

Alexandre Da Costa

Violin

Winner of the 2012 Juno Award, Alexandre Da Costa was born in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He showed an uncommon interest for both the violin and piano at a very early age. By the age of nine, he had the astonishing ability to perform his first concerts with stunning virtuosity on both instruments, which brought him recognition as a musical prodigy. His chosen professional career as a violinist began very early and, after encouragement from Charles Dutoit, he was soon performing regularly as soloist with orchestra as well as in recital.

At age 18, he obtained a Master's Degree in violin and a First Prize from the Conservatoire de Musique du Québec. Concurrently, he also obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Piano Interpretation from the University of Montreal. Subsequently, told he had to choose one instrument, he studied in Madrid at the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofia with a legendary violin teacher who became his mentor, Zakhar Bron (whose previous students famously include the likes of Maxim Vengerov and Vadim Repin). He later pursued post-graduate studies at the Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst of Vienna, Austria, with G. Schulz, C. Altenburger and R. Honeck. Among the many other prizes that followed were the Sylva Gelber Foundation Award from the Canada Council for the Arts, and in 2003 the Council's Musical Instrument Bank decided to go further and award him the "1689 Baumgartner Stradivarius". In 2010, he received the prestigious Virginia-Parker Prize, one of Canada's highest cultural distinctions.

Winner of many national and international first prizes, Alexandre Da Costa has given over a thousand concerts and recitals throughout North America, Europe, Australia and Asia. He has performed the major halls of Vienna (Musikverein), Berlin (Philharmonie), New York (Carnegie Hall), Beijing (Poly-Theater) and beyond. He has played as guest soloist with more than a 100 different orchestras including London's Royal Philharmonic, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the Berlin Symphony, the Dresden Philharmonic, the Bergen Philharmonic, the BBC Concert Orchestra, the Prague Philharmonic, the National TV and Radio Orchestra of Spain and the Vienna Symphony. Conductors he has played under include Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Leonard Slatkin, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Vasily Petrenko, Matthias Bamert, John Axelrod and Peter Oundjian. His live performance broadcasts have aired on BBC, West-Deutscher Rundfunk (WDR), CBC, NPR, ORF and many others. Da Costa has given the world premieres of works by Elliott Carter, Michael Daugherty, Lorenzo Palomo, Jean Lesage and Airat Ichmouratov. Alexandre Da Costa is also active as a chamber player and recently recorded the complete Brahms sonatas (to be released in 2014), alongside pianist Wonny Song. Among Da Costa's chamber music colleagues have been Menahem Pressler, Matt Haimowitz, Danny Driver and Hélène Mercier.

As a recording artist, he has more than 20 CDs on, variously, Warner Classics, JVC/Victor, ATMA, XXI-21 Records and Octave/Universal, among them the world premiere recordings of the Violin Concertos by Portuguese composers Luis de Freitas Branco and Armando José Fernandes. In 2012, he won the JUNO award for "Classical Album of the Year" for his recording of the concertos by American composer Michael Daugherty, with the Montreal Symphony under Pedro Halffter for Warner Classics. The Washington Post selected his recording of the Beethoven concerto with Klezmer cadenzas by A. Ichmouratov as CD of the Year. He now records for Warner Classics International and Acacia Classics/Universal Music Group.

In addition to his concert schedule, Alexandre Da Costa is Professor and Head of Strings at the Edith Cowan University, and regularly gives masterclasses at various universities and conservatories around the world. He was also named Musical Development Director for Canimex, a company gathering an impressive collection of fine instruments for the benefit of talented artists, as well as Artistic Director of the Laurentians Classical Festival of Canada. Alexandre Da Costa now plays a "Guarneri del Gesù" of 1730 and a Sartory bow, loaned by Canimex.

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