

ELIAH SAKAKUSHEV-VON BISMARCK

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Eliah Sakakushev-von Bismarck enjoys a versatile career as cellist, chamber musician, soloist, orchestra lead cellist, teacher and artistic producer. His numerous concert appearances and tours have made him feel a world citizen, being often on the stage in Europe, Israel, Brazil, Argentina, the USA, Russia, Japan, New Zealand and Australia. Born in Bulgaria, Eliah was admitted to the Special School for Musicians in his hometown Plovdiv at the age of 7. Ten years later he moved on to study at the Vienna University of Music. It was in the German city of Mannheim, however, that he obtained his Orchestra Diploma and Concert Certificate (*Konzertexamen*) under the guidance of Prof. Michael Flaksman. Eliah also studied at the Menuhin Academy in Switzerland. An inspirational figure in his development as musician and cellist was the late Russian Cellist Victoria Yagling. Encounters and masterclasses with M. Rostropovich, Gary Hoffman, Arto Noras, Frans Helmerson, Siegfried Palm, Anner Bylsma and other leading cellists influenced Eliah's playing. Honoured with various national and international prizes, including the Grand Premio at the Chamber Music Competition in Varenna, Italy and a special prize at the Mendelssohn Competition in Berlin, Eliah was also recipient of the *Wilhelm-Müller-Stiftung*, Mannheim and the *Oscar & Vera-Ritter-Stiftung*, Hamburg grants.

Since 2003 Eliah has been the principal cellist of the Orquesta Filarmonica de Malaga (Spain), the Sao Paulo State Symphony Orchestra (Brazil), the Philharmonic Orchestra of Regensburg (Germany), as well as the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra (New Zealand). He has also collaborated with the Basque National Orchestra, (Spain) and the Philharmonic Orchestra of Minas Gerais (Brazil). With the Festival String Orchestra I Palpiti Eliah performed frequently in venues such as Disney Hall (Los Angeles) and Carnegie Hall (New York). An avowed chamber musician, Eliah has appeared in numerous formations at various festivals throughout the world, such as *Estate Musicale a Portogruaro*, *Ascoli Piceno Music Festival* (Italy), *Kultursommer Rheinland-Pfalz*, (Germany), *Yokosuka Bay* (Japan), *West-Siberia-East Music Festival* (Russia), *Eilat Chamber Music Festival*, *Felicja Blumenthal* (Israel), *Adam Chamber Music Festival* in Nelson (New Zealand), as well as at the *Ravinia Festival* in Chicago and *Young Artists International* in Los Angeles. He has shared stage with such musicians as violinists Dora Schwarzberg, Ida Haendel, Roman Nodel, Felix Ayo, as well as many of the leading young soloists of his generation. Significant part of his annual chamber music agenda occupies the festival *Musikfest Schloss Wonnfurt* in Bavaria, which he has been running as artistic director together with his wife Caroline von Bismarck since 2003. Eliah was also the creator and artistic director of the *Festival Sefarad* - a production of *Centro Sefarad Israel* in the Spanish capital Madrid.

Eliah has recorded the entire work for cello and piano by Robert Schumann and another CD with selected suites J. S. Bach. A portrait CD of contemporary German composer F.-F. Kaern in cooperation with the German Radio *Deutschland Radio Kultur* was released in 2000. Eliah's concert appearances have been broadcasted by *Deutschland Radio Kultur*, *Classical Arts Showcase* (USA), *Radio Cultura* (Brazil), *Israel Kol haMusika*, the Bulgarian National Radio and *Radio New Zealand Concert*.

Enjoying a growing popularity as a teacher, Eliah started off as a faculty member of the Feuermann-Conservatory, the Cello School of the prestigious Kronberg Academy in Germany. Since then he has been invited to lecture and tutor at the Auckland University, the Royal Irish Academy of Music (Dublin), the New Zealand School of Music (Wellington), Monash University (Melbourne), the Otago University (Dunedin), as well as at the Auckland String Quartet Summer School. He has been involved with the Education Outreach Programmes of the *Orquestra Sinfonica de Barra Mansa* in Brazil, as well as the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra.

Eliah plays a master cello by French luthier Leon Bernardel, Paris 1899. He dominates six languages and lives in Auckland.

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