



Jonah Kim Cellist

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Jonah Kim - BIOGRAPHY

Born in Seoul, Korea, cellist Jonah Kim immigrated to the United States at the age of seven. His father, a pastor at a Korean Presbyterian Church in New York, introduced Jonah to the cello that same year. Despite having no formal musical training, Jonah's father possessed a keen ear for music, and he coached Jonah playing the cello. Jonah figured things out quickly by watching and imitating Pablo Casals from VHS tapes of his performance of Bach's Solo Cello Suites. Within a year, Jonah was accepted to the Juilliard School Pre-College Division with full scholarship where with Ardyth Alton he began his first professional training, including how to read music.

During his first year at Juilliard, Jonah was unsure whether the cello and classical music were really for him. He was attending a New York City public school, learning to speak English, and adjusting to life in the United States. Jonah and his father wrote to Janos Starker at Indiana University for advice. Starker's invitation for Jonah to perform was pivotal, inspiring the young cellist to continue his studies. Starker later remarked, "Jonah is an exceptional talent. He is at the top of his generation."

Two years later, just before his tenth birthday, Jonah was accepted to the **Curtis Institute of Music** in Philadelphia. During his six years there, he studied under Peter Wiley, Lynn Harrell, and Orlando Cole, who wrote, "[Jonah] is one of the most accomplished cellists I have taught in my sixty five years on the Curtis faculty." He has also participated in masterclasses with cellists Joel Krosnick, Timothy Eddy, Stephen Isserlis, Gary Hoffman, Marcy Rosen, Andre Diaz, and Ron Leonard among others.

Jonah made his debut with Wolfgang Sawallisch and the **Philadelphia Orchestra** in 2002 after winning the first prize at the Philadelphia Orchestra's Albert M. Greenfield Competition. He also performed with the **National Symphony Orchestra** at its pops concert entitled "Stars of Tomorrow" in 2003, on which Joseph McLellan of the Washington Post wrote "*[Jonah] sounded like the next Yo-Yo Ma.*"

Since then, he has performed with Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra, New Philharmonia Orchestra, Atlantic Classical Orchestra, Redlands Symphony, Palm Beach Symphony and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. Jonah has given recitals at the Kimmel Center (Philadelphia), the Kravis Center (West Palm Beach), and the Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.). He has also appeared in radio and TV programs at WHYY, WITF, MPBN and WXEL, NBC and CBS. During summers, Jonah performs and participates in the Atlantic (Maine), Encore (Ohio), Lancaster (Ohio), Killington (Vermont), Sarasota (Florida), and Kneisel Hall (Maine) music festivals.

Jonah's passion for chamber music began when he collaborated with his peers at Curtis. He has performed most of the standard piano trio literature with violinist Chen Xi and pianist Yuja Wang. His mentors at Curtis include Joseph Silverstein, Aaron Rosand, Ida Kavafian, Gary Graffman, and Seymour Lipkin, as well as the Guarneri, Emerson, Vermeer, and the Takacs string quartets. Since his graduation from Curtis in spring of 2006, Jonah has been dividing his time between New York City, Prague and Miami.

Jonah Kim – CRITICAL ACCLAIM

"I have never heard a better, more musically satisfying performer."

- **Laszlo Varga (1925 ~)**

"Jonah is an exceptional talent. He is at the top of his generation."

- **Janos Starker (1924 ~)**

"[Jonah] has imagination and creativity, hard to find in young musicians."

- **Lynn Harrell (1944 ~)**

"One of the most accomplished cellists I have taught in my sixty five years on the Curtis faculty."

- **Orlando Cole (1908 ~ 2010)**

"Bold, melts into lithe finger work, glistening - never over-played; lush without being maudlin, graceful without sentimentality... played the Dvorak concerto as if he composed it on the spot from his own heart... he sank into Dvorak's love songs with divine artistry and impeccable technique, and synergized totally with the orchestra. Artistry aside, Kim's articulate technique elevated the work beyond poignant. Amazing double-stop work, exact octaves, clean, clear notes in high and low registers, articulate arpeggios - the audience was blessed to textbook-perfect technique. Ah, but Kim's phrasing took us beyond the moment; with light fingering that seemed to barely touch the strings, slight hesitations, breathless lifts, he instilled magic. And then he played Paganini. After 45 minutes with a tough concerto, he unassumingly settled into a cello performance of Caprice No. 24, composed for violin, and left the audience in a second spontaneous standing ovation. All of Paganini's work is practically impossible to play on the violin, let alone on the cello. In the words of principal second violin Art Svenson, Kim is 'from another planet.' Nothing we could have done could show enough appreciation for what he brought to the audience at this amazing moment."

- **Sherli Leonard, The Press-Enterprise**

"Kim has a thorough command of his instrument, with a large, accurate technique, a highly tense lyrical style, and a willingness to hammer the cello with forceful bowings if need be. By contrast, he played the long lines of the second movement with restraint and a kind of trembling subterranean emotion that was very effective; in the third-movement cadenza [of the Shostakovich cello concerto], Kim showed he could handle its wide range of drama, from near-static introspection to frenzied mania."

- **Greg Stepanich, PB Daily News**

"The amazing young cello soloist Jonah Kim... I couldn't possibly be more excited, or more appreciative of this exceptional concert! A once-in-a-lifetime experience! It seemed to me that Mr. Kim experienced a number of ecstatic moments during the Dvorak cello concerto - and he took me with him!"

- **Jane Lorenz, The Village News**

Jonah Kim – DISCOGRAPHY



Tracks:

Sgambati – Serenata napolenata
Chaminade – Serenade espagnole
Popper – Serenade
Popper – Wie einst in schoner'n tagen
Popper – Mazurka
Popper - Fantasie uber kleinrussische lieder
Rachmaninoff - Cello Sonata 3rd Mvt
Chopin - Cello Sonata 3rd Mvt
Chopin - Nocturne in Eb Major
Seyfried - Cradle Song
Paganini - Caprice No. 9
Paganini - Caprice No. 24
Grant - Waltz for Betz