

Biography

Alisa Weilerstein

(Cello)



"A young cellist whose emotionally resonant performances of both traditional and contemporary music have earned her international recognition... Weilerstein is a consummate performer, combining technical precision with impassioned musicianship," stated the MacArthur Foundation, when awarding American cellist Alisa Weilerstein a 2011 MacArthur Fellowship. An exclusive recording artist for Decca Classics, Alisa was the first cellist to be signed by the label for over 20 years.

Her debut recording of the Elgar and Elliott Carter cello concertos with Daniel Barenboim and the Staatskapelle Berlin was named *BBC Music* magazine's "Recording of the Year 2013." Weilerstein's second Decca release, featuring Dvorák's Cello Concerto, revealed a "take-no-prisoners emotional investment that is evident in every bar" (*New York Times*). *Solo*, a compilation of unaccompanied 20th Century cello music, was released in October 2014 to critical acclaim. The album's centerpiece is Kodály's Sonata for solo cello, a signature work in which the cellist has impressed the *New York Times* with her "staggering performance."

The American-born cellist Alisa Weilerstein has attracted attention worldwide for her natural virtuosity, intensity of her playing and the spontaneity and sensitivity of her interpretations. In 2010, she was invited by Daniel Barenboim and the Berlin Philharmonic to play the Elgar concerto in the orchestra's annual Europakonzert which that year took place in Oxford's Sheldonian Theatre. She has appeared with all of the major orchestras throughout the United States and Europe with conductors including Pablo Heras-Casado, Gustavo Dudamel, Sir Mark Elder, Christoph Eschenbach, Paavo Järvi, Zubin Mehta, Matthias Pintscher, Yuri Temirkanov, Juraj Valcuha, Osmo Vänskä, Semyon Bychkov, Simone Young and Jaap van Zweden. She has also appeared at major music festivals throughout the world as a soloist, recitalist and as a chamber musician.

The 2015-16 season sees Alisa give world premiere performances of two major new concertos, both of them commissioned from leading composers and written especially for her. With the Chicago Symphony she gives the world premiere of Pascal Dusapin's new concerto, before undertaking its European premiere with the Stuttgart Opera Orchestra as well as the Paris Opera Orchestra. Similarly, with the composer on the podium, she will give the world premiere of Matthias Pintscher's new concerto with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, followed by performances with Cologne's WDR Symphony orchestra. Other highlights include performances with the Bavarian Radio Symphony, London Symphony, NDR Hamburg, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre de Paris.

Following the October release of their duo album debut on Decca, comprising sonatas by Chopin and Rachmaninoff, Alisa reunites with her longtime recital partner, pianist Inon Barnatan, for a tour of North America and on a tour of six European capitals that takes in London's Wigmore Hall.

An ardent champion of new music, she has worked extensively with Osvaldo Golijov and premiered works by Lera Auerbach and Joseph Hallman. Last season she gave the New York premiere of Matthias Pintscher's *Reflections on Narcissus* under the composer's direction during the New York Philharmonic's inaugural Biennial. She appears at major music festivals worldwide, and regularly collaborates with Venezuela's Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra and the El Sistema education programme.

Weilerstein, whose honours include Lincoln Center's 2008 Martin E. Segal prize and the 2006 Leonard Bernstein Award, is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music and Columbia University. Diagnosed with type 1 diabetes aged 9, she is now a Celebrity Advocate for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

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