



RAFAEL HOEKMAN - Cello -

“Spirited and fiery performance”, “A young musician with a bright future” (Toronto Star).

“The youthful mastery of Hoekman on the cello quickly became apparent and his playing predominated in this work” (Brockville Recorder and Times).

“Hoekman, who plays cello with apparent ease” (Bellville Pioneer)

“Hoekman certainly has something to say. He made his cello talk to the audience, commanding our attention...” (St. John’s Telegram)

“Memorably inspiring” (Winnipeg Free Press)

Rafael Hoekman grew up in St. John’s, Newfoundland and began his musical training with his parents at the age of three. His principal teachers were Theo Weber in St. John’s, Yuli Turovsky in Montreal, and he completed his Master’s Degree with Shauna Rolston at the University of Toronto. He has since established himself as one of Canada’s most versatile cellists, finding success as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral player, and teacher.

As a soloist, Rafael first attracted attention by winning First Prize at the Orford International Competition in 1998. This award led to performances of the Boccherini Concerto with I Musici de Montreal and a subsequent CD on the Amberola Label. In quick succession, Rafael garnered awards from competitions including the Montreal Symphony Competition, the CMC Stepping Stones Competition, and the Debut Young Artists Competition. In 2004, Rafael won the audience award and 2nd prize in the Quebec Symphony’s Canadian Concerto Competition. In addition to performing with I Musici de Montreal, Rafael has appeared as soloist with the Calgary Philharmonic, the Quebec Symphony, the Newfoundland Symphony, Sinfonia Toronto, the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and the Etobicoke Philharmonic.

As a chamber musician and founding member of the Tokai String Quartet, Rafael won Fourth Prize in the Banff International String Quartet Competition as well as the Felix Galimir Chamber Music Award and the Sir Ernest MacMillan Grant for a young Canadian chamber ensemble. Rafael's chamber music performances have been featured on several national broadcasts for the CBC. He has been heard all across Canada on tours for Jeunesses Musicales and Debut Atlantic. He counts as his chamber music partners James Ehnes, Alexander Tselyakov, Anton Kuerti, the St. Lawrence Quartet, the Aviv Quartet, the Penderecki String Quartet, and the Gryphon Trio to name but a few. Festivals he has performed in include the Festival of the Sound, Clear Lake Chamber Music Festival, Toronto Summer Music Festival, MountainView Festival of Chamber Music and Song, and the Elora Festival among others.

Before joining the Calgary Philharmonic in 2011, Rafael held assistant principal positions with both the Winnipeg and Windsor Symphony Orchestras. He has also held positions with Orchestra London Canada and Sinfonia Toronto (principal cello). He was a frequent guest with the Detroit and Toronto Symphonies and held a one year position in Toronto during the 2007-2008 season.

As a teacher, Rafael has served on the faculties of the Kincardine Music Festival, Southern Ontario Chamber Music Institute, Silver Creek Festival, and Music at Port Milford. His students have had great success in RCM exams and have gone on to study cello at universities across Canada.

This past summer, big changes have occurred for Rafael, his wife Meran Currie-Roberts, and their two children Sam and Anastasia. In May, Rafael won the position of Assistant Principal Cello with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, and then in June won the position of Principal Cello of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra!

Living in Alberta is in a way coming full circle for Rafael: his father was born in Lethbridge, and his mother was born in Conrad, Montana, just 5 hours drive from Calgary.