

«Van der Heijden pulls out beautifully moulded lyricism by the yard» – Gramophone

Admired for her captivating sonority and creative programming, Laura van der Heijden has emerged as one of the leading cellists of her generation. Her first album with Chandos Records, «Pohádka» was released in 2022 to critical acclaim.

Highlights of the coming season include touring with the Brno Philharmonic (Martinů), BBC Symphony at the Barbican as part of the George Walker «Total Immersion» project conducted by Alpesh Chauhan, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, BBC Scottish with the World Premiere of a new work by Cheryl Frances-Hoad, and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. In 2023, she will tour the US with the Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective, and is also Artist in Focus at King's Place, London performing in two contrasting chamber music recitals and CPE Bach with the Aurora Orchestra. She also gives solo and chamber recitals at Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Wigmore Hall, Cheltenham Music Festival and at the Bad Kissingen Festival as part of a trio ensemble.

Her engagements in recent years include concerts with leading orchestras such as Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony and BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Royal and BBC Philharmonic Orchestras, as well as the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, European Union Chamber and English Chamber Orchestras, New Zealand Symphony, BBC Concert Orchestra at the 2018 BBC Proms, and with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in the opening concert of the inaugural BBC Proms Australia. She has performed at venues including the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow, Amsterdam's Het Concertgebouw, Opernhaus Zürich, Wigmore Hall, LSO St Luke's, Leeds Town Hall, Usher Hall Edinburgh, Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre, Smetana Hall Prague, Snape Maltings, Saffron Hall, Kings Place and St George's Bristol. She has made numerous appearances on BBC Radio 3 In Tune, and has worked with such distinguished musicians as Sir Andrew Davis, Karl-Heinz Steffens, Kirill Karabits, Ryan Wigglesworth, Huw Watkins, Krzysztof Chorzelski, the Redon Quartet and the Brodsky Quartet.

Laura was the winner of the BBC Young Musician competition aged 15. Her 2018 debut album 1948 won the 2018 Edison Klassiek Award and the 2019 BBC Music Magazine Newcomer of the Year Award. The disc, featuring Russian music for cello and piano with pianist Petr Limonov, has been hailed as a «thought-provoking debut disc from an impressive and intelligent young cellist» (Gramophone).

Also a passionate chamber musician, Laura is a key member of the critically-acclaimed Kaleidoscope Collective alongside Tom Poster and Elena Urioste, who perform a wide variety of captivating repertoire across the UK and beyond with highlights this season including the Wigmore Hall and Ryedale Festival. She also regularly collaborates with the likes of Jâms Coleman, Timothy Ridout, Katya Apekisheva and Max Baillie, and has given recitals at the Wigmore Hall, West Cork and Beverley Chamber Music Festivals, Harrogate International Festival, the Cheltenham Festival, Music In The Round, Oxford's Holywell Music Room and at the Oxford Lieder Festival. In Summer 2023 she will also perform in the Miesbach Festival, Germany.

Laura is a graduate of St John's College, Cambridge and currently studying for a Masters with Antje Weithaas at the Hans Eisler in Berlin. She plays a late 17th-century cello by Francesco Ruggieri of Cremona, on generous loan from a private collection.

Reviews:

BBC Radio 3, Record Review (Radio, UK)

Andrew McGregor, February 2022

«I love the impulsive passion of Laura van der Heijden's cello playing, while Jâms Coleman has a real feel for the fragility and sadness of the piano writing, as well as the combustible quality of some of the outbursts of emotion. The whole recital is beautifully made, from that Janacek fairytale to Kodály's folk song inflected cello sonata, played with memorable depth and breadth ... proper storytelling in music»

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0014nxn>.

BBC Music (Magazine, UK)

Hellen Wallace, March 2022 (*****)

«Laura Van der Heijden and Jams Coleman unleash Pohádka's power with this big-boned reading, with its hair-trigger transitions from dreaming innocence to cataclysm ... it's a treat to hear Kodály's too-rarely performed Sonata Op.4. These performers bring sonorous depth and mystery to its long-limbed first movement, and spritely wit to its dancing finale.»

Seen and Heard (Online, UK)

Michael Cookson, October 2021

«Laura van der Heijden is described as 'a very special emerging talent' and having now witnessed her first-hand demonstrating such adept and expressive playing, that is a description I can definitely endorse ... With unfailing support from the Hallé, van der Heijden made one question why the concerto is so neglected. From the first note I was gripped by the soloist's decidedly assured performance. Striking was her outstanding phrasing and lavish consideration to every note of this intensely romantic work.»

<https://seenandheard-international.com/2021/10/gemma-new-conducts-the-halle-and-celebrates-the-centenary-of-blackburns-king-georges-hall/>

The Strad (Magazine, UK)

Janet Banks, March 2022

«The interesting programming, engaging playing, an empathetic partnership and a convincingly real, immediate sound combine to make this a disc that's worth seeking out.»

Limelight (Magazine, Australia)

Lisa MacKinney, April 2022

«These works of complex tonality and emotional intensity, full of light, shade and plenty of darkness, are brought vividly to life by van der Heijden [...] and Coleman, whose rapport is clear in these beautiful performances. The recording is rich, warm and very well-balanced, allowing van der Heijden's superb tone to weave effortlessly around Coleman's piano.»

<https://limelightmagazine.com.au/reviews/pohadka-ales-from-prague-to-budapest-laura-van-der-heijden-jams-coleman/>