Friday 1st November 2024, 1.15pm

Eleftheria Kotzia (Guitar)

Described by USA Review as doing for the Greek soul what flamenco does for the Spanish, Eleftheria Kotzia has toured regularly in Europe, Canada, the United States, South America, North Africa, Australia, New Zealand and the Far East. She has performed both as a soloist and with orchestras at many of the great International Guitar

and Music Festivals, including the 10th Anniversary Series of the D' Addario Foundation in the USA, the Festival Estival in Paris, the Tavener Festival in Athens, the Segovia Celebrations in Spain, the Guitar Foundation of America in the USA (three times), the 10th Anniversary Series of the Festival 'Guitarras Del Mundo' in Argentina, the City of London Festival and various other festivals around the world.

Born in northern Greece, in Alexandroupolis , Eleftheria Kotzia studied guitar at the National Conservatory in Athens, the Conservatoire National Supérieure in Paris, and finally at the Guildhall School of Music in London. Among her teachers have been Julian Bream, Alexandre Lagoya, Dimitri Fampas, David Russell and Timothy Walker. She was the winner of the first prize in the 6th International Guitar Competition in Milan.

When Eleftheria made her London debut the Times admired her *skill, unfailing beguiling tone and her ability to vary her touch with fluency*. Since then Eleftheria Kotzia has

performed for various radio and TV stations, including the BBC and WNYC and has given recitals at some of the most famous concert halls in the world, including the *Merkin Concert Hall* and the *Carnegie Recital Hall* in New York, the *Herbst Theatre* in San Francisco, The *Wigmore Hall* and the *South Bank Centre* in London, the *Megaron Concert Hall* in Athens, *Les Halles* and the *Ampitheatre Richelieu* in the Sorbonne in Paris, the *Jubilee Hall - Raffles Hotel* in Singapore , The *Rudolfinum* in Prague.

Eleftheria Kotzia has an impressive list of recordings to her credit. Among them the first recording of *Michael Tippett's The Blue Guitar*, which was described as *life enhancing*, enjoyed unanimous critical acclaim and was selected by Gramophone magazine as a *Critic's Choice Recording of the Year*. The American Record Guide hailed her as a *wizard-a strong sensuous player with bite and sass*. *John Tavener's* only solo guitar work, *Chant*, was also recorded for the first time by Eleftheria Kotzia, ('*Mediterraneo'*) in a special adaptation made for her by the composer. Her CDs *'Fuoco'* on Harmonia Mundi - Mandala and *'La Guitarra Latina'* on Chandos, *'Gypsy Ballad'* (Somm) and *'Respectus'* have all received rave reviews.

Kotzia was selected to represent Greece in *London's Millennium Celebrations: String of Pearls* . She played the guitar part in the first performance of John Tavener's *Fall and Resurrection* in St Paul's Cathedral, London, which was televised live and subsequently issued on CD/DVD.

An inspirational creative force Eleftheria Kotzia set out in 1992 on an important initiative: the encouragement of non-Greek composers to write Greek-influenced music for her. Her uniquely pioneering work has resulted in compositions by such composers as *Dusan Bogdanovic* (his popular 'Levantine Suite'), *Stephen Dodgson*, *Carlo Domeniconi*, *John Duarte* and *Edward McGuire*, who were all influenced in different ways by the richness of the Greek musical heritage.

Eleftheria has also presented numerous works by Greek composers in her recitals around the world such as *Theodorakis*, *Hadjidakis*, *Haliasas*, *Giorginakis*, *Pittas*, *Tatsis*, and *Boudounis*. Estonian *René Eespere* and Chilean composer *Edmundo Vasquez* have also dedicated works to Eleftheria. *René Eespere* wrote and dedicated his guitar concerto to her. It was premiered in October 2007 in Tallin, Estonia and subsequently recorded by Eleftheria. Passionate in collaborating with other artists she has worked with acclaimed violinist Leonidas Kavakos, Clio Gould, Luigi de Philipi , with mezzo- soprano Patricia Rosario, Flutist Judith Hall, cellist Robert Max etc.