



## Bion Tsang

(Pronounced BEE-on SANG)

### PROGRAM BIOGRAPHY

Cellist **Bion Tsang** has been internationally recognized as one of the outstanding instrumentalists of his generation: among his many honors are an Avery Fisher Career Grant, an MEF Career Grant and the Bronze Medal in the IX International Tchaikovsky Competition. Mr. Tsang earned a Grammy nomination for his performance on the PBS special *A Company of Voices: Conspirare in Concert* (Harmonia Mundi).

Mr. Tsang has appeared as soloist with such orchestras as the New York, Mexico City, Moscow, Busan and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestras, the National, American, Pacific, Delaware and Atlanta Symphony Orchestras, the Saint Paul and Stuttgart Chamber Orchestras, the Louisville Orchestra and the Taiwan National Orchestra. Other highlights include making his solo debuts at Orchestra Hall in Chicago with Zubin Mehta and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, and at the Esplanade in Boston with the Longwood Symphony Orchestra. He also gave the U.S. premiere of the Enescu *Symphonie Concertante*, Op. 8 with the American Symphony Orchestra in Avery Fisher Hall and the U.S. premiere of Tan Dun's *Crouching Tiger Concerto for Cello Solo and Chamber Orchestra* at Atlanta's Symphony Hall.

As a chamber musician, Mr. Tsang has collaborated with such artists as violinists James Ehnes, Pamela Frank, Nai-Yuan Hu, Jaime Laredo, Cho-Liang Lin, Anne Akiko Meyers and Chee Yun, violist Michael Tree, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, bassist Gary Karr and pianist Leon Fleisher. He has been a frequent guest artist of the Boston Chamber Music Society, Brooklyn Chamber Music Society, Chamber Music International of Dallas, Fort Worth Chamber Music Society, Da Camera of Houston, Camerata Pacifica of Los Angeles and Bargemusic in New York and performed at such festivals as Marlboro Music Festival, the Cape Cod, Tucson, Portland and Seattle Chamber Music Festivals, the Bard Festival, Bravo! Colorado, Music in the Vineyards and the Laurel Festival of the Arts, where he served as Artistic Director for ten years.

Mr. Tsang's discography includes three live concert recordings, each captured at Jordan Hall in Boston: *Beethoven: Sonatas and Variations for Cello and Piano* (Artek), *Brahms: Cello Sonatas and Four Hungarian Dances* (Artek), and *Bion Tsang & Adam Neiman: Live at Jordan Hall* (BHM). In 2017, Tsang released *The Blue Rock Sessions* (BHM), featuring eighteen virtuoso miniatures for cello and piano, with accompanying individual videos shot by Rodanti Films at the Blue Rock Artist Ranch and Studio in Wimberly, TX. In 2019, he released *Dvořák/Enescu Cello Concertos* (SONY Classical) with conductor Scott Yoo and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. In 2021, Tsang released *Bach Cello Suites* (SONY Classical), recorded at Bastyr Chapel in Seattle, WA, on the 1713 "Bass of Spain" Antonio Stradivari cello from the Fulton Collection. His latest album, *Cantabile* (Universal Music Group), with Yoo and the RSNO, was released in 2023.

A versatile collaborator, Mr. Tsang was featured on the soundtrack to *Recapturing Cuba: An Artists Journey*, a PBS documentary by Trinity Films, winning two Gold Medals—Director's Choice and Artistic Excellence—at the Park

City Film Music Festival, coincident to the Sundance Film Festival. He was a featured guest artist on the KLRU-TV and PBS television production, *A Company of Voices: Conspirare in Concert*, filmed in Dell Hall at the Long Center for the Performing Arts in Austin, and aired nationally on PBS stations during their March 2009 pledge drives. Tsang has also been featured on KLRU-TV's *In Context* recorded in the *Austin City Limits* studio, the first time classical musicians appeared in that space. A frequent collaborator with the Hong Kong City Contemporary Dance Company, he has performed solo cello onstage alongside the dancers in productions of *There, After...* (Kodaly Op. 8 Solo Sonata) and *Plaza X* (Bach Solo Suites). Tsang has been featured twice on the PBS Great Performances television docuseries *Now Hear This* in episodes "Beethoven's Ghost" (2021) and "Schumann: Genius and Madness" (2023), which includes music and video footage from the making of *Cantabile* in Glasgow, Scotland.

Mr. Tsang made his professional debut at age eleven in two concerts with Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic. That same year he returned to perform two more concerts with Mehta and the Philharmonic. One of these performances was broadcast worldwide on the CBS *Festival of Lively Arts* television series. While still in his teens, he became the youngest cellist ever to receive a Gregor Piatigorsky Memorial Prize and the youngest recipient ever of an Artists International Award. He was also chosen as a Finalist of the NFAA's Arts Recognition and Talent Search and subsequently as a Presidential Scholar in the Arts. At age nineteen, Tsang became the youngest cellist to win a prize in the VIII International Tchaikovsky Competition. He has been featured on America Online as CultureFinder's "Star Find of the Week," on the Internet Cello Society as "Artist of the Month," and most recently in print in the book *21st-Century Cellists*.

Born in Michigan of Chinese parents, Bion Tsang began piano studies at age six and cello at age seven. The following year, he entered The Juilliard School. Tsang received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard University and his Master of Musical Arts degree from Yale University, where he studied with Aldo Parisot. His other principal cello teachers have included Ardyth Alton, Luis Garcia-Renart, William Pleeth, Channing Robbins, and Leonard Rose.

Mr. Tsang resides in Austin, TX, where he is Division Head of Strings and holds the Joe R. & Teresa Lozano Long Chair in Cello at the Sarah and Ernest Butler School of Music at The University of Texas at Austin. He was the recipient of the Texas Exes Teaching Award after just his first year of service and soon after was named "Instrumentalist of the Year" by the Austin Critics Table. He has also served as visiting professor at Indiana University in Bloomington. In his spare time, Bion helps his family run the Paul J. Tsang Foundation, a nonprofit organization named in honor of Bion's father and formed to help facilitate educational or career opportunities for promising students and professionals in the arts and sciences. Most of all, he enjoys spending time with his three children: Bailey, Henry and Maia.

Mr. Tsang plays on a Wayne Burak workbench series cello made in April 2011.

[www.biontsang.com](http://www.biontsang.com)

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