

## **BIOGRAPHY OF JUSSI MAKKONEN, CELLO**

Mr. Jussi Makkonen (born in 1979) was brought into public notice in Finland when he won the national competition of EBU in 1996. It was the 16-year-old's interpretation of Sir Edward Elgar's Concerto for cello and orchestra Op. 85 as the soloist of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra which impressed the jury and sealed the win. Since then, Jussi has been a wanted cellist both in Finland and abroad. He has performed in many of the world's most illustrious venues: the Musikverein in Vienna, the Royal Albert Hall in London, the Concert Hall in Stockholm, the Cité de la Musique in Paris etc. Jussi has also performed before millions of TV-watchers in the music programs of EBU, BBC and YLE (Finnish Broadcasting Company). He has also performed for the heads of state in the European Parliament in Brussels, for the Queen of the Netherlands in the memorial festivity of the Second World War in Amsterdam etc. Jussi has also performed in the Carnegie Hall in New York and the Kennedy Center in Washington.

Jussi started to play the cello at the age of 7, in the Institute of Music of Pielisen-Karjala in Lieksa (Northern Karelia of Finland). In 1993, he was selected to study in the Sibelius Academy's programme for the young and talented and in 1996 he started his university studies in the Sibelius Academy. He finished his Master of Music degree in 2004. He has studied under professors Martti Rousi, Arto Noras and Frans Helmersson. Jussi has also studied conduction privately under Jorma Panula.

Since 2003, Jussi has acted as a cello teacher in the Institute of Music of North Helsinki. In addition, chamber music has always been close to his heart. He has played chamber music in the piano quartet "Focus" and he has played together with pianists Folke Gräsbeck and Risto Lauriala among others.

Jussi's sponsors have included OKO-Bank, Wihuri's Foundation, Finnish Cultural Foundation, City of Lieksa, the Sibelius Academy, Foundation of Eskelinen and Rajaseutuyhdistys among others.

Jussi has been performing with international orchestras, such as the European Union Youth Orchestra and Gustav Mahler-Orchestra.

Jussi plays on an almost 200 years old German cello, which is sponsored by Finnish Cultural Foundation and Wihuri's Foundation.