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## Benett Tsai – 25-26 Biography

The music-making of Australian cellist Benett Tsai has been described as “electrifying...flawless freshness” (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*) and “charismatic, heartfelt playing full of fluid intensity” (*Sydney Arts Guide*). Named a VC Artist on *The Violin Channel*, he gained recognition at the 2022 Grand Prix Emanuel Feuermann in Berlin, where he received both the Third Prize and Special Prize for the Best Haydn Concerto as the youngest entrant. The following year, he joined the roster of Young Concert Artists for management upon winning the 2023 YCA Susan Wadsworth International Auditions in New York, becoming a YCA Jacobs Fellow and receiving The Stern Young Artist Award. His subsequent recital was listed as one of the best debuts in 2024 by *New York Classical Review*, and he was most recently selected for the 25-26 Classeek Ambassador Programme based in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Since his mainstage debut at the age of thirteen, Benett has performed actively as a soloist and chamber musician. He has appeared with orchestras such as the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonia Lahti, Kammerphilharmonie Metamorphosen Berlin, Maryland Symphony Orchestra, Anchorage Symphony Orchestra, Australian Chamber Orchestra Academy, and the Canberra Symphony Orchestra. Conductors with whom he has collaborated include Esa-Pekka Salonen, Umberto Clerici, Joseph Bastian, Nicholas Milton, and Elizabeth Schulze.

Among other venues worldwide, Benett has been presented in recitals at The Kennedy Center (Washington D.C.), Berliner Philharmonie, Shanghai Oriental Arts Center, Kaufman Music Center (New York), City Recital Hall (Sydney), and Melbourne Recital Centre. He has also made appearances at the Verbier Festival, Rose Theater at Lincoln Center with Emanuel Ax, Musica Viva Australia, and the Morgan Library & Museum (New York). Notably, he was featured in the 2020 film, *The Way Forward*, where he played with pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet.

Highlights of the 25-26 season include a return to Shanghai Oriental Arts Center, in addition to further concerts with the Colgate University Orchestra, Classical Arts Society of Washington, Arizona Friends of Chamber Music, and Classeek (Switzerland). Joining *YCA on Tour*, he will also perform chamber music across North America, with engagements at The Kennedy Center, Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, Calgary ProMusica, UAB Alys Stephens Center, Ithaca College, and the Sarasota Artist Series Concerts.

Born in 2003, Benett began playing the cello at the age of five under the guidance of his uncle and teacher, Thomas Tsai. He currently studies with Clive Greensmith at The Colburn School in Los Angeles, where he holds a Bachelor of Music degree. In previous years, he also learned with Susan Blake and Li-Wei Qin. His other significant mentors include Ralph Kirshbaum, Steven Isserlis, and his pianist father, Joshua Tsai.

Benett plays on a 1719 Giuseppe Guarneri 'filius Andreae' cello, on loan to him from a generous benefactor.