

Colburn Artists

James Baik, 'Cello



Cellist James Baik has been described as “an undeniable authority,” and possess “a real warmth emerging in lyricism... and displays mixture of sonic mastery and interiority,” by Belgian newspaper *Le Soir*, after his astounding performance at the 2021 Queen Elisabeth competition. Recently, James was 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-Saens’ 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 Baik rounded the year by being named a YoungArts finalist, participated at YoungArts Week in Miami and 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 and upcoming performances include the Dvorak 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 the Orchestre Royal de Chambre de Wallonie with conductor Vahan Mardirossian, a performance of Brahms’ Double Concerto alongside violinist Gabrielle Després and the Peninsula Symphony under the baton of Mitchell Sardou Klein, and chamber music performances at the Ravinia Festival, the Music in the Vineyards Festival in Napa Valley and Nevada Chamber Music Festival, where he is an invited 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 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 has 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 a widely praised performance of Rachmaninoff’s Cello Sonata.

Raised in Houston, Texas, James' early education included tutelage from Houston Symphony Associate Principle Christopher French and with esteemed pedagogue Hans Jørgen Jensen in Chicago. James is currently a Bachelor of Music candidate at the Colburn Conservatory of Music where he studies with Clive Greensmith.

(Biography current as of September 2022)