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Miami International GuitART Festival

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The passion and love for guitar is taking over the FIU School of Music with the Miami International GuitART Festival starting Wednesday, February 24th until Sunday February 28th.

Dr. Mesut Özgen, Coordinator of Classical Guitar Studies at the FIU School of Music and Founder of the MIGF is organizing the five-day festival with various activities.

Özgen says that the music festival will have a series of concerts and other all-day events like masterclasses and lectures.

“The masterclasses are offered for the advanced guitar students that register, and they perform in front of the artist and the students get feedback. It’s very informative, interactive and entertaining,” says Özgen.

Thomas Caprara, a junior music business major who is performing at the festival as part of the FIU Guitar Ensemble, says he is excited for the masterclasses.

“The most exciting part of the festival is attending the masterclasses because they are always full of great information and it’s an awesome learning experience,” says Caprara.

Starting Wednesday, Feb. 24th there will be a Luthiers Expo held in the Frost Art Museum Café, where a variety of handmade guitars will be on display and available for sale.

Throughout the festival, there will be eleven concerts performed by modern artists and composers from around the world. Performers include the Miami Guitar Trio and the Miami Guitar Orchestra & Student Showcase.

There will also be a closing performance of the festival from Felipe Carvajal, an FIU student majoring in music composition,

“I will be closing the festival with a Flamenco concert. I will be playing 10 of my original compositions with a



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full ensemble. My music is modern flamenco with some parts of jazz influence,” says Carvajal.

The masterclasses and concerts will take place in both the WPAC Recital Hall and Concert Hall.

The Miami Guitar Orchestra and Student Showcase Concert will perform Saturday Feb. 27 and the Miami Guitar Trio Concert will perform Sunday, Feb. 28.

Both are free for FIU Students.

Ögzen is not only arranging the festival, but he hopes to make the festival more known.

“There are people that have attended the concerts and are so impressed with them, and don’t know anything about the Guitar Orchestra! They are always so surprised and always tell me they wish they knew more about them,” he says.

“I hope to bring international and local artists together as well as students to have a high quality but entertaining music festival.”

Carvajal thinks that it’s important to hold music festivals, especially this one.

“Every concert and workshop is going to be different and all the musicians attending are great. The concerts and masterclasses help the guitar community grow and improve. It’s a great opportunity,” he says.

Tickets to this festival range from free admission to \$35.

Özgen thinks that the Miami International GuitART Festival is important and one of the biggest guitar events especially for FIU’s School of Music.

“If you look at all the other events going on in the

world like wars, global warming and hunger, this has zero importance in terms of solving those problems. However, this is human nature and you can't ignore these problems. But, we can't live without music and it's impossible to live without art" says Özgen.

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