

Santiago Cañón Valencia, Second Prize Cello

2012 Johansen International Competition for Young String Players

At the age of 16, **Santiago Cañón Valencia** won **Second Prize Cello** and \$7,000 at the **2012 Johansen International Competition (JIC) for Young String Players** in Washington, DC. He was born in Bogotá, Colombia in May 1995. He began studying cello at the age of 4 under the supervision of his mother, with formal studies for the next 8 years with Polish cellist Maestro Henryk Zarzycki in Bogotá, Colombia.

Mr. Cañón Valencia made his debut as a soloist playing the Vivaldi Cello Concerto with the Bogota Philharmonic at the age of 6. He has performed with major orchestras many times since, including the Haydn D Major Cello Concerto at age 9, the Dvorak Cello Concerto at age 12, and the Shostakovich Cello Concerto at age 14. In 2009 and 2012 he was identified as a Young Talent at the Third and Sixth Cartagena International Music Festivals.

Mr. Cañón Valencia was accepted to compete in the Fifth Carlos Prieto International Cello Competition in Morelia, Mexico (11 years old), the Seventh Adam International Music Cello Competition (NZ) (13 years old), and the 2010 Beijing International Music Cello Competition (15 years old), in which he was joint top prize winner. The upper age limit of these competitions is 30 to 34 years old, pitting him against far more experienced cellists. Nevertheless, at age 11 he received one of the few prizes in the Mexico competition, and won 2 of the 7 prizes in the Adam International Competition, at 13 years old.

In December of 2011 (16 years old), Mr. Cañón Valencia won the first prize at the Gisborne International Music Competition 2011 (NZ) and in March 2012 won First Prize at the National Concerto Competition, Christchurch, NZ. He has played as soloist with the main orchestras in Colombia; Bogotá Philharmonic, Medellín Philharmonic and the National Symphony Orchestra of Colombia. Overseas, he has played with HanngZhou Philharmonic Orchestra in Beijing, China, Auckland Chamber Orchestra, Opus Orchestra, Trust Waikato Symphony Orchestra and The New Zealand Youth Orchestra.

Mr. Cañón Valencia gave the Premier Performance of the Gulda Cello Concerto in Auckland in May 2012 with The Auckland Chamber Orchestra. He will play the Elgar Cello Concerto with the Victoria Orchestra in Melbourne, Australia in October 2012.



He is currently studying at the University of Waikato under James Tennant, in a special new ‘Soloist Stream’ designed to cater to exceptional talent. His studies are sponsored by the Sir Edmund Hillary Scholarship. In 2012, he finished recording his first CD with Solo Cello works by composers of the 20th century: Kodaly, Ginastera, Ligeti and Cassadó.

Mr. Cañón Valencia has played for a number of world-famous musicians, including Yo-Yo Ma, Andres Diaz, Gary Hoffman, Philippe Müller, Pieter Wispelwey, Aldo Parisot, Alban Gerhardt, and many others and shared the stage with Li-Wei Qin, Philippe Müller, Alisa Weilerstein and Andres Diaz, among others.

Mr. Cañón Valencia is sponsored by the “Mayra and Edmundo Esquenazi” Scholarship through Salvi Foundation, Bogotá, Colombia. One of his cellos was gifted to him by the renowned cellist Andrés Diaz.