

Esther Yoo, Violin

Praised for her profound depth of expression, freshness of interpretation, and dazzling technique, Esther Yoo is unquestionably one of the world's leading violinists. Her artistry has been recognized worldwide, with *The Strad* hailing her as "the model of a violin soloist in the modern age".

Uniquely tri-cultural among classical soloists, she was born in the United States, educated in Belgium, Germany and the U.K., and proudly embraces her Korean heritage. This international background informs the versatility and breadth of expression that defines her as one of the most articulate and gifted communicators.

Highlights of the 2025/26 season includes the release of her new Deutsche Grammophon album *Love Symposium*, featuring Bernstein's Serenade, recorded with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Long Yu. She returns to perform with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra, and debuts with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León, Presidential Symphony Orchestra and Evergreen Symphony Orchestra among others. Esther returns to the Z+ International Chamber Music Festival and makes her long awaited recital debut at Seoul Arts Center with pianist JaeHong Park. In September 2025, Esther joined the faculty at the Royal College of Music (RCM) as a Professor of Violin, a role that she will have while simultaneously maintaining her performing career.

Recent seasons saw Esther debut with Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Calgary Philharmonic, Shanghai Symphony, Orquesta Filarmonica de Málaga, and China Philharmonic Orchestras. She toured with the Munich Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic and Korean Chamber Orchestras and returned to iconic venues such as Wigmore Hall and Concertgebouw Amsterdam. She joined the Seattle Symphony and Hong Kong Philharmonic for the American and Asian premieres of Raymond Yiu's Violin Concerto, a piece written for her, co-commissioned by both orchestras and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, with whom she gave the world premiere in March 2024.

Esther works with the world's most prominent orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Deutsche Radio Philharmonie, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Orchestre National de Lille, Orquesta Sinfónica RTVE, Melbourne Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, KBS Symphony Orchestra, as well as at venues and festivals such as Lincoln Center, Royal Albert Hall, Seoul Arts Center, Aspen Music Festival, La Folle Journée, Prague Spring Festival and the BBC Proms.

Her collaborations with leading conductors include Gustavo Dudamel, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Jaap Van Zweden, Tugan Sokhiev, Lahav Shani, Vasily Petrenko, Santtu-Matias Rouvali, Dalia Stasevska, Myung-Whun Chung, and Karina Canellakis.

Esther passionately champions new music and has premiered several works throughout the span of her career. In addition to the recent premieres of Raymond Yiu's Violin Concerto, she has also premiered pieces by Xiaogang Ye, Michael Fine, Andrei Golovin, Matt Laing and Iain Farrington, whom Esther commissioned to write two compositions for her album *Love Symposium*.

Esther is a founding member of the Z.E.N. Trio alongside pianist Zhang Zuo and cellist Narek Hakhnazaryan, with whom she has toured internationally, and released two albums on Deutsche Grammophon. As a recitalist and chamber musician, Esther has collaborated with Yuja Wang, Yekwon Sunwoo, Peter Gregson, Lise Berthaud, Henri Demarquette, Jean-Frédéric Neuburger and principle musicians of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic and Shanghai Symphony Orchestras. Future seasons have her paired with Ning Feng, Anna Geniushene, Hayoung Choi and Diyang Mei.

A prolific recording artist, Esther has released several critically acclaimed albums on Deutsche Grammophon featuring the concertos of Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, Glazunov, Bruch and Barber. She is also featured prominently on the soundtrack of the feature film *On Chesil Beach*, and is a guest artist on pianist Chad Lawson's album *breathe*, both released on Decca.

Esther began playing the violin at the age of four and made her concerto debut at eight. At sixteen, she became the youngest prizewinner of the International Jean Sibelius Violin Competition and shortly after was one of the youngest ever prize-winners of the Queen Elisabeth Competition. Her career quickly flourished, highlighted by distinctions including BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, Classic FM's "Top 30 Artists under 30," the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's inaugural Artist-in-Residence, and "20 Artists to Watch" by WQXR.

In addition to her performances, Esther also engages with audiences through writing, broadcasting, and podcasts, reflecting her passion for sharing music in fresh and meaningful ways. She is a frequent contributor to BBC Radio 3, BBC Music Magazine, Gramophone, The Arts Desk and The Strad.

