

Berta Rojas



Berta Rojas

Classical Guitarist, Latin Grammy® Award Winner
Associate Professor of Berklee College of Music

Biography

With a renowned international trajectory, praise for Berta includes the Washington Post's "...guitarist extraordinaire" and Classical Guitar Magazine's "...ambassador of the classical guitar."

Berta was awarded a Latin Grammy for her album *Legado* (2022) in the category of Best Classical Album. The same album received another statuette for Best Contemporary Classical Contemporary Composition for Anido's *Portrait*, written by Sergio Assad. She has been nominated to the Latin Grammy on three other occasions: in the category of Best Tango Album for *History of Tango* (2015), recorded with the Camerata Bariloche; in the category of Best Classical Album for *Salsa Roja* (2014); and in the category of Best Instrumental Album for *Día y Medio – A Day and a Half*, a duo with Paquito D'Rivera (2012).

Berta's acknowledged warmth and musicality have won her the admiration of audiences at major venues worldwide. Among them are, the 92Y, the Weill Recital Hall of Carnegie Hall and the Fredrick P. Rose Hall of Jazz at the Lincoln Center in New York, the South Bank Centre of London, at Shakespeare's Globe in London as a guest of the grand master, John Williams, the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., and Flagey Studio 4 in Brussels, where she performed with the Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra for Belgian National Television.

In 2011, Berta, along with guest star Paquito D'Rivera, initiated the four-year tour "In the Footsteps of Mangoré" following the travels of Paraguay's Agustín Barrios, pioneer of the classical guitar in the Americas. The duo performed in twenty countries of Latin America



and the Caribbean, concluding the journey at the National Theater of the capital of El Salvador, the final resting place of the celebrated composer.

Berta takes her audience on a colorful journey of sound at each concert, embracing new works by composers in diverse genres.

In addition to continually enriching her own artistic career with frequent international tours offering concerts and giving master classes, Berta Rojas is passionately committed to furthering and disseminating the classical guitar. A particular focus is on promoting the music of her country, Paraguay, as well as Latin American music more widely. Providing ongoing support for the careers of young upcoming guitarists is another facet dear to her heart, with projects in different formats such as the Barrios WorldWideWeb Competition, the Ensemble Pu Rory (in the Guaraní language, Festive Sounds), Instrumentoteca and Jeporeka (Search), among others.

After initial studies in Paraguay under masters Felipe Sosa and Violeta de Mestral, Berta continued her studies in Uruguay as a student of Abel Carlevaro, Eduardo Fernández and Mario Payseé. She went on to get a master's in music at the Peabody Institute under Manuel Barreco, Ray Chester, and Julian Gray. Berta recently joined the faculty of Berklee College of Music as an Associate Professor, sharing her knowledge and love of music with a select group of young guitarists from various parts of the world.



Berta Rojas has been ranked amongst the most influential women in the Hispanic World by EFE News Agency in 2014 and EsGlobal in 2017. She was named a Fellow of the Americas of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for her artistic excellence, and honored by her country with the title, Illustrious Ambassador of Musical Arts, granted by the Senate. In 2015, the Chamber of Deputies awarded her the National Order of Merit of the Comuneros, and the Cabildo of the capital, Asunción, the title of Master of the Arts. The Autonomous University of Encarnación granted her an Honorary Doctorate in 2016 as did the Universidad Americana. The Foreign Ministry of Paraguay gave her the National Order of Merit Don José Falcón in 2017 in acknowledgement for her outstanding contribution to culture. The Carlos Colombino Award bestowed by the National Secretariat of Culture followed suit. In 2019, the National University of Asunción also granted her an Honorary Doctorate. In 2022 she received the Golden Guitar Award: A Life Dedicated to the Guitar, bestowed by the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory of Milan.

More recently in 2023, she was awarded with the National Order of Merit in the Grade of "Grand Cross", the highest degree of recognition granted by Paraguay.



What the press says

What the press says

"...in picking the repertoire that she will put down on record Miss Rojas also makes a statement of sorts: that only the best has made it into her line of sight and that only the best is good enough to go on record. Moreover, as a serious musician, she knows that there is a whole world of music in South America, written specifically for the guitar that still awaits discovery. And she seems to always be first out of the gate, not simply "discovering" this music, but playing it in such a noble fashion that she often sets the bar for every other guitarist."

"This is what you would call an album to die for...Bravo Berta Rojas!"

Raul Da Gama, World Music Report/Canada

"Ninety minutes maintained at the highest level of performance and interpretation."

Colin Cooper, Classical Guitar Magazine

"...Berta Rojas, guitarist extraordinaire..."

Mark Adamo, Washington Post

"...heart-touching musical artistry"

Jim McCutcheon, Sounboard Magazine

"...an ambassador of the classical guitar."

Tim Panting, Classical Guitar Magazine

"Rojas clearly has Barrios' music deeply in her blood..."

Stephen Brookes, Washington Post



“Terruño contains some of the most exciting pieces recently written for solo guitar, and uses every aspect of the instrument. Rojas executes the fast scales and arpeggios, harmonics, rasgueados, and percussive tapping techniques with incredible precision, tone and clarity.”

Brad Conroy, Guitar International

“Her tremolo is as smooth as glass and the often remarkably challenging technical components of the music are disguised by formidable technique, making them seem non-existent.”

Zane Turner, MusicWeb International

“As a performer, Rojas ranks among the top players of the day as she is both technically proficient and emotionally expressive on every piece.”

Dr. Matthew Warnock, Modern Guitar Magazine

“From the first track with instruments from a landfill to a final track of celebration, *Salsa Roja* is a portrayal of life and love. Above poverty, above loneliness, above sadness, love and music and the love of music carry on in a dance without end. And Berta Rojas plays the tune.”

Travis Rogers, Jazz Times

“Ms. Rojas’ playing is informed by electrifying technique and virtuosity, and features her characteristic, sinewy tone, a palette of myriad wondrous colours and is framed by subtle, swinging gesture and soulful enunciation.”

Raul Da Gama, The World Music Report



“In the hands of Berta Rojas, the classical guitar truly becomes the world’s instrument---a means of bridging wide cultural divides via the uncommon clarity and inherent loveliness of her music.”

Mark Holston, Latina Magazine

“All is performed to perfection by an artist who seemingly takes everything in her stride...One runs out of superlatives when writing about Berta Rojas, it has all been said before, countless times.”

Steve Marsh, Classical Guitar Magazine

“The unbearable heat and humidity outside Meralco Theater didn’t dampen the spirit of Manila’s music lovers who gave Paraguay guitar icon Berta Rojas a standing ovation after the last section of Agustin Pio Barrios Mangore’s “La Catedral,” which left no doubt about the immense stature of the visiting artist.”

Pablo A. Tariman, Philippine Daily Inquirer

“I have not watched another guitarist who could draw such warmly golden tones out of a piece of wood! Nor have I encountered a guitar more sonorous or more deeply throated; listening to this one guitar was equivalent to listening to a choir of them!”

Julie Yap Daza, Tempo Philippines Newspaper Tabloid

Discography



Legado, 2022

Berta Rojas

Winner of the Latin Grammy as “Best Classical Album”

Acclaimed guitarist Berta Rojas illuminates the legacies of the prodigious Ida Presti and María Luisa Anido through her CD, *Legado*. Featuring Rojas’ stunning and attentive interpretations of original compositions by Anido and Presti as well as a selection of works written in their homage, the album is a celebration of the lives and artistry of two of guitar history’s most illustrious players.

<https://open.spotify.com/album/3nJoFnBbEu6aDpbFftrsfT>



Felicidade, 2017

Berta Rojas - Toquinho - Gilberto Gil - Ivan Lins

On the CD “*Felicidade*,” renowned Paraguayan guitarist Berta Rojas and the National Symphonic Orchestra of Paraguay —under the direction of the Argentine maestro Popi Spatocco— are joined by three legendary contributors to the rich story of Brazilian music: Gilberto Gil, Toquinho and Ivan Lins.

<https://open.spotify.com/album/14RDFIBtz71YBOrOhyi9eD>



Historia del Tango, 2015

Berta Rojas - Camerata Bariloche

Nominated to the XVI Latin Grammy as “Best Tango Album.”

“*History of Tango*”, Berta Rojas’s latest album in collaboration with the iconic Argentinian orchestra Camerata Bariloche, with 12 pieces that render a special tribute to the genre. The album covers some of the most iconic tango pieces specially arranged by Carlos Franzetti, Grammy and Latin Grammy winner.

<https://open.spotify.com/album/5PviFGuPDls6SDQmRTxg5>



Salsa Roja, 2013

Berta Rojas

Nominated to the XV Latin Grammy as “Best Classical Album.”

In this album, Berta Rojas pays tribute to Latin America. *Salsa Roja*, exudes elegance, sophistication and a sensuality that invites the listener to discover the many dimensions of the soul.

<https://open.spotify.com/album/0NtNDbAd4KyhKfTi39ciFj>



Día y medio, 2012

Berta Rojas - Paquito D’Rivera

Nominated to the XIV Latin Grammy as “Best Instrumental Album.”.

Grammy Award Winner Paquito D’Rivera pairs with guitarist extraordinaire, Berta Rojas on an exciting and singular duet. Together, they pay tribute to jewels of the Paraguayan musical tradition including pieces by the great composer Agustín Barrios. Together they present a program that is attractive and fun to listen to, which received unanimous critical accolades.

<https://open.spotify.com/album/2rUW8Cvoj2iWHwAIOV7k2T>



Terruño, 2009

Berta Rojas

Featuring works by young composers such as Gismonti, Sinesi, Lindsay-Clark, Falu, Solis, this is Berta Rojas' exciting new release. Probably, her best album yet...

<https://open.spotify.com/album/1lm56oZuDqQgkvynSi4LLn>



Paraguay according to Agustín Barrios (DVD), 2008

Berta Rojas

Director Marcelo Martinessi leads us down the road to nostalgia. Eight video clips take us on a tour of Paraguay accompanied by a musical instrument: the guitar; a composer: Agustín Barrios; and a performer: Berta Rojas.



Intimate Barrios, 2008

Berta Rojas

The foremost Paraguayan Guitarist, Berta Rojas, pays tribute to the foremost Paraguayan composer, Agustín Barrios

<https://open.spotify.com/album/77jck4na6WV9HLSX2xiHQh>



Alma y corazón, 2007

Berta Rojas - Carlos Barbosa-Lima

Berta Rojas and Brazilian guitarist Carlos Barbosa-Lima recently collaborated on a CD entitled "Alma y Corazon" (Heart and Soul), featuring Brazilian and Paraguayan music. This is the first time several of these pieces have been recorded on disc. "Carlos and Berta's guitars embark on an eclectic and universal journey varying from simplicity to adept profundity, until obtaining the symphonic illusion of perfect harmony of two guitars."

<https://open.spotify.com/album/2AUUHqjY7aWSrmTiGsznSi>



Cielo abierto, 2006

Berta Rojas

In her many travels, Berta has gathered in her guitar seeds of friendship and rhythms and sounds from around the world. In Cielo Abierto, Berta reaps the musical seeds she has planted, presenting us with works from many of the talented composers she has befriended and reflecting their genius through her own masterful hands..

<https://open.spotify.com/album/7CDAjUKxt4iz82GkZLOGpR>



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