Dimitris Soukaras

biography

Dimitris Soukaras moves between musical worlds, exploring the meeting points of classical, contemporary music and the musical culture of the Mediterranean. A Greek guitarist, arranger and composer based in London, he has developed an eclectic artistic practice shaped by performance, new commissions and cross-cultural collaboration. His work seeks to expand the expressive possibilities of the guitar, challenging the boundaries of its traditional repertoire and reimagining its relationship with other musical voices.

As a soloist, Dimitris has appeared with the Athens State Orchestra, Audentia Ensemble, Academica Athens Orchestra, Filarmonia Orchestra Campana, Oradea State Philharmonic Orchestra, Patras String Orchestra and Ionian Symphony Orchestra, among others. His performances have taken him to internationally renowned venues including Musikverein in Vienna, King's Place and St Martin-in-the-Fields in London, Megaron Athens Concert Hall and St John's Smith Square. He has appeared at festivals across Greece, Italy, the UK, Europe and Canada, including the London Guitar Festival, Paxos Music Festival, Patras International Festival, Emilia Romagna Festival and EuroStrings.

A central part of his artistic identity is his commitment to contemporary music and the creation of new repertoire. He has premiered more than twenty works written for him, collaborating with leading composers including Grammy Award winners Leo Brouwer and Sergio Assad, both of whom have dedicated compositions to him. His collaboration with Brouwer has led to the creation of *Concerto of Ancient Korinthos*, the composer's final guitar concerto, inspired by Dimitris' hometown. He has also worked closely with pianist - composer Belle Chen and Greek composers including Theodore Antoniou, Philippos Tsalahouris, Petros Klampanis, John Panagiotou and Iason Maroulis, contributing to the development of new Greek music for guitar.

His chamber music collaborations span a diverse range of artistic partnerships. With Australian mezzo-soprano Lotte Betts-Dean, he has developed an imaginative voice-and-guitar repertoire, culminating in their album *Everything You've Ever Lived* (Delphian Records, 2025), which explores musical connections across centuries, cultures and genres. Together with Italian accordionist and bandoneon player Giancarlo Palena, he founded the Palena–Soukaras Duo, presenting programmes that bring together tango, film music and classical repertoire. Other collaborators include star soprano Aphrodite Patoulidou.

His discography reflects his interest in musical diversity and artistic dialogue. His albums include *Roots* (NAXOS Records, 2021), featuring world premiere recordings of works by contemporary Greek composers, and *Antithesis* (PKMusic Records, 2025), bringing together classical and electric guitar, original compositions and works by Leo Brouwer, Sergio Assad and Belle Chen. His recordings and performances have been featured on BBC Radio 3 and Greek national radio.

His work has attracted international critical attention. Kathimerini has described him as "the classical musician of the young generation", while Jazz UK News has recognised him as "an outstanding Greek classical guitarist." BBC Music Magazine praised his arrangements as "thoughtfully transcribed for voice and guitar", while Planet Hugill observed that his arrangements of Ravel's Greek songs "sound as if they were meant to be with voice and guitar." Guitare Classique Magazine has also highlighted his ability to blend the guitar's colours with other instruments in a way that brings out the meaning of the music.

His achievements include more than twenty international awards, among them the David Russell Guitar Prize, the Ivor Mairants Guitar Award, First Prize at the Mottola International Guitar Competition and the Academy of Athens Music Award. He is a winner of the International Guitar Foundation's Young Artists Platform, a EuroStrings Artist, a D'Addario Artist, an AER Amplifiers Artist and a Yeoman of the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

Beyond the concert stage, Dimitris is the founder and Artistic Director of the MUΣA Concert Series in Ancient Corinth, established in 2019. Dedicated to supporting emerging musicians and presenting adventurous musical programmes, the festival creates encounters between classical music, jazz, folk traditions and contemporary creativity.

An alumnus of the Ionian University and the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he completed his Master of Arts and Advanced Diploma with distinction, Dimitris was awarded the Academy's prestigious DipRAM. In 2024, he completed his PhD at the University of Surrey, supported by the Academy of Athens and the Athena Scholarship. His doctoral research, *The Creative Role of the Performer through the Creation of New Works for Guitar by Non-Guitarist Composers*, reflects the central philosophy of his artistic work: the performer not simply as an interpreter, but as an active creative voice in the evolution of music.
