



James Baik, cello

Cellist **James Baik** has been described as an artist with “an undeniable authority,” and one possessing “a real warmth emerging in lyricism” by Belgian newspaper *Le Soir*, after his astounding performance at the 2021 Queen Elisabeth competition. First Prize Winner of the 2023 Young Concert Artists Susan Wadsworth International Auditions and recipient of the Paul A. Fish Memorial Prize and the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Prize, James is a YCA Jacobs Fellow and is managed worldwide by Young Concert Artists.

James was also a finalist at the 2019 Stulberg International String Competition and would go on to receive the first prize at the prestigious Irving M. Klein International Competition. He made his debut solo appearance in 2015 with the Houston Civic Symphony Orchestra and the Clear Lake Symphony in Saint-Saëns’ Cello Concerto No. 1. In 2018, James won the DePaul Concerto Competition, reached the finals at the Johansen International Competition in Washington D.C., and rounded the year by being named a YoungArts finalist. James was also awarded the grand prize at the Walgreens National Competition, resulting in a performance of the Schumann Cello Concerto with conductor Dr. Allen Dennis at Northwestern University.

Highlights from recent performances include the Dvořák Cello Concerto with the Colburn Orchestra, under the baton of Sir Andrew Davies at the Walt Disney Concert Hall, Haydn’s Cello Concerto in C Major with both the Orchestre Royal de Chambre de Wallonie with conductor Vahan Mardirossian and the Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle (NC), Brahms’ Double Concerto alongside violinist Gabrielle Després and the Peninsula Symphony under the baton of Mitchell Sardou Klein, Schumann’s Cello Concerto with the Brevard Music Center, and chamber music performances at the Ravinia Festival, the Music in the Vineyards Festival in Napa Valley, and Nevada Chamber Music Festival, where he was invited as a guest artist. In 2021, James, alongside his colleagues violinist Ray Ushikubo and pianist HyeJin Kim, performed the Beethoven Triple Concerto with the Pasadena Symphony under the baton of David Lockington, where he also performed a new work for two celli with the conductor as composer and cellist.

An active chamber musician, James plays as a regular member of the Galin Cello Quartet. He has worked with many notable musicians such as Noah Bendix-Balgley, David Finckel, Wu Han, Emanuel Ax, Arnaud Sussmann, Dmitri Murrath, Miriam Fried, Gary Hoffman, Tessa Lark, Gilbert Kalish, Bob McDonald, David McCarroll, members of the Tokyo String Quartet, the American String Quartet, the Pacifica String Quartet, and the Escher String Quartet. James attended the Meadowmount School of Music and the Aspen Music Festival, where he participated in the Finckel Wu Han Chamber Music Program, and was invited as a guest artist for the Music of the Vineyards Festival. Recently, James was a fellow at the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, where he gave widely praised performances of Rachmaninoff’s Cello Sonata and the Franck Sonata in A Major.

During the 24-25 season James will make concerto appearances with the Mobile Symphony alongside fellow YCA artists violinist Benjamin Baker and pianist Chaeyoung Park in performances of the Beethoven Triple Concerto, as well as Shostakovich’s 1st Cello Concerto with the Hamilton College Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, he will make recital and chamber music appearances with the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, BIG ARTS Sanibel Island, Buffalo Chamber Music Society, Hayden’s Ferry Chamber Music Series, as well as special appearances on the YCA series at The Morgan Library & Museum in NYC and YCA’s season finale concert at Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall.

Raised in Houston, Texas, James’ early education included studies with Houston Symphony Associate Principal Christopher French and with esteemed pedagogue Hans Jørgen Jensen in Chicago. James holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Colburn Conservatory of Music where he studied with Clive Greensmith.