

“The performance [Kodaly Solo Sonata] is superb: totally secure in technique, rich in sonority, compellingly idiomatic in its rhapsodising, and exhilarating in the passages representing an entire band of village musicians.”

Anthony Burton, BBC Music Magazine

ALISA WEILERSTEIN

CELLO

Biography

“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.

In the 2017-18 season Weilerstein gives two performances of Schumann’s Cello Concerto, with the Pittsburgh Symphony under Manfred Honeck and the Philadelphia Orchestra led by Christoph Eschenbach; two performances of the Barber Concerto, with the Chicago Symphony led by Jiří Bělohlávek and the Cleveland Orchestra under Alan Gilbert; and a performance of Tchaikovsky’s Variations on a Rocooco Theme with conductor Jeffrey Kahane leading the New York Philharmonic. She also plays a series of duo recitals on tour with her regular recital partner, Israeli pianist Inon Barnatan, beginning at Philadelphia’s Kimmel Center and Carnegie Hall. Other concerto appearances include Shostakovich with the Deutsches Symphonie Orchester and James Conlon; Prokofiev with the Dallas Symphony under Jaap van Zweden; tours of the UK with the Czech Philharmonic and Bělohlávek playing Shostakovich and Dvořák; and performances of Lutoslawski’s Cello Concerto with the Indianapolis Symphony under the baton of Krzysztof Urbaniak.

In recent years, Weilerstein recorded the Elgar and Elliott Carter cello concertos with Daniel Barenboim and the Staatskapelle Berlin. The disc was named “Recording of the Year 2013” by BBC Music, which featured the cellist on the cover of its May 2014 issue. Her release of Dvořák’s Cello Concerto with the Czech Philharmonic, topped the U.S. classical chart. Her third album, a compilation of unaccompanied 20th-century cello music titled Solo, was pronounced an “uncompromising and pertinent portrait of the cello repertoire of our time” (ResMusica, France). Solo’s centerpiece is the Kodály sonata, a signature work that Weilerstein revisits on the soundtrack of If I Stay, a 2014 feature film starring Chloë Grace Moretz in which the cellist makes a cameo appearance as herself. In 2015 she released a recording of sonatas by Chopin

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and Rachmaninoff, marking her duo album debut with Inon Barnatan. And in 2016, Weilerstein released her album of Shostakovich's two cello concertos with the Bavarian Radio Symphony under Pablo Heras-Casado.

Weilerstein's career milestones include an emotionally tumultuous account of Elgar's concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic and Barenboim in Oxford, England, and a performance at the White House for President and Mrs. Obama. An ardent champion of new music, she has worked on multiple projects with Osvaldo Golijov and Pintscher and premiered works by Lera Auerbach and Joseph Hallman. Weilerstein, whose honors 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, she is a Celebrity Advocate for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

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