



Benjamin Baker, violin

Benjamin Baker, a New Zealand native, has moved audiences around the world with his musicianship, with recent performances as far afield as Lebanon, Albania, Siberia, China, Australia, New Zealand, Colombia, Argentina, Venezuela, and throughout the United Kingdom and United States.

He has performed as soloist with the Royal Philharmonic, English Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, London Mozart Players, Bristol Metropolitan Orchestra, Sinfonia Cymru in Wales, National Children's Orchestra in Manchester, Auckland Philharmonia, Maui Pops Orchestra, South Carolina's Long Bay Symphony, Charleston Symphony, and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra. In 2017 he premiered a new Concerto 'Stranded' by Matthew Kaner for the European Commission's celebration of Europe Day at St. John's Smith Square.

Since winning 1st Prize at the 2016 YCA Susan Wadsworth International Auditions in New York and 3rd Prize at the Michael Hill Competition in New Zealand in 2017 Benjamin has established a strong international presence. Described by the *New York Times* as bringing "virtuosity, refinement and youthful exuberance" to his debut at Merkin Concert Hall, he is much sought after as soloist and chamber musician. Since his recital debuts on the Young Concert Artists Series at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. and at New York's Merkin Concert Hall, sponsored by the Peter Jay Sharp Prize, he has also given recitals and performed chamber music at Wigmore Hall, New York's Caramoor Center, Haydn's Ferry Chamber Music Series, New York's Morgan Library & Museum, Ithaca College, Evergreen Museum & Library, Ravinia Festival, Washington Performing Arts, Pepperdine University, Buffalo Chamber Music Society, and the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival.

Benjamin's recording "The Last Rose of Summer" reached #22 on the charts in its first week and was featured on Classic FM and BBC Radio 3, where he appears regularly. In 2021 Delphian Records released his recording with pianist Daniel Lehardt "1942" featuring works of Prokofiev, Copland, and Poulenc. As a follow up, Delphia Records released "1919: CODA" in 2023 featuring Benjamin and Daniel playing works by Janáček, Lili Boulanger, Debussy, and Elgar.

Highlights of Benjamin's 23-24 season include debuts with the London Philharmonic Orchestra playing Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante alongside violist Jordan Bak, BBC National Orchestra of Wales playing the Barber Concerto under Ryan Bancroft, and the world premiere of Matthew Kaner's Violin Concerto with BBC Scottish and Ryan Wigglesworth. As part of Young Concert Artists' special season finale performance Benjamin will also make an appearance at Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall in May 2024.

Benjamin's love of dance and combining music and movement have led him to performances with the Royal New Zealand Ballet in "Les Lutin" based on Bazzini's Caprice "La Ronde des Latin's" and as an ambassador for London Music Masters, he created and led a special project for young violinists with dancer Cheryl McChesney. He is currently working on a new project titled "Sei Solo" which will feature Nico Muhly's "A long Line" for Violin and electronics featuring dancer and choreographer James Pett.

Benjamin has returned to New Zealand to play concerts, appear on radio and television broadcasts and launch his own festival in Queenstown, NZ called *At the World's Edge Festival (AWE)*. During the 22-23 Season Benjamin launched AWE Overseas in NYC and London, offering a touring project bringing a piece of NZ music and culture

to different corners of the world. For his devotion to charities for children, he is grateful to be an Honorary Member of the Rotary Club of Port Nicholson.

Currently a resident of London, Benjamin studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School and with Natasha Boyarsky and Felix Andrievsky at the Royal College of Music, where he was awarded the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Rose Bowl graduation prize.

Benjamin plays a Giovanni Grancino from 1694 on generous loan from a Charitable Trust.