

Itzhak Perlman, violin

Undeniably the reigning virtuoso of the violin, Itzhak Perlman enjoys superstar status rarely afforded a classical musician. Beloved for his charm and humanity as well as his talent, he is treasured by audiences throughout the world who respond not only to his remarkable artistry, but also to the irrepressible joy of making music, which he communicates. In January 2009, Mr. Perlman was honored to take part in the Inauguration of President Barack Obama, premiering a piece written for the occasion by John Williams and performing with clarinetist Anthony McGill, pianist Gabriela Montero, and cellist Yo-Yo Ma. In December 2003 the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts granted Mr. Perlman a Kennedy Center Honor celebrating his distinguished achievements and contributions to the cultural and educational life of our nation. In May 2007, he performed at the State Dinner for Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, hosted by President George W. Bush and Mrs. Bush at the White House.

Born in Israel in 1945, Mr. Perlman completed his initial training at the Academy of Music in Tel Aviv. He came to New York and soon was propelled into the international arena with an appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show in 1958. Following his studies at the Juilliard School with Ivan Galamian and Dorothy DeLay, Mr. Perlman won the prestigious Leventritt Competition in 1964, which led to a burgeoning worldwide career. Since then, Itzhak Perlman has appeared with every major orchestra and in recitals and festivals around the world.

Mr. Perlman is a frequent presence on the conductor's podium, and through this medium he is further delighting his audiences. This season marks his second as Artistic Director of the Westchester Philharmonic Orchestra. He has performed as conductor with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony, National Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the symphony orchestras of San Francisco, Dallas, Houston, Pittsburgh, Seattle, Montreal and Toronto, as well as at the Ravinia and OK Mozart festivals. He was Music Advisor of the St. Louis Symphony from 2002 to 2004 where he made regular conducting appearances, and he was Principal Guest Conductor of the Detroit Symphony from 2001 to 2005. This season he conducts the San Francisco, New Jersey Symphony, Seattle, Baltimore and Dallas Symphonies, as well as a two-week engagement with the Israel Philharmonic. Internationally, Mr. Perlman has conducted the Berlin Philharmonic, Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Philharmonic, the English Chamber Orchestra, and the Israel Philharmonic.

As soloist, Mr. Perlman continues to visit major centers throughout the world. In September 2009, he will help celebrate the opening of the Barvikha Concert Hall outside Moscow with a reprise of his acclaimed Klezmer program, "In the Fiddler's House." He will also be featured in recital at the Moscow Conservatory with pianist and frequent collaborator, Rohan De Silva. Other highlights of his 2009-10 season include a performance with the New York Philharmonic to commemorate World Polio Day; two West Coast tours covering Los Angeles, San Diego and Vancouver, among others; and recitals across North and Central America including Mexico City, Atlanta, Miami, and Boston. Mr. Perlman also appears with students from the Perlman Music Program in a three-concert series at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and in Israel.

A major presence in the performing arts on television, Itzhak Perlman has been honored with four Emmy Awards, most recently for the PBS documentary *Fiddling for the Future*, a film about the Perlman Music Program and his work as a teacher and conductor there. In July of 2004, PBS aired a special entitled *Perlman in Shanghai* which chronicled a historic and unforgettable visit of the Perlman Music Program to China, featuring interaction between American and Chinese students and culminating in a concert at the Shanghai Grand Theater and a performance with one thousand young violinists, led by Mr. Perlman and broadcast throughout China. Mr. Perlman's third Emmy Award recognized his dedication to Klezmer music, as profiled in the 1995 PBS television special *In the Fiddler's House*, which was filmed in Poland and featured him performing with four of the world's finest Klezmer bands.

Mr. Perlman has entertained and enlightened millions of TV viewers of all ages on popular shows as diverse as *The Late Show with David Letterman*, *Sesame Street*, the PBS series *The Frugal Gourmet*, *The Tonight Show*, the Grammy® awards telecasts, and numerous *Live From Lincoln Center* broadcasts, including *The Juilliard School: Celebrating 100 Years* in April 2006, and PBS specials, including *A Musical Toast* and *Mozart by the Masters*, in which he served both as host and featured performer. In April 2008, Mr. Perlman joined renowned chef Jacques Pépin on *Artist's Table* to discuss the relationship between the culinary and musical arts. Mr. Perlman lent his voice as the narrator of *Visions of Israel*, the 20th program in WLIW New York's acclaimed *Visions* series, which premiered on PBS in June 2008. In July 1994, Mr. Perlman hosted the U.S. broadcast of the *Three Tenors, Encore!* live from Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. In March 2006, a worldwide audience in the hundreds of millions saw Mr. Perlman perform live on the 78th Annual Academy Awards telecast, as he performed a medley from the five film scores nominated in the category of Best Original Score. One of Mr. Perlman's proudest achievements is his collaboration with film score composer John Williams in Steven Spielberg's Academy Award winning film *Schindler's List*, in which he performed the violin solos. He can also be heard as the violin soloist on the soundtrack of Zhang Yimou's film *Hero* (music by Tan Dun) and Rob Marshall's *Memoirs of a Geisha* (music by John Williams).

In February 2008, Itzhak Perlman was honored with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award for excellence in the recording arts. His recordings regularly appear on the best-seller charts and have garnered fifteen Grammy Awards. His most recent releases include an all-Mozart recording with the Berlin Philharmonic (EMI) with Mr. Perlman performing as both soloist and conductor and a recording for Deutsche Grammophon with Mr. Perlman conducting the Israel Philharmonic. Other recordings reveal Mr. Perlman's devotion to education, including *Concertos from my Childhood* with the Juilliard Orchestra under Lawrence Foster (EMI) and *Marita and her Heart's Desire*, composed and conducted by Bruce Adolphe (Telarc). Other recordings over the past decade have included a Grammy-nominated live recording with pianist Martha Argerich performing Beethoven and Franck Sonatas (EMI); *Cinema Serenade* featuring popular hits from movies with John Williams conducting (Sony); *A la Carte*, a recording of short violin pieces with orchestra (EMI) and *In the Fiddler's House*, a celebration of Klezmer Music (EMI) that formed the basis of the PBS television special. In 2004, EMI released *The Perlman Edition*, a limited-edition 15-CD box set featuring many of his finest EMI recordings as well as newly compiled material and RCA Red Seal released a CD titled *Perlman reDISCOVERED* which includes material recorded in 1965 by a young Itzhak Perlman.

Mr. Perlman has a long association with the Israel Philharmonic, and he has participated in many groundbreaking tours with this orchestra from his homeland. In November of 1987 he joined the IPO for history-making concerts in Warsaw and Budapest, representing the first performances by this orchestra and soloist in Eastern bloc countries. He again made history as he joined the orchestra for its first visit to the Soviet Union in April/May of 1990, and was cheered by audiences in Moscow and Leningrad who thronged to hear his recital and orchestral performances. This visit was captured on a PBS documentary entitled *Perlman in Russia* which won an Emmy. In December of 1994 Mr. Perlman joined the Israel Philharmonic for their first visits to China and India.

Over the past decade Mr. Perlman has become more actively involved in educational activities. He has taught full time at the Perlman Music Program each summer since it was founded and currently holds the Dorothy Richard Starling Foundation Chair at the Juilliard School.

Numerous publications and institutions have paid tribute to Itzhak Perlman for the unique place he occupies in the artistic and humanitarian fabric of our times. Harvard, Yale, Brandeis, Roosevelt, Yeshiva and Hebrew universities are among the institutions which have awarded him honorary degrees. He was awarded an honorary doctorate and a centennial medal on the occasion of Juilliard's 100th commencement ceremony in May 2005. President Reagan honored Mr. Perlman with a "Medal of Liberty" in 1986, and in December 2000, President Clinton awarded Mr. Perlman the "National Medal of Arts." His presence on stage, on camera and in personal appearances of all kinds speaks eloquently on behalf of the disabled, and his devotion to their cause is an integral part of Mr. Perlman's life.