

Recognized as one of America's finest classical guitarists, William Kanengiser won First Prize in the 1987 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, as well as top awards in major guitar competitions in Toronto (1981) and Paris (1983). He has recorded four solo CD's for the GSP label, ranging from classical to jazz to Caribbean to Near Eastern styles, and he was chosen to record Books 8 and 9 for the Suzuki Guitar Advanced Repertoire Series. In 2005 he released a live concert DVD, "Classical Guitar and Beyond," for Mel Bay Recordings, which also features Mr. Kanengiser's talents as a comedian/mimic in his infamous "GFA Imitation Show." A member of the Guitar Foundation of America Board of Trustees for many years, he is deeply committed to the GFA mission, and has taught, performed and conducted at a number of GFA conventions and symposia.

He currently holds the title of Associate Professor of Classical Guitar at the USC Thornton School of Music, where he has taught since 1983. He was named Outstanding Graduate of the USC School of Music upon conferral of his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees, in 1981 and 1983 respectively. In 2011 he received the Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching, and in 2013 Dean's Award for Excellence in Professional Endeavors. His deep interest in biomechanical, medical and psychological concerns of musicians led him to co-found the Thornton Wellness Committee in 2013, and he recently developed a new course entitled "Musician's Health and Wellness." He has given master classes at conservatories and guitar societies around the world, and produced two instructional videos, "Effortless Classical Guitar" and "Classical Guitar Mastery," for Hot Licks Video. He has served as featured performer and curator of the New York Guitar Marathon, as Artistic Director of the Laguna Beach Music Festival, and has given solo recitals across the U.S., Mexico and Canada, as well as Japan, Australia, China, New Zealand and throughout Europe. In June 2017 he will travel to Paraguay to work with Pu'Rory, Berta Rojas' youth guitar project.

As a founding member of the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet, Mr. Kanengiser has toured extensively throughout Asia, Europe, and North America and recorded over a dozen CD's. LAGQ was awarded a GRAMMY for Best Classical Crossover Recording in 2004 for their "LAGQ's Guitar Heroes" CD. Their most recent CD, "New Renaissance," was released in March 2015. It features Mr. Kanengiser's arrangements of Spanish Renaissance music, originally created for the stage production "The Ingenious Don Quixote." Premiered by LAGQ with John Cleese (of Monty Python), the show is now being toured with comedian Phil Proctor of the Firesign Theater, and was released as a live DVD on Mel Bay Recordings.

One of Mr. Kanengiser's passions is finding ways to include student and semi-professional players in serious performance experiences through guitar orchestras. In 2006, Kyoto-based composer Shingo Fujii dedicated "Concierto de Los Angeles" for Guitar and Guitar Orchestra to him, and in addition to the U.S. premiere at the 2007 Guitar Foundation of America Convention, he has performed it over 30 times. LAGQ subsequently commissioned another piece by Mr. Fujii entitled "Shiki," and they recently premiered a new work by Andrew York called "By Chants." Altogether, Mr. Kanengiser has invited over 2,000 guitarists onstage to perform with him. He recently commissioned Sergio Assad to compose a new work for guitar and guitar orchestra, inspired by the experiences of refugees and immigrants around the globe, which will be premiered in Fall 2018, as part of his new Diaspora commissioning project. The 2019-2020 season will see the launch of "British Invasion," a new collaboration with the Alexander String Quartet, featuring works inspired by Sting, Led Zeppelin, the Beatles, and John Dowland.

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