NAREK HAKHNAZARYAN

Cellist & *Conductor*

Since winning First Prize and the Gold Medal at the XIV International Tchaikovsky Competition at just 22, cellist and conductor Narek Hakhnazaryan has established himself as one of the most captivating and sought-after musicians of his generation. Critics have described him as "dazzlingly brilliant" (The Strad) and "nothing short of magnificent" (San Francisco Chronicle), and after his debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Times declared, "His command of the instrument is extraordinary."

Hakhnazaryan is an Honored Artist of Armenia and a recipient of the Movses Khorenatsi Medal for "outstanding achievements in the field of culture."

He performs regularly in the world's most prestigious venues and has appeared with many of the world's leading orchestras, including the Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Orchestre de Paris, London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Finnish Radio Symphony, Helsinki Philharmonic, Barcelona Symphony, Sydney Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic and NHK Symphony, among many others.

He has collaborated with esteemed conductors such as Gergiev, Jurowski, Koopman, Alsop, Lintu, Petrenko, Sokhiev, Robertson, Honeck, Noseda, Pletnev, Fischer, Netopil, Spivakov and Guerrero. Hakhnazaryan has toured Spain with the WDR Symphony Orchestra and Saraste, the United States with the Estonian National Symphony and Järvi, and Japan with the Czech Philharmonic and Bělohlávek.

A former BBC New Generation Artist, Hakhnazaryan has performed with all the BBC orchestras and made a sensational debut at the BBC Proms. In 2017 the Wiener Konzerthaus named him a "Great Talent," presenting him in recital, chamber music and orchestral performances, including appearances with the Wiener Symphoniker under Hrůša. In 2025 he released his widely praised solo album *Chant du ménestrel* with the Wiener Symphoniker on the ARS Produktion label.

Alongside his career as a cellist, Hakhnazaryan is building a growing career as a conductor. He made his conducting debut at Hamburg's Laeiszhalle with the Neue Philharmonie Hamburg, and in Armenia he has led critically acclaimed opera productions of Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice* and Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*. In the 2025/26 season he toured Spain with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra as both soloist and conductor and also conducted the orchestra at the Wiener Konzerthaus. He also conducted Borodin's Symphony No. 2 with the Montenegrin Symphony Orchestra and appeared on the podium with the Sinfonietta de Braga in Portugal.

Highlights of the 2026/27 season include Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 at the opening of Emir Kusturica's Kustendorf festival in Serbia; the opening concert of the International Flute Festival in Yerevan, Armenia, with flutists Silvia Careddu, Vincent Lucas and Felix Renggli; debuts with the Anima Musicae Chamber Orchestra in Budapest and the Subotica Symphony Orchestra in Serbia; and a return to the Vienna Chamber Orchestra for concerts in Switzerland and at the Wiener Konzerthaus. As a cellist, he performs the Elgar Cello Concerto with ORCAM in Madrid, gives a recital with Lera Auerbach in Dortmund, and returns to the Wiener Konzerthaus for recital and chamber music.

In 2024 he founded a chamber orchestra in Armenia, where he serves as Artistic Director and Chief Conductor. Under his leadership, the orchestra performs in Armenia and abroad, bringing Armenian and international music to audiences around the world.

A passionate chamber musician, he has performed at leading festivals such as Verbier, Marlboro, Ravinia and Aspen, and has collaborated with artists including Trifonov, Maisky, Kozhukhin, Pressler, Levit, Repin and Matsuev. He is a founding member of the Z.E.N. Trio with violinist Esther Yoo and pianist Zhang Zuo, which has toured North America, Europe, China and Australia and released two acclaimed albums on Deutsche Grammophon.

Beyond the concert hall, Hakhnazaryan has contributed to film, recording soundtracks and appearing in award-winning productions including Kusturica's *On the Milky Road*, *Yasha and Brezhnev* and the animated documentary *Aurora's Sunrise*.

Mentored from the age of 14 by the legendary Mstislav Rostropovich, Hakhnazaryan studied at the Moscow State Conservatory with Aleksey Seleznyov and earned his Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory under Laurence Lesser. He began studying the cello at the age of six at the Sayat-Nova School of Music in Yerevan with Zareh Sarkisyan.

His early achievements include First Prize at the 2006 Aram Khachaturian International Competition in Armenia, First Prize at the 2006 Johansen International Competition for Young String Players, and First Prize at the 2008 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, which led to his debuts at the Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall at the age of 19.

Narek Hakhnazaryan plays exclusively on Larsen Strings.

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