

Cellists' Corner

Brief Career Details of Important Cellists

prepared by David Johnstone from public information

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SPECIAL FEATURE ON SOLO VIRTUOSO CELLIST

SANTIAGO CAÑÓN-VALENCIA

Santiago Cañón-Valencia made his orchestral debut as a soloist when he was six years old with the Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá. Since then, he has appeared with all the major orchestras in his native Colombia and his international solo career has taken him around the world to perform with orchestras such as the Mariinsky Orchestra with Valery Gergiev, Brussels Philharmonic with Stephane Deneve, St Petersburg Philharmonic with Nikolai Alexeev, Hungarian Radio Symphony Orchestra with Janos Kovacs, Moscow Soloists with Yuri Bashmet, The Orchestre Royal de Chambre de Wallonie with Frank Braley, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Münchener Kammerorchester with Clemens Schuldt and Antwerp Symphony with Muhai Tang, among others.

He is probably the most amazing competition winner in all cello history: Winner of the Silver Medal and “Audience Favourite” Award at the 2019 XVI International Tchaikovsky Competition and the 2018 Starker Foundation Award, Mr. Cañón-Valencia has been a fixture of the International Cello Competition scene for many years. He was awarded third prize at the prestigious Queen Elisabeth International Competition 2017 in Brussels. He is also a First Prize winner of the Carlos Prieto International Cello Competition, Beijing International Music Competition, Gisborne International Music Competition, and Lennox International Young Artists Competition. He was also a major prize winner of the Sphinx, Casals, Johansen, Cassadó, and Adam cello competitions.

Highlights of his 2020-2021 season included returning concerto performances in Colombia, Japan, South Africa, the United States, and Russia, as well as debuts as a soloist with Frankfurt Radio Symphony and Christoph Eschenbach, Prague Philharmonia and Phoenix Symphony Orchestra, among others.

Passionate about new music, Mr. Cañón-Valencia was responsible for Carlos Izcaray's world premiere of his Cello Concerto "Stringmaster" alongside Alabama Symphony Orchestra. Santiago also premiered Jorge Pinzón's Cello Concerto "Rapsodia a los 4 Elementos" at the Cartagena International Music Festival 2019. He was also responsible for the Colombian premiere of Ginastera's Cello Concerto No. 2 with the National Symphony Orchestra of Colombia as well as premiering in New Zealand Gulda's Cello Concerto in Auckland, with the Auckland Chamber Orchestra.

Highlights of his 2021-2022 season included returning concerto performances in Colombia and Japan as well as debuts as a soloist with the SWR Symphonieorchester with Andris Poga, Prague Philharmonia, RTVE Symphony Orchestra, Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, and appearances at the Dresden, Casals and Moritzburg festivals.

HEAR/SEE HIM IN VIRTUOSO WORKS:

Popper - Elfentanz - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hB2f4ABWubg>

Paganini Caprice 24 live performance -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ViisDuB700>

Bottermund-Starker Variations Paganini LIVE -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0NUJUGN3BVw>

Gaspar Cassadó Suite for Cello Solo (complete) -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebMlp9Kc_bY

David Popper, Spinning Song: Santiago Cañón Valencia (just 12 years old!!!)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-RA19M_LEg

He is undoubtedly a “cellists’ cellist”. Here is a very brief quote from my friend **Suzana Stefanović**, the principal cellist of the Spanish Radio-Television Orchestra in Madrid:

“On stage and also up close, he transmits a tranquility that belies his astonishing virtuosity, I haven't seen a left hand like that in a long time. Uncompromising intensity and musicality, also something rare today.”



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