

ALISA WEILERSTEIN
Cellist

Biography

American cellist Alisa Weilerstein has attracted widespread attention for playing that combines a natural virtuosic command and technical precision with impassioned musicianship. At 27 years old, she is already a veteran on the classical music scene having performed with the nation's top orchestras, given recitals in music capitals throughout the U.S. and Europe, and having regularly appeared at prestigious festivals. She is also a dedicated chamber musician.

The intensity and passion of her playing has regularly been lauded, as has the spontaneity and sensitivity of her interpretations. Following her Zankel Hall recital debut Justin Davidson of *New York Magazine* said: "Whatever she plays sounds custom-composed for her, as if she has a natural affinity with everything."

A highlight of Ms. Weilerstein's 2009-10 season will take place on May 1st, 2010 when she performs Elgar's Cello Concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic and Daniel Barenboim in London for the orchestra's 2010 European Concert, an annual event that marks the founding of the Berlin Philharmonic. The concert will be televised live worldwide and will also be released on DVD. During the season she will also perform the Elgar concerto with the Hamburg Philharmonic and the Orchestre National de Lyon.

Following her debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in June 2009, John von Rhein at the *Chicago Tribune* said of Ms. Weilerstein's performance of the Dvorak Cello Concerto: "The 27-year-old cellist spanned the full emotional range from poignancy to ebullience, bringing out an abundance of sentiment while avoiding sentimentality." During the 2009-10 season she will perform this concerto with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Peter Oundjian, the Cleveland Orchestra and Jonathan Nott, the Slovenia Symphony Orchestra and Giordano Bellicampi, the Hallé Orchestra and Okko Kamu and the Israel Philharmonic and Pietari Inkinen.

Other highlights of Ms. Weilerstein's 2009-10 season include the Canadian premiere of Osvaldo Golijov's *Azul* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and her debuts with the BBC Scottish Symphony and at the Cartagena International Music Festival. In November 2009 Ms. Weilerstein will perform the first three of Bach's Six Cello Suites over three days at Columbia University in New York City. She will conclude the cycle performing the final three suites in April 2010. In 2008 Ms. Weilerstein and composer/pianist Lera Auerbach performed the world premiere of Ms. Auerbach's 24 Preludes for Cello and Piano at the Caramoor International Music Festival and subsequently performed this work at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival in Germany and the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. They will come together again to perform this work in a program that also includes Shostakovich's 24 Preludes, making 48 preludes in total, in San Francisco and Vancouver. Ms. Weilerstein will also join pianist Inon Barnatan for recitals in Washington D.C., Baltimore, Denver, Omaha, Ann Arbor and the Virgin Islands.

Ms. Weilerstein has been continually engaged by orchestras across the U.S. and has performed as soloist with the Baltimore Symphony, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, National Symphony

Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Saint Louis Symphony, the Seattle Symphony and the Orchestra of St. Luke's, among others. In Europe she has performed with the Barcelona Symphony, Bournemouth Symphony, Gulbenkian Orchestra Lisbon, Hallé Orchestra, Leipziger Bachkollegium, NDR Hamburg, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre National de Lyon, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich.

Conductors Ms. Weilerstein has performed with include Marin Alsop, Sir Andrew Davis, Sir Mark Elder, Christoph Eschenbach, Lawrence Foster, Hans Graf, Manfred Honeck, Paavo Jarvi, Jeffrey Kahane, Louis Langrée, Andrew Litton, Jesus Lopez-Cobos, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Ludovic Morlot, Peter Oundjian, Itzhak Perlman, Kirill Petrenko and David Robertson.

In addition to her performances as a soloist, Ms. Weilerstein performs regularly as a chamber musician. She is part of a core group of musicians that performs at the Spoleto Festival USA each year and she also performs with her parents, Donald and Vivian Hornik Weilerstein, as the Weilerstein Trio, which is the Trio-in-Residence at the New England Conservatory in Boston.

In 2008 Alisa Weilerstein was awarded Lincoln Center's Martin E. Segal prize for exceptional achievement and she was named the winner of the 2006 Leonard Bernstein Award, which she received at the Schleswig-Holstein Festival in Germany. She received an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2000 and was selected for two prestigious young artists programs in 2000-01; the ECHO (European Concert Hall Organization) "Rising Stars" recital series and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Chamber Music Society Two. Ms. Weilerstein also recorded a CD for EMI Classics' "Debut" series in 2000.

Alisa Weilerstein began playing the cello at four years old after her grandmother assembled a makeshift instrument out of cereal boxes for her to play with while she was sick with the chicken pox. After convincing her parents to buy her a real cello, she showed a natural affinity for the instrument and performed her first public concert six months later. Her Cleveland Orchestra debut was in October 1995, at age 13, playing the Tchaikovsky "Rococo" Variations. She made her Carnegie Hall debut with the New York Youth Symphony in March 1997. Ms. Weilerstein is a graduate of the Young Artist Program at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she studied with Richard Weiss, and she has been appointed artist-in-residence at the Institute beginning August 2009 which will see her visit the campus two days each semester to work with cello students. In May 2004, she graduated from Columbia University in New York with a degree in Russian History.

In November 2008 Ms. Weilerstein, who was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when she was nine, was made a Celebrity Advocate for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. She meets with members of the local chapters of JDRF when she tours with the aim of demonstrating to young people that living with and managing diabetes does not stop you from doing anything you want to do. In June 2009 she conveyed this message to delegates at the JDRF's Children's Congress in Washington as a member of a role model panel and she is an active member of the organization's Juvenation social network.

For more information on Ms. Weilerstein, please visit www.alisaweilerstein.com.

JULY 2009 - PLEASE DESTROY PREVIOUSLY DATED MATERIAL

Shuman Associates, 120 West 58 Street, New York, New York 10019

Tel: 212-315-1300, Fax: 212-757-3005, Email: shumanpr@shumanassociates.net