# MATTHEW DENMAN

Guitarist · Composer · Conductor · Educator

## SHORT BIO

Matthew Denman is a guitarist, composer, conductor, and educator. *Soundboard*, the journal of the Guitar Foundation of America, calls him “a prominent pedagogue of his generation,” and Matthew Greif of the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet writes that his music is “uniquely personal, beautifully projecting life experiences through the magical lens of solo guitar.”

He is Associate Professor of Guitar at Oklahoma City University and founder of the Leyenda Foundation. A protégé of Pepe Romero, he has directed the Celedonio Romero Guitar Institute since 2011. His 2026 Unconventional Tour took him to five countries on three continents, from a keynote in Austin to Ürümqi, Zürich, London, Brussels, Buffalo, and The Juilliard School, where he was guest artist. His first solo album, *Withstood*, arrives winter 2026.

## LONG BIO

Matthew Denman is a guitarist, composer, conductor, and educator whose work joins the concert stage, the classroom, and the building of arts communities. *Soundboard*, the journal of the Guitar Foundation of America, describes “a sterling reputation as player, scholar, impresario, composer, and all-around esteemed figure in the classical guitar community.” He is Associate Professor of Guitar at Oklahoma City University’s Wanda L. Bass School of Music and the founder and executive director of the Leyenda Foundation.

A protégé of Pepe Romero, Denman was in the first class of the Celedonio Romero Guitar Institute and has directed it since 2011. Romero has said the Institute “exists and can exist because we have someone like Matt Denman.” It became the seed of the Leyenda Convention, now an annual gathering in Oklahoma City spanning classical, jazz, flamenco, and fingerstyle guitar, and of the Leyenda Foundation, whose programs include the Celedonio Romero, Charlie Christian, and Fingerstyle Guitar institutes, Leyenda Spark, Leyenda Dance, and Leyenda Records, an artist-first label. The Romero Institute has served more than 1,000 students since 2009, and Spark reaches more than 600 young musicians and dancers each year.

Denman built the guitar program at Classen School of Advanced Studies in Oklahoma City into one of the most respected high school programs in the country. It was featured on the cover of *Soundboard* in 2013 and earned him the GFA/Augustine Award for excellence in guitar education and Classen SAS Teacher of the Year. From 2013 to 2018 he served as Director of Education for the

Guitar Foundation of America. His students have won top prizes at the Eastman Concerto, GFA, and Haire competitions, and more than twenty Leyenda alumni now teach guitar in schools and universities across the country. Former students include Collin Holloway, Audrey Oden, Colin Deibert, Carey Morrow, and Henry Dillon of Surf Curse and Current Joys.

He has performed, taught, and lectured across the United States, Europe, and Asia, and has appeared as soloist in Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* with the Enid Symphony Orchestra. His 2026 Unconventional Tour took him to five countries on three continents. It opened with the keynote at Austin Classical Guitar's National Teacher Summit and continued to Ürümqi, China, where he trained 38 guitar teachers and conducted the closing concert of the Silk Road Guitar Art Week. In the fall he launched Leyenda Elementa, Leyenda's European sister organization, with the Zürich Fall Guitar Fest; lectured at the Royal Academy of Music and the Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles; performed and conducted at the Buffalo International Guitar Festival; and appeared at The Juilliard School as guest artist, where Tali Roth, head of pre-college guitar, called his performance lecture "first class."

His compositions, including *Wolves of Winter* and *Lindley House*, are published by Les Productions d'Oz. Matthew Greif of the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet calls his music "uniquely personal, beautifully projecting life experiences through the magical lens of solo guitar." His first solo album, *Withstood*, arrives winter 2026, and in February 2027 the Romero Institute expands to California with the first Celedonio Romero Guitar Weekend in San Diego.

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