

Alexander Ivashkin

Alexander Ivashkin began his music education in Moscow at the Gnessins Special School of Music for gifted students at the age of five, studying piano and cello.

It was Mstislav Rostropovich who suggested he choose the career of a solo cellist. Ivashkin has established an international reputation as an interpreter both of the standard repertoire and of contemporary music. He has appeared as soloist with leading conductors such as Rostropovich, Muti, Penderecki, Ozawa, Rozhdestvensky, Vladimir Jurowski, Temirkanov, Barshai, Lazarev and Furst. In chamber music he has collaborated with such musicians as Gidon Kremer, Shlomo Mintz, Isabelle van Keulen, Oleh Krysa, Dmitri Sitkovetsky, Boris Berman, Dmitri Alexeev, Arturo Pizzaro, Victoria Postnikova, Piers Lane and Irina Schnittke to name but a few. A selection of the leading orchestras with whom he has appeared as soloist would include the Russian State, Ukrainian State, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Bolshoi Theatre, Netherlands Philharmonic, RAI Torino, Australian ABC, New Zealand SO, Berlin, Hamburg, Montreal Soloists, Cape Philharmonic, Sofia Festival, BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic, London Chamber and Netherlands Chamber Orchestras, and the Moscow Studio for New Music.

Since 1995 Ivashkin has been Artistic Director of the Adam International Cello Competition and Festival in New Zealand. He also directs annual festivals in London, including the Rostropovich Memorial Festival in the Wigmore Hall and the VTB Capital International Cello Competition.

Alexander Ivashkin has given first performances and been the dedicatee of many works by contemporary composers. Along with Mstislav Rostropovich and Natalia Gutman he is one of the cellists for whom Alfred Schnittke composed. He has actively collaborated with composers such as Cage, Crumb, Kagel, Penderecki, Sculthorpe, Gubaidulina, Kancheli, Pärt, Shchedrin, Korndorf, Raskatov, Tarnopolski, MacMillan, Lyell Cresswell and Gillian Whitehead. A recording artist on the Chandos, BMG and Naxos labels, Ivashkin has to his credit award-winning recordings of the complete cello music of Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Roslavets, Tcherepnin, Schnittke and Kancheli.

He has taught at schools of music in Russia, the US, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, and currently is Professor of Music of the University of London and Head of Performance Studies at Goldsmiths College, University of London.

Recent career highlights have included USA performances of the two Shostakovich Cello Concertos; three of Gubaidulina's Cello Concertos at the BBC's Festival celebrating the composer in London, Holland and Italy (all in the presence of the composer); the Schumann Concerto in Utrecht and St Petersburg; the world premiere of a new version of Penderecki's Largo (Cello Concerto) under the composer's baton; Schnittke's Second Cello Concerto with the LPO under Vladimir Jurowski; as well as concerts, recordings and masterclasses in France, Germany, Greece, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Russia, and UK.

Alexander Ivashkin is also well known as a conductor, working with orchestras and choruses in Great Britain, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. He plays a Giuseppe Guarneri cello of 1710, courtesy of The Bridgewater Trust - as well as electric cello, viola de gamba, sitar and piano.