Rayfield Allied

Pieter Wispelwey

Cello



"Cello playing of incomparable technical and musical accomplishment."

Hugh Canning,
The Sunday Times

Pieter Wispelwey is equally at ease on the modern or period cello. His acute stylistic awareness, combined with a truly original interpretation and a phenomenal technical mastery, has won the hearts of critics and public alike in repertoire ranging from JS Bach to Gubaidulina, Dutilleux and works composed for him.

Wispelwey's career spans five continents and he has appeared as soloist with many of the world's leading orchestras including the Boston Symphony, Dallas Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, NHK Symphony, Yomiuri Nippon, Tokyo Philharmonic, Sapporo Symphony, Sydney Symphony, Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo, London Philharmonic, Hallé Orchestra, BBC Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Academy of Ancient Music, Gewandhaus Orchester Leipzig, Danish National Radio Symphony, Budapest Festival Orchestra and Camerata Salzburg.

Conductor collaborations include Ivan Fischer, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Herbert Blomstedt, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Jeffrey Tate, Kent Nagano, Otto Tausk, Sir Neville Marriner, Philippe Herreweghe, Vassily Sinaisky, Vladimir Jurowski, Louis Langrée, Marc Minkowski, Ton Koopman and Sir Roger Norrington.

With regular recital appearances in London (Wigmore Hall, Kings Place), Paris (Châtelet, Louvre), Amsterdam (Concertgebouw, Muziekgebouw), Brussels (Bozar), Berlin (Konzerthaus), Vienna (Konzerthaus, Musikverein), Milan (Società del Quartetto), Buenos Aires (Teatro Colon), Sydney (The Utzon Room), Seoul (Arts Center), Tokyo (Toppan Hall), Los Angeles (Walt Disney Hall) and New York (Lincoln Center), Wispelwey has established a reputation as one of the most charismatic recitalists on the circuit.

In the 2026/2027 season, Wispelwey tours Australia giving three concerts at Melbourne Recital Centre which trilogies Britten's Cello Suites and makes a further appearance at Sydney's Bennelong Restaurant with pianist Piers Lane. He tours the US East Coast in March 2027 in recital. Wispelwey tours Taiwan, as well as returning to Japan's Toppan Hall in 2027. He also appears at recital venues including Wigmore Hall, SPOT Gronningen, the University of Tübingen, and Bamberg Muziekverein where he will give his renowned complete rendition of Bach's Suites.

Wispelwey's performances of the complete Bach Suites in a single evening form a major strand of his recital appearances, an accomplishment that has attracted major critical acclaim throughout Europe and the US. "On paper it is a feat requiring brilliance, stamina and perhaps a bit of hubris. In practice Mr. Wispelwey proved himself impressively up to the challenge, offering performances as eloquent as they were provocative" (New York Times). With a number of "complete" sets by other composers in his repertoire, he has also followed the complete Bach Suites with a recital of those by Britten, and extended the venture to its greatest proportion yet when he played the complete Bach Suites, Beethoven's complete works for cello and piano, and the two cello sonatas by Brahms over the course of three consecutive evenings at Melbourne Recital Centre as part of their Great Performers Series.

Together with Paolo Giacometti, Wispelwey is the recipient of the 2019 Brahmspreis in recognition of the duo's groundbreaking interpretations of the composer's music, which culminated in an exciting recording venture committing the complete duo works by Schubert and Brahms to disc. The final instalment of the 6 CDs was released in May 2019 by Evil Penguin Records Classic.

Pieter Wispelwey's impressive discography of about 50 albums, available on Channel Classic, Onyx and EPR, has attracted major international awards. As well as the complete Schubert and Brahms, he has released three recordings of the complete Bach Suites, and his recent recording of Weinberg's Concertino received the German Record Critics Award. In 2023, he released two albums In Memoriam, dedicated to his son Dorian, who tragically died in 2022. The first of these is a rerelease of the three greatest Schubert Violin-Piano pieces and the Trockne Blumen Variations, Schubert having played a great role in Dorian's life. The second, the Scordatura album, features two works in darker, alternative tunings: Bach's Fifth Suite and Kodaly's Sonata. A 35-disc retrospective box set was released in November 2024, compiling all of Wispelwey's recordings for Channel Classics between 1990 and 2009, an extraordinary body of work spanning solo repertoire, major concertos, chamber music, and contemporary works, and showcasing long-standing collaborations with artists such as Paul Komen, Paolo Giacometti, Dejan Lazić, and conductor Iván Fischer.

Recent highlights include duo recitals with Paolo Giacometti at Teatro Colon (Buenos Aires) and Villa Papendorf, appearances at the Cello Biënnale Amsterdam, the International M. K. Čiurlionis Music Festival and Toppan Hall (Tokyo), performances with the Orquestra Metropolitana de Lisboa as part of Festival Paulo Gaio Lima, and with the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra.

Born in Haarlem, The Netherlands, Wispelwey studied with Dicky Boeke and Anner Bylsma in Amsterdam and later with Paul Katz in the USA and William Pleeth in the UK. Pieter is Professor of Cello at Robert Schumann Musikhochschule Düsseldorf and the Conservatorium van Amsterdam. He plays on a 1760 JB Guadagnini cello and a 1710 Barak Norman baroque cello.

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For updated versions please contact
info@rayfieldallied.com

Rayfield Allied
9-12 The Stableyard
Broomgrove Road
London SW9 9TL
www.rayfieldallied.com
E-mail info@rayfieldallied.com
Telephone +44 (0) 20 3 176 5500

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