

Christopher Kenniff

Classical Guitarist



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Biography

Christopher Kenniff, classical guitarist, is a critically acclaimed recitalist and chamber musician. The Newark Star Ledger (NJ) has described him as having “a lush, liquid tone, remarkably clean fingering and a nicely varied touch,” while Classical New Jersey writes “Kenniff’s presentation and playing stood out among the concerts of the Access to Art Series. His quiet, poignant play with dynamics was mesmerizing... his playing was idiomatic, beautifully voiced, and technically flawless... he left the listeners with the impression that he himself was thrilled to give the performance.”

Mr. Kenniff is frequently heard as a member of the acclaimed ensembles *Duo Fresco: New Directions for Viola & Guitar* and *Duo Cantiga* (soprano & guitar). Mr. Kenniff is featured in the NJN cable network’s documentary “Morris at the Millennium,” and was appointed to the New Jersey State Council on the Arts’ Artist in Residence Roster as well as the roster of Music for All Seasons, a non-profit organization under the artistic direction of renowned cellist Steven Isserlis.

Active in the performance of contemporary as well as traditional repertoire for the classical guitar, Mr. Kenniff has premiered works by composers Samuel Adler, Emma Lou Diemer, Jose Mora Jimenez, Timothy Broege, John Sichel, Matthew Halper, Victor Kioulaphides, Jose Lezcano, Frank Ezra Levy, Sergio Parotti, Paul Mack Somers, Max Simonic and Raymond Wojcik. Mr. Kenniff has performed at the Juneau Jazz and Classics Festival (Juneau, Alaska), the Chautauqua Festival (Chautauqua, NY), the Bowdoin Festival (New Brunswick, ME), The Crossroads of Tradition Festival (Bloomington, IN) and the Access to Art Chamber Music Festival (Cape May, NJ), and on concert series throughout the United States. Recent collaborations include performances with the Adelphi Chamber Orchestra, the Manhattan Chorale Ensemble, the Eastman Chorale and the Monmouth Civic Chorus.

Mr. Kenniff holds BM and MM degrees *Magna cum Laude* from Southern Methodist University and an Artist Diploma from Indiana University. He was awarded first prize at the *Counour de Guitarre (Quebec, Canada)*, the *Music Teachers National Association Competition* and the *National Federation of Music Clubs Biannual Competition*. He was also the winner of the *Dallas Classical Guitar Society’s Young Artist Auditions* and the prestigious *Dallas Music Teacher’s Award*.

Mr. Kenniff is the founder and director of the *American String Teacher’s Association of New Jersey’s Chamber Music Institute (ASTA/NJ CMI)*. He has been recognized for contributions as a music educator by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts, the New Jersey Guitar and Mandolin Society and was named *2008 Studio Teacher of the Year* by the American String Teacher’s Association of New Jersey. His students are frequent award winners and many have continued their studies at the nation’s top collegiate and conservatory programs. Mr. Kenniff has presented workshops & master classes for ASTA/NJ, MENC, NJ State Council on the Arts, Music for All Seasons, the St. Louis Guitar Society and many collegiate music programs. He has recorded two compact discs: *Transfiguration (works by Halper, DeFalla, Purcell, Kioulaphides and Adler)* and *Christopher Kenniff plays works by Turina, Ponce, Roussell, Tedesco, Dowland, Scarlatti and Mertz*.