

Newsletter

Summer holidays

MAYA
DESCHEEMAER
♦



Who am I?

My journey with the guitar began when I was seven years old. My cousin first placed the instrument in my hands, it only had two strings, but that didn't stop me from figuring out how to play Smoke on the Water with just one finger. That Christmas, I received a guitar with six strings, and from that moment on, music became an essential part of my life.

I later studied at the Kunsthumaniora Arts School in Antwerp, where I had the opportunity to perform the first and second movements of the Villa-Lobos Guitar Concerto with the school orchestra at the age of seventeen. I continued my studies at the Fontys Academy of the Arts, earning my Master's degree under the guidance of Johan Fostier, and most recently completed my postgraduate studies with Antigoni Goni at the Koninklijk Conservatorium in Brussels.

Over the years, I've been fortunate to have my work recognised at several international competitions in Greece, Spain, Russia, the Netherlands and Belgium. In 2023, I was awarded first prize at the Twente Guitar Festival. More recently, I received second prizes at the Antwerp Guitar Festival and the Rust Guitar Festival in Austria, and most recently a third prize at the International Guitar Festival in Nürtingen. I'm grateful for every step of this journey and excited to continue sharing music, stories and new projects with you.

Wat kan je verwachten?

Upcoming Projects

Past concerts

Volterra Project

How were your holidays?

Concert agenda

4/9 7pm

Book presentation (h)Art(O)theek

A publication featuring the artists of (h)Art(O)theek Mortsel, of which I am a member.

<https://www.hartotheek.com/agenda/voorstelling-boek-h-art-o-theek>

18/10 11.30am

Apretiefconcert

Kasteel van Schoten

<https://www.ccschoten.be/programma/met-inleiding/aperitiefconcert-maya-descheemaeker-echos-van-tijd-en-klank>

15/11 3pm

Matinée with het erasmus ensemble

Theater Het Klokhuis

5/12 8pm

Solo recital From england with love

The Antwerp Pianist

<https://www.theantwerppianist.be/event/concert-maya-descheemaeker-gitaar-49/register>

18/2

Privé recital Eglantier Edegem



Past concerts

SALON ZEIDLER

A little while ago, in April, I was invited by luthier Benoît Zeidler to perform a recital in his workshop in Schaerbeek. It was a very intimate and unique setting in which to share music.

For me, perhaps the biggest challenge was speaking French. I spent quite some time wondering whether I should introduce my pieces in French, but in the end, I still found it a little too intimidating. So I introduced them in English instead. Afterwards, though, I was happy to discover that I could actually speak quite good French with the people in the audience — if I may say so myself!



It was particularly lovely to see how everything comes together when you perform in a guitar workshop. Benoît is incredibly passionate and regularly transforms his workshop into a stage for both emerging and established guitarists. It makes these concerts feel very personal and special, for both the musician and the audience.

CONCERT IN (H)ART-O-THEEK

In June, I gave an aperitif concert at the (h)Art-O-theek in Mortsels, a place that seeks to bring people together through art. They organise book readings, exhibitions, workshops and, of course, concerts.

It was such a welcoming place to perform, with a particularly lovely audience. The programme seemed almost tailor-made for the space. The artworks in the gallery looked as though they had been hung especially for this concert. They enriched the music, just as the music hopefully enriched them. A beautiful exchange between the two.

I really enjoyed talking to the audience afterwards. Everyone was so kind and warm towards me. There is surely nothing more inspiring than that!



The Volterra Project

This summer, I took part in the Volterra Project for the second time, a symposium in the beautiful region of Tuscany.

This year was a very special edition, celebrating the project's 20th anniversary. Alumni who had previously taken part in one of the earlier editions were invited back. I was lucky enough to receive an invitation as well. Needless to say, I didn't have to think twice about it.

The project takes place in a unique location: an old villa perched on top of a hill. There is no paved road leading to the villa, so the journey there gave us quite a shake. But as soon as you arrive, you forget all about it. You immediately feel as though you've stepped into a fairy tale.

Before the project began, chamber music ensembles were put together and we were assigned repertoire. We spent the week rehearsing and studying these works. At the end of the week, we had two concerts where we got to perform the pieces we had worked on.



Alongside the rehearsals, there were also business seminars, acting classes and physiology lessons. And outside of the sessions, we were treated to fantastic Italian food and had the chance to swim in a pool overlooking the beautiful surroundings.

It was a truly unique experience. I had the opportunity to play with fantastic musicians from all over the world. Because of the intensive programme and the fact

and inspired
by Antigoni Goni

The Volterra Project 


[sim'pou.zi.em]

**SYMPOSIUM
Celebrating
20 years**
200 alumni
36 countries
360° approach
**July 10-18th
2026**
Composer in residence:
Dušan Bogdanović
Artists in residence:
Antigoni Goni
Luca Isolani
Eleonora Perretta
Maarten Vandenbenden
CHAMBER MUSIC RESIDENCY
ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS
INNOVATIVE WORKSHOPS
CAREER PRESENTATIONS

 the Volterra Project  #thevolterraproject www.volterraguitar.org

that we were so removed from the outside world, we became a very close-knit group. Each and every one of them is a wonderful person who gave me so much love and inspiration.

I also learned an enormous amount about myself. About what I find difficult during rehearsals and how I can deal with it. About how to take my place as an artist without making myself smaller than I need to be. About what being an artist means to me, and about what I need in order to stay inspired.

Coming home felt very strange at first. I had spent eight days living in a bubble, working intensively on myself and surrounded by like-minded people. I had formed unique bonds with truly remarkable people who are now back on the other side of the world. It still amazes me how you can build such a strong bond of trust with someone in such a short amount of time.

It was an experience I will carry with me for the rest of my life. I got to experience so many beautiful moments, all in such an incredible place.

I hope that each and every one of you will have the chance to experience something similar someday.

How were your holidays?

CAMPING

After the Volterra Project, I spent a few days camping in the Ardennes with my friends. It was really nice to be surrounded again by people I love spending time with. It has become an annual tradition for us, we've been doing it since 2015, although it had been a few years since I was last able to join.

It was wonderful to be back in this place. Both the place and the people hold so many memories for me, so it felt really special to return and create new ones together.

By now, we know all the nice spots in the area. One of them is a rock with some very deep crevices. And, as luck would have it... that's exactly where my phone fell.

The perfect opportunity for a digital detox while camping, you might think.

Unfortunately, I was leaving for Sweden immediately afterwards, so I really did need a phone. In the end, I had no choice but to order a new one.

And then, a miracle happened: on the exact day I was leaving for Sweden, my friends managed to retrieve my phone from the rock using a magnet, a rope and a generous amount of superglue.

The only problem? By then, I had already bought a new one...



How were your holiday?

ZWEDEN

Next, my friend Lien and I travelled to Sweden. We made the journey by train, with a stopover in Berlin, where we spent the night.

We had planned to visit a few museums during our day in Berlin, but of course, we hadn't thought to check whether they were open on Mondays. So we went for the major sights instead! We visited Alexanderplatz, the Brandenburg Gate and the Berlin Wall, but also stopped by a fantastic fantasy bookshop and a few second-hand shops. Berlin is such a vibrant city, with a very distinct artistic character.

From there, we took the night train to Stockholm. The journey took no less than 18 hours, so we were incredibly happy when we finally arrived at our hotel and could take a nice, refreshing shower.



The next day, we rented a car and headed to our home for the week: a little camper cabin in Dalarna. It was a fantastic place. The river where we could swim and go paddleboarding was literally right in our garden. The owner was also incredibly friendly and immediately gave us plenty of recommendations for things to do in the area.

For example, he recommended a bakery that he used to own. The bread we had there was possibly the best bread we have ever eaten.

We went on beautiful hikes, visited a moose farm and a buffalo farm, discovered some abandoned waterfalls and went canoeing. Of course, we also made plenty of time for fika and enjoyed the fresh air and beautiful surroundings.

But all good things must come to an end. After our week in Dalarna, we returned to Stockholm, where we stayed for another two nights before catching our flight home.

On our last day in Stockholm, we decided to get tattoos. We found a lovely studio with a wonderful artist, and we are both very happy with the result!

