

Lara St. John

www.larastjohn.com

Canadian-born violinist Lara St. John has been described as “something of a phenomenon” by *The Strad* and a “high-powered soloist” by *The New York Times*.

She has performed as soloist with the orchestras of Cleveland, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, the Boston Pops, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, NDR Symphony, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Strasbourg Philharmonic, Bournemouth Symphony, Camerata Ireland, Belgrade Symphony, Amsterdam Symphony, and the Akbank Chamber Orchestra in Turkey, among others.

Lara has also performed with the Queensland Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony, ACO², Auckland Philharmonia, Tokyo Symphony, Kyoto Symphony, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic, China Philharmonic, Hangzhou Symphony and Shanghai Symphony.

She has traveled to Latin America for appearances with the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela, the São Paulo Symphony, Rio de Janeiro’s Orquestra Sinfonica Brasileira, Orquestra Filarmônica de Minas Gerais, Orquestra Sinfónica Nacional del Ecuador, Orquestra Sinfónica Nacional de México, the SODRE in Montevideo, and the Sociedad Filarmónica de Lima in Peru.

Recitals in major concert halls have included New York, Boston, San Francisco, Ravinia, Wolf Trap, Washington, D.C., Prague, Berlin, Toronto, Montreal, Bogotá, Lima and the Forbidden City. Lara has commissioned or premiered new works by an array of prominent composers, including Matthew Hindson, Martin Kennedy, John Corigliano, Gene Pritsker, Serouj Kradjian, Tarik O’Regan and John Psathas.

Upcoming performances will include the Filarmónica de Buenos Aires, the Estonian National Symphony and the Royal Conservatory in Toronto.

The *Los Angeles Times* wrote, “Lara St. John happens to be a volcanic violinist with a huge, fabulous tone that pours out of her like molten lava. She has technique to burn and plays at a constant high heat.”

Lara owns and runs her own label, Ancalagon, which she founded in 1999. Her recording of *Bach: The Six Sonatas & Partitas for Violin Solo* was the best-selling double album on iTunes in 2007. Her 2008 world premiere recording of Matthew Hindson’s Violin Concerto prompted *Gramophone* to write, “It’s the sort of work

that should get audiences running, not walking, back to concert halls on new-music nights.”

In 2009, American Record Guide said of her Vivaldi/Piazzolla disc with the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra: “I can imagine no suaver, more atmospheric performance.” Her *Mozart* recording with The Knights won a Juno Award in 2011.

In 2014, her Schubert album with Berlin Philharmonic principal harpist Marie-Pierre Langlamet, principal cellist Ludwig Quandt and soprano Anna Prohaska was chosen as one of “the best CDs of spring” by *Der Tagesspiegel*, and *MDR Figaro* recommended it for its “boundless enchantment.”

Her 2016 release of *Shiksa*, an album of reimagined folk music, with pianist Matt Herskowitz, received a five-star review from *All About Jazz*: “Music like this is beyond imagination and talent. It exists only in the loosely-held molecules found on the razor’s edge of creation.” Her *Key of A* recording of sonatas by Beethoven and Franck in 2019 prompted *Audiophile Audition* to write, “You will want this disc; you need this disc, and it provides an hour of exceptional pleasure and illuminating insight into the worlds of two very different composers.”

In 2022, she released *she/her/hers*, an album of solo violin works written by women. *The Wall Street Journal* praised it for broadening the classical music canon and noted that “the composers’ varied cultural moorings yield a striking breadth of accents.”

Lara has produced, edited and performed in more than 30 music videos. Among these, “Czardashian Rhapsody” won “best music video” at the Toronto International Short Film Festival in 2017.

In 2019, Lara revealed to reporters at *The Philadelphia Inquirer* that she had been abused and raped by a professor at the Curtis Institute of Music when she was 14 years old, and that the institution subsequently covered up the crimes. As a result of the *Inquirer* article, she heard from many other survivors of abuse at the hands of music teachers, conductors and colleagues. She is now in the process of making a documentary film on this subject.

In 2021 Lara was invested with the Order of Canada by the Governor General of Canada on behalf of Queen Elizabeth, for service to society and innovations that “ignite our imaginations.”

Additionally in 2021, she programmed and produced the Atterbury House Sessions, a free, live-streamed series of 12 concerts celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Atterbury House, an iconic architectural gem on the Upper East Side of New York City. She initiated the series to provide an outlet for her colleagues in light of the daunting challenges posed to the performing arts by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lara has been featured in *People*, *US News and World Report*, on CNN's "Showbiz Today," NPR's "All Things Considered," the CBC, the BBC, in a Bravo! special: "Live at the Rehearsal Hall," and twice on the cover of *Strings* magazine.

She began playing the violin when she was two years old. She made her first appearance as soloist with orchestra at age four, and her European debut with the Gulbenkian Orchestra when she was 10. She toured Spain, France, Portugal and Hungary at ages 12 and 13 and entered the Curtis Institute at 13. She pursued further studies at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the Mannes College of Music and the New England Conservatory. Her teachers have included Felix Galimir and Joey Corpus.

Lara owns and performs on the 1779 "ex-Salubue" by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini. She is fluent in English, French and Spanish.