with Gustavo Pazos Conde

De Ploeg

Ruyneman Ensemble, member

W.A. Mozart

Amsterdam Guitar Trio (Helenus de Rijke, Olga Franssen, Esther Steenbergen)

J.S. Bach

Solo, Cello suites

Franz Schubert

Die schöne Müllerin, with Maarten Koningsberger and Olga Franssen

Arpeggione Sonata, with Olga Franssen

Corazón

Tania Kross, accompanist / arrangements

Repertoire

Esther Steenbergen Trio (Eric Calmes, Enrique Firpi)

Roël Calister, Eric Vaarzon Morel

New Repertoire

Esther Steenbergen Trio (Eric Calmes, Enrique Firpi)

Oene van Geel, Claus Tofft, Theodor Milkov

Zing met ons mee

Tania Kross ensemble, member

What's New

Maarten Koningsberger, Nico van der Linden Quartet, member

Sakura

Solo

Contact

+31650261632

ehs@esthersteenbergen.com

esthersteenbergen.com

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