

Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir

Icelandic cellist Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir enjoys a varied career as a performer, collaborator and teaching artist. She has appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Iceland Symphony, among others, and her recital and chamber music performances have taken her across the US, Europe and Asia. Sæunn has performed in many of the world's prestigious venues including Carnegie Hall, Suntory Hall, Elbphilharmonie, Barbican Center and Disney Hall and the *Los Angeles Times* praised her performances for their "emotional intensity".

In 2022, Sæunn premiered *Gemæltan*, a new concerto by Canadian/Icelandic composer, Veronique Vaka, with the Iceland Symphony as part of her position as Artist in Residence, as well as performing chamber music and solo recitals in New York, Los Angeles, Reykjavík, San Francisco, Seattle, and Singapore.

Recent releases include *Vernacular*, a solo album of Icelandic music for cello, and the award-winning cello concerto, *Quake*, written for her by Páll Ragnar Pálsson, with the Iceland Symphony and Daníel Bjarnason on the Sono Luminus label which was nominated for a 2021 Grammy. Her recording of the Bach Cello Suites is due out in June 2023.

In addition to collaborating with Daníel Bjarnason on his award-winning composition *Bow to String*, Sæunn enjoys working with composers of our time such as Páll Ragnar Pálsson, Þuríður Jónsdóttir, Halldór Smárason, and Melia Watras. She has also given the US premiere of Betsy Jolas' *Wanderlied* and the Hong Kong premiere of Sofia Gubaidulina's *Canticle of the Sun*, for cello, 2 percussionists and choir.

An avid chamber musician, she has collaborated in performance with Itzhak Perlman, Mitsuko Uchida, Richard Goode and members of the Emerson, Guarneri and Cavani Quartets and has participated in numerous chamber music festivals, including Prussia Cove and Marlboro, with whom she has toured. Formerly Artist-in-Residence at Green Music Center's Weill Hall in Sonoma as well as cellist of the Manhattan Piano Trio, she is currently cellist and founding member of Decoda, The Affiliate Ensemble of Carnegie Hall.

Sæunn has garnered numerous prizes in international competitions, including the Naumburg Competition in New York and the Antonio Janigro Competition in Zagreb, Croatia. She is an alum of Ensemble Connect— a program of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, and the Weill Music Institute in partnership with the New York City Department of Education—performing chamber music at Carnegie Hall and bringing classical music to students in the New York City Public Schools.

Born in Reykjavik, Iceland, Sæunn is on the faculty of the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. For more information, please visit www.saeunn.com