

## Biography: Mario Brunello

*Mario Brunello is one with his instrument, a Maggini cello from 1600. His mastering of the cello is effortless and passionate, releasing both the dark moaning and the treble pitched jubilee with angelic tones.*

Monika Willer, Westfalen Post – KLAVIERFESTIVALRUHR (05/2017)

Expressive freedom arises naturally whenever Mario Brunello makes music. It flows from his openness to every emotion, giving life to interpretations of striking honesty and individuality. The Italian cellist, equally at home as concerto soloist, chamber musician and originator of pioneering projects, has captivated audiences worldwide and attracted international critical acclaim. His poetic artistry has been praised by Gramophone for its 'great spirit' and described as 'intense and passionate' by The Strad. Brunello is armed with the skills required to shift from searching introspection to extrovert display in response to the expressive breadth of a repertoire that spans everything from landmark concertos to striking contemporary cello masterworks.

Mario Brunello was born in 1960 at Castelfranco Veneto in northern Italy. The surrounding countryside and nature of the Treviso region have proved enduring inspirations for the cellist's music-making, touching everything from his feeling for rubato to his fascination with the interdependence of sound and silence. His register of spiritual influences also includes mountains and deserts, and the meditative stillness of remote places. As artistic director of I Suoni delle Dolomiti since 1994, Brunello has invented performances in the peaks and valleys of the Dolomites, given at an altitude of over 2000 metres. He will perform four programmes with Kremerata Baltica in July 2017 during the annual summer festival of concerts by world-class artists.

Brunello's 2017-18 season highlights include Dvořák's Cello Concerto with Myung-Whun Chung at the Teatro alla Scala, a tour of Japan with Akiko Suwanai and Boris Berezovsky, and Schumann's Cello Concerto with Vasily Petrenko at the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and Gustavo Gimeno and the RAI Orchestra in Turin. He is set to return to NHK Tokyo to perform Schnittke's Cello Concerto No. 1 with Tadaaki Otaka, and will give the world premiere of Justè Janulyté's Midnight Sun for cello and orchestra with the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra at the 2017 Vilnius Festival. Brunello's forthcoming schedule also includes a return to Yerevan to perform Mansurian's Cello Concert with the State Orchestra of Armenia. He will join Kremerata Baltica in the dual role of soloist and conductor, and explore J.S. Bach's Cello Suites and Solo Sonatas and Partitas (the latter on cello piccolo) in recitals in London, Venice, Florence and Bologna.

Brunello made his breakthrough in 1986 as the first and only Italian ever to win the coveted International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. His success was built on studies with Adriano Vendramelli at the Conservatorio di Musica Benedetto Marcello di Venezia and with Antonio Janigro, among the last century's finest cello teachers. Brunello's heartfelt playing has won the admiration of leading conductors, Antonio Pappano, Valery Gergiev, Claudio Abbado, Semyon Bychkov, Riccardo Chailly, Daniele Gatti, Vladimir Jurowski, Riccardo Muti, Yuri Temirkanov and Myung-Whun Chung among them.

He has performed as concerto soloist with many of the world's foremost ensembles, including the London Philharmonic and London Symphony Orchestras,

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the Mariinsky Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic and Munich Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio-France and Deutsches Sinfonie Orchester Berlin, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and NHK Symphony Tokyo, and the Filarmonica della Scala and Accademia di Santa Cecilia. Claudio Abbado invited Brunello to perform as soloist with the Lucerne Festival Orchestra and Mozart Orchestra on several occasions.

Over the past three decades Mario Brunello has forged a series of fruitful chamber music partnerships. He has often worked with Gidon Kremer, Frank-Peter Zimmermann, Isabelle Faust, Vadim Repin, Yuri Bashmet, Martha Argerich, Maurizio Pollini, Borodin Quartet, Alban Berg Quartet and cultivated a long-lasting duo collaboration with the pianist Andrea Lucchesini. At the invitation of Gidon Kremer, Brunello is honoured to be resident artist of Kremerata Baltica, with whom he collaborates as soloist and conductor.

His all-encompassing artistic passions and innate curiosity have generated special projects that cross genres and disciplines, such as musical theatre with Alessandro Baricco and Marco Paolini, collaborations with singer-songwriters Vinicio Capossela and Gianmaria Testa, and jazz concerts with Uri Caine, Paolo Fresu, John Surman and Norma Winstone. Many of his most innovative projects were born at antiruggine ('rust-proofing'), a former Castelfranco Veneto iron foundry transformed by Brunello into a laboratory for exploring creative dialogues with literature, philosophy, science, visual arts and multimedia ([link](#)), and at Arte Sella, a unique open-air museum of natural art, of whose music season he is artistic director.

The cellist has embraced new audiences with his fresh approaches to communication and determination to take artistic risks. Bach has held Brunello's full attention and artistic research for many years, leading him to make two recordings of the composer's Six Cello Suites. He plans to tour his unique three-concert programme in 2018-19 comprising Bach's Suites for solo cello and Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin, performing the former on his cherished Maggini cello, built around 1600, and the latter on violoncello piccolo, on which Brunello will also play Bach and Vivaldi compositions for two violins with violinist Giuliano Carmignola.

The wide range of Mario Brunello's interests is reflected in his substantial discography. The Brunello Serie, on the EGEEA label, includes *Odusia*, a musical odyssey through Mediterranean culture; *Violoncello* and, complete with works for solo cello, cello and choir, and cello and electronics; *Tavener's The Protecting Veil* with Kremerata Baltica; *Vivaldi's Cello Concertos*; and a double-disc set of *Bach's Cello Suites* (which received the prestigious Italian Critics' Award 2010). His many other outstanding albums include recordings of *Beethoven's Triple Concerto* with Claudio Abbado for Deutsche Grammophon, *Dvořák's Cello Concerto* with Antonio Pappano for Warner Classics, and a live video recording from the Salle Pleyel in Paris of *Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No.2* with Valery Gergiev.

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