Sean Shibe

Guitar / Electric Guitar

Sean Shibe continues to prove himself a truly original mind at the frontier of contemporary classical music.

2024/25 season highlights include a residency at Wigmore Hall with four concerts across the season, including a special programme dedicated to Pierre Boulez’s centenary performing the chamber cantata *Le Marteau sans maître*. He tours the UK with folk fiddler Aidan O’Rourke; across the UK and Europe with mezzo-soprano Ema Nikolovska, exploring the many iterations of the Orlando myth through electronics, melodica, protest song and recitation; and with Karim Sulayman for a US tour of their breathtaking duo programme *Broken Branches*. Other notable engagements include debuts in Shanghai and Hong Kong, and a debut tour with the Australian Chamber Orchestra performing Cassandra Miller’s new guitar concerto *Chanter* in thirteen performances across the country. Shibe also premieres an electric guitar concerto by Mark Simpson at the BBC Proms and a solo work by the Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Tyshawn Sorey.

Recent engagements include solo performances at venues including Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Philharmonie de Paris, Konzerthaus Wien, Southbank Centre, Konzerthaus Dortmund and Alte Oper Frankfurt. Shibe has also appeared at 92NY, Musashino City Hall, Herbst Theatre, The Phillips Collection, and regularly at Wigmore Hall. He has played at numerous festivals such as the La Jolla SummerFest, Aldeburgh Festival, BBC Proms, Heidelberger Frühling, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Mozartfest Würzburg and Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival.

Ever keen to explore new cooperative dynamics, Shibe regularly collaborates with soloists and ensembles alike. In recent years, he has worked with the Hallé, Britten Sinfonia, BBC Singers, Manchester Collective, Dunedin Consort, Quatuor Van Kujik, Danish String Quartet, LUDWIG, and conductors Thomas Adès, Krzysztof Urbański, Christoph Eschenbach, Taavi Oramo, Catherine Larsen-Maguire, flautist Adam Walker, singers Allan Clayton, Ben Johnson, Robert Murray and Robin Tritschler, and performance artist Marina Abramović.

Shibe is an ardent supporter of contemporary music, taking a hands-on approach to new commissions and working with composers to experiment with and expand the guitar repertoire. Premieres to date include works by Thomas Adès, Oliver Leith, Cassandra Miller, Sasha Scott, Daniel Kidane, David Fennessy, Shiva Feshareki, David Lang, Julia Wolfe and Freya Waley-Cohen. He is equally committed to the canon, regularly pairing bold, new pieces with his own transcriptions of J.S. Bach’s lute suites and seventeenth-century Scottish lute manuscripts.

Often praised for his original programming, Shibe’s discography continues to garner recognition from critics and audiences alike. Recording exclusively for Pentatone, his latest solo album *Profesión* was awarded the 2024 BBC Music Magazine Award. Released the same year, his album with tenor Karim Sulayman - *Broken Branches* - was nominated for the 2024 GRAMMY Award for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album, and his solo album *Lost & Found* was awarded the OPUS Klassik 2023 Award for Solo Instrument, adding to an OPUS Klassik 2021 Award for Chamber Music Recording, a 2019 Gramophone Concept Album of the Year Award and a 2021 Gramophone Instrumental Award for *softLOUD* and *Bach* respectively.

Born in Edinburgh in 1992, Shibe studied at Royal Conservatoire of Scotland under Allan Neave, with further studies at Kunst-Universität Graz in Austria and in Italy under Paolo Pegoraro. He is now a Guitar Professor at Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Shibe is a former BBC New Generation Artist, a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship 2012 winner, a Royal Philharmonic Society 2018 Young Artist Award winner, a multi-GRAMMY nominee, and the recipient of the 2022 Leonard Bernstein Award.