

## BIOGRAPHY

# MARTIN TAYLOR MBE

Award winning guitarist MARTIN TAYLOR has established a unique musical career as an internationally acclaimed musician, and his inimitable style has seen him recognised as the world's foremost exponent of solo jazz guitar playing.

Although completely self taught, he has enjoyed a remarkable musical career spanning across four decades, and during that time has invented and developed a way of playing the guitar that is admired, and often imitated, by guitarists all over the world. As well as being a true guitar innovator, he is also a master concert performer, dazzling audiences with his solo shows, which combine virtuosity, emotion, humour, with a strong stage presence.

He spends much of the year travelling the world, playing in concert halls in Europe, North America, Japan, Asia, and Australasia.

As well as his solo concerts and recordings, he has also collaborated with musicians from many different musical genre including Stephane Grappelli, Chet Atkins, Bill Wyman, Dionne Warwick, Sacha Distel, Bryn Terfel and Jamie Cullum.

From 1979 to 1989 he toured the world and recorded over 20 albums with the French jazz violin legend STEPHANE GRAPPELLI. Monsieur Grappelli described him as *"Rich in talent and elegance, he's a great artist"*.

In 2002, he was appointed MBE "For Services to Jazz Music", in The Queen's Birthday Honours List, which he received personally from Her Majesty the Queen at an investiture at Buckingham Palace.

In 2007 he received the prestigious BBC Radio 2 "Heart of Jazz" Award in recognition of his career in music, was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the North Wales Jazz Guitar Festival for his "Contribution to Jazz Guitar Worldwide" and was voted Best Guitarist in the British Jazz Awards for a record eleventh time.

When not touring he divides his time between his homes in France and Scotland where he writes music for TV and film.

His autobiography MARTIN TAYLOR - AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A TRAVELLING MUSICIAN and his latest CD/DVD FRETERNITY are available worldwide.

## TIMELINE BIOGRAPHY

The virtuoso guitarist Martin Taylor MBE first came to prominence in the late 1970's through his collaborations with the legendary violinist Stephane Grappelli, and now tours the world's concert halls with his dazzling live performances.

He began playing at the age of four when his father, bassist Buck Taylor, gave him a small acoustic guitar as a present. A totally self taught guitarist, he learned to play by listening to his father's records and trying to imitate what he heard. Seven years later he was playing in local bands and gained the respect and admiration of professional musicians who were amazed by the young boy they called "The Guitar Wizard".

Although inspired initially by the Gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt, it was to be piano players, most notably Art Tatum and later Bill Evans, that caught his imagination and set him on the path of developing his own individual style of solo playing.

In 1978 he made his debut album TAYLOR MADE, and the following year received a call from Stephane Grappelli inviting him to play on a series of concerts in France. Shortly after those concerts he joined Stephane on a coast-to-coast tour of the U.S, including New York's Carnegie Hall and the Hollywood Bowl. It was the beginning of an eleven year collaboration which took in numerous world tours, and over 20 albums including recordings with Nelson Riddle, Michel Legrand, Yehudi Menuhin, Peggy Lee and several film soundtracks including the Louis Malle movie MILOU EN MAI and DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS starring Steve Martin and Sir Michael Caine.

Alongside his work with Grappelli, he was also pursuing his own solo career and in 1987 had great success in America with his Los Angeles recorded album SARABANDA.

In 1993 he made his first solo album for Linn Records ARTISTRY, which was No.1 in the HMV charts for six weeks, establishing him as one of the most popular and biggest selling acoustic guitarists in the UK.

The following year he formed his group SPIRIT OF DJANGO. Their first recording included their version of Robert Palmer's JOHNNY AND MARY, which was used on the famous cult TV ads with "Nicole-Papa!" for the Renault Clio.

In 1999 he signed a recording contract with SONY MUSIC, making two critically acclaimed albums, KISS AND TELL and NITELIFE, which showed the many sides of Martin Taylor both as a guitarist and composer.

He has also collaborated with musicians from many different musical genres including, **CHET ATKINS, GEORGE HARRISON, ERIC CLAPTON, CHRIS REA, BILL WYMAN, DIONNE WARWICK, LIZA MINNELLI, SACHA DISTEL AND BRYN TERFEL.**

Martin is a popular artist in Japan and alongside classical saxophonist NOBOYA SUGAWA, recorded the music for NHK's most popular TV drama series SAKURA, which during its run had a daily audience of 26 million.

In 1998 he founded the registered charity The Kirkmichael International Guitar Festival in his home village in Scotland, which became one of the biggest and most prestigious guitar festivals in the world. He also founded Guitars For Schools, which promotes the teaching of guitars in primary schools. Through his work he has raised money to buy guitars for school children throughout Scotland.

Over the years he has received many awards and honours including The Freedom of the City of London, the Gold Badge of Merit from the British Academy of Composers and Songwriters, and was made an Honorary Doctor of the University of Paisley, Scotland.

In 2002, Martin was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) "For Services To Music", in The Queen's Jubilee Birthday Honours List, and received his award personally from Her Majesty The Queen at an investiture at Buckingham Palace.

His album SOLO was released in 2002 to great critical acclaim while in 2003 a joint CD with YES guitarist Steve Howe called MASTERPIECE GUITARS caused waves in the music scene when they used a total of \$6million worth of guitars on the album.

In 2004 he released his album "The Valley" with special guests Bryn Terfel and Sacha Distel and in the same year went onto perform with Jamie Cullum, Mark Knopfler and Jeff Beck.

In 2007 he released the first album and dvd from his group Fraternity featuring Guy Barker which picked up a number of awards. In that year he also received the prestigious BBC Radio 2 "Heart of Jazz" Award in recognition of his career in music, was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the North Wales Jazz Guitar Festival for his "Contribution to Jazz Guitar Worldwide" and was voted Best Guitarist in the British Jazz Awards for a record eleventh time.

His autobiography for Sanctuary Publishing "KISS AND TELL" is available worldwide.