

Joseph Shields is a versatile, award-winning guitarist and composer whose artistry has been featured on prominent stages across the United States. His performances include appearances in Los Angeles, New York City, the National Liberty Museum in Philadelphia, and as a featured artist at notable events such as Guitar Sarasota, the Long Island Guitar Festival, the Macon Cherry Blossom Festival, and the Stetson International Guitar Workshop, where he also served as guest lecturer.

A dynamic interpreter of contemporary music, Mr. Shields has premiered numerous works for electric guitar, including U.S. and world premieres by acclaimed composers Lois Vierk and Adam Silverman. He has collaborated with distinguished artists such as soprano Marilyn Mulvey, and his own compositions have received acclaim from both audiences and colleagues. Celebrated French guitarist and composer Roland Dyens described him as “a very refined and sensitive musician.”

Mr. Shields is the recipient of several prestigious awards, including the **Eliot Fisk Prize** from Yale University—awarded “to an outstanding guitarist”—where his performances were noted for their “exciting and virtuosic playing.” He also won **First Prize** in the Belle and Lynam Jackson Competition at Marshall University and was one of just four guitarists selected nationwide to perform for the legendary Pepe Romero, who praised him as “a wonderful guitarist.”

In addition to his performance career, Mr. Shields is a published author, with articles appearing in *Soundboard*, the journal of the Guitar Foundation of America. He is increasingly sought after for his mentorship on sustainable careers in the arts, helping musicians build purposeful lives grounded in income stability, creative impact, and family balance. He is also an emerging leader in liturgical arts consulting.

As an educator, Mr. Shields has guided students to remarkable achievements, including National Young Leaders Awards, All-State Jazz Band selections, and admissions to top-tier conservatories such as Eastman, Manhattan School of Music, New England Conservatory, and Syracuse University.

Mr. Shields holds degrees in Music Performance and Music Theory from Yale University, Marshall University, and Stetson University. He has served on the faculties of Marshall University and Shawnee State University. After nearly two decades in Connecticut, he returned to Florida in 2015 to establish a guitar program at the prestigious St. Stephen’s Episcopal School in Bradenton.

He currently serves as **Music Director at Faith Presbyterian Church in Gainesville**, is a **board member of Guitar Sarasota**, and **Artistic Director and host** of its **Vera & Imre Hecht Emerging Artists Concert Series**. He continues to perform, compose, and teach with distinction.

Above all, Joseph Shields treasures his role as husband to his wife Nancy, and father to their four beautiful children—his most meaningful and enduring work.