

## LONG BIOGRAPHY

### **Recipient of the 2015-2016 McKnight Artist Fellowship for Performing Musicians administered by MacPhail Center for Music**

Cellist **Wilhelmina Smith** made her solo debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra while a student at the Curtis Institute of Music. She has since forged a versatile musical career based on the strength of her beautiful sound, commitment to a vast repertoire and impassioned performances marked by intelligence and integrity. Hailed by the New York Times as “winningly individual,” her performances have received critical acclaim: Strad magazine described her performance of the Bach C minor Suite as “memorable [...] an intelligent and individual reading [in which] there was an abundance of ideas.” She has performed as a solo recitalist across the US and in Japan, and as a soloist with orchestras in the US and abroad. As a chamber musician she has performed with musicians such as Paul Tortelier, Yo-Yo Ma, Joshua Bell, Pamela Frank, Dawn Upshaw, Benita Valente and members of the Guarneri, Juilliard, Brentano, Miami, Borromeo and Galimir String Quartets in major venues across the US and Europe.

In September 2000, Ms. Smith was invited by Esa-Pekka Salonen to perform as guest principal cellist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic for the opening week of the season, and in the fall of 2004 she was invited to perform as guest principal cellist with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. In recent seasons, she has been soloist with international orchestras such as the Ural Philharmonic Orchestra in Russia and the Orquesta Millennium in Guatemala. She won the Nathan and Doris Patz prize in the 1997 International Leonard Rose Cello Competition. Strings magazine presented her in a solo recital at the New York Society for Ethical Culture. In March 2003, she performed a recital with marimbist Makoto Nakura in Tokyo and Kobe, Japan that was broadcast nationally on NHK (Japan’s national public television).

Her performances of contemporary works for solo cello have won particular praise – Henri Dutilleux himself proclaimed as “outstanding” her performance of his piece for solo cello. A commitment to the future of music has led her to participate in important premieres and to develop working relationships with major and emerging composers of our time. In 2010 she collaborated with Esa-Pekka Salonen for a performance of his cello concerto, “Mania”, and in 2011 gave the US premiere of his solo cello piece, “Knock, Breathe, Shine.” She has also worked with composers such as George Crumb, Henri Lazarof, Ned Rorem, George Perle, Osvaldo Golijov, Derek Bermel, Jennifer Higdon, Eric Zivian, Robert Cuckson, Bruce Adolphe and many others.

Ms. Smith is much in demand by chamber music groups and festivals throughout the country. She has been a guest artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Boston Chamber Music Society, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Chamber Music Palisades and the Musicians from Marlboro touring program. La Jolla Music Society SummerFest, Caramoor, El Paso Chamber Music Festival are among the many festivals in which she has participated, and will make her debut appearance at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival this summer. Ms. Smith is the founder and Artistic Director of Salt Bay Chamberfest on the coast of Maine, now in its twentieth year, and has been Artistic Director of the Pensacola “ClassicFest” in Florida since 1997.

In addition to being a former member of the Mannes Trio (Faculty Artists-in-Residence at Mannes College The New School for Music in New York), in the summer of 1999, Ms. Smith joined several internationally acclaimed musicians to form Music from Copland House – an innovative chamber ensemble that features the music of Aaron Copland, his influences, his contemporaries, and his legacy. In 2005 she joined violinist Jennifer Koh and violist Hsin-Yun Huang in forming the Variation String Trio.

Ms. Smith’s solo CD of sonatas by Britten and Schnittke with pianist Thomas Sauer was released on the Arabesque label in December of 2006. She has also released numerous recordings of chamber music, including the complete chamber works of Aaron Copland (Arabesque) and works by Sebastian Currier (Koch), John Musto (Koch) and Aaron Jay Kernis (Koch). In addition, she has performed frequently with Sting and has performed on recent recordings for both Sting and Bruce Springsteen. She currently lives in Saint Paul, Minnesota with her husband Mark Mandarano and children August and Giovanna.

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