



ÉTIENNE GARA, violinist

Praised for the warm tone and expressiveness of his playing, French born violinist Étienne Gara has performed extensively worldwide, appearing as soloist in such renowned venues as the SOKA Performing Art Center and the Segerstrom Center for the Arts in the Greater Los Angeles Area, the Jordan Hall in Boston, the Marigny Theatre in Paris, the Wiener Saal and the Marmor Saal of the Mirabell Palace in Salzburg. Since making his orchestral solo debut in 2005 with the Savaria Symphony Orchestra in Hungary, he has continued his soloist career in Europe, the United States and Asia. His concerts have been broadcast in the USA, Hungary, Switzerland, France and Belgium.

Mr. Gara has been a frequent guest of international music festivals, including the Stavelot Festival in Belgium, the Aurora Festival in Sweden, the Thy Festival in Denmark and the Academy of Music of Lausanne where he was nominated laureate as part of one of the best violin-piano duos. He performed at the Tons Voisins and the Juventus Festival in France where he met the composer Eric Tanguy, who later wrote a piece for him. He was invited to participate in the Perlman Music Program in New York in 2009 and 2010, and joined Itzhak Perlman for the winter residency of the festival in Sarasota, FL and travels in Israel.

A 2010 laureate of the prestigious Fondation Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet, as well as a laureate of the Fifth International Chamber Music Ensemble competition in Boston, he is a winner of Sir Yehudi Menuhin's "Music Live Now" competition and of the 2014 and 2016 Beverly Hills Audition, and won Second Prize at the Raiffeisen Klassik Competition in Salzburg. The Lions Club of France honored him with a scholarship for their national "Young Talent" award. In 2005, he had the honor to be appointed concertmaster for the grand opening of the new Auditorium of the Mozarteum in Salzburg and since then, acts regularly as concertmaster for orchestras such as the Los Angeles Virtuosi Orchestra and the Kontrapunktus Chamber Orchestra. He also appears as guest principal violin with many ensembles in halls including the Disney Concert Hall and the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles.

A passionate chamber musician, Mr. Gara has performed with many renowned players such as Lucy Chapman, Rober Tapping, Jacob Koranyi, Julian Steckel, John Walz, Daniel Blumenthal, Plamena Mangova and Denis Pascal. As an advocate for the arts, he has collaborated with The American Contemporary Ballet, the Austin Eurythmy Ensemble, and appeared on screen in short and feature movies and stars in "Goodbye, You" and "Riptide". He recorded for Leonard Cohen and is the founder of the award winning Sunset Club Trio, an ensemble joining the forces of the violin, the electric guitar and the flamenco guitar in their own arrangements of the great classical repertoire. Mr. Gara is also the artistic director of the Open Academy Orchestra, in Los Angeles, that he conducts since 2016.

Born in Paris to a French mother and Hungarian father, Mr. Gara started playing the violin at the age of five. After studying in Paris, he continued his education at the Mozarteum University of Salzburg with Igor Ozim and Helmut Zehetmair. As an Erasmus scholarship recipient, he worked with Victor Tretiakov at the Musikhochschule of Cologne before completing his Performer Diploma with Mauricio Fuks at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. He earned his Master of Music at New England Conservatory under renowned pedagogue Donald Weilerstein and later joined world-renowned violinist Midori at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. He also worked closely with Irina Botchkova, Miriam Fried, Itzhak Perlman, Kim Kashkashian, Paul Katz, János Starker, Menahem Pressler, the Borromeo Quartet.

In 2014, he recorded on a 1714 Stradivarius for Media Hyperium3 a recital program of French music with pianist Sonia Achkar and in 2015, he was the concertmaster on the first album of the Kontrapunktus Chamber Orchestra.