

Lionel Martin – Biography

“His lyrical style, coupled with splendid virtuosity, somehow projects a self-effacing manner that always puts the music centre stage,” wrote *The Strad* in its review of Lionel Martin (b. 2003). Anne-Sophie Mutter describes him as “a wonderfully sensitive, spontaneously responsive, and highly imaginative artist.” With his compelling stage presence, tonal sensitivity and creative imagination, he ranks among the outstanding cellists of his generation.

Lionel Martin is a laureate of the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels. His previous distinctions include a prize at the 2025 Budapest International Cello Competition, the Suggia Award in Porto in 2024 and First Prize at the 2022 Ton & Erklärung Competition in Hanover.

As a soloist, Lionel Martin has performed with renowned ensembles including the Belgian National Orchestra, Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra, ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, SWR Symphony Orchestra, NDR Radiophilharmonie and Gürzenich Orchestra Cologne. He has worked with conductors such as Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Ariane Matiakh, Howard Griffiths, Dirk Kaftan and Antony Hermus. Solo appearances have taken him to the Vienna Musikverein, KKL Luzern and Tonhalle Zürich.

Lionel Martin has been supported by the Anne-Sophie Mutter Foundation since 2017. Performing alongside the violinist, he has appeared at major venues including Carnegie Hall, the Berliner Philharmonie, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg and Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires. His other chamber-music partners include Albrecht Mayer, Lauma Skride, Martin Klett, Tianwa Yang, Liisa Randalu and Magdalene Ho.

Recitals have taken him to festivals including the Lucerne Festival, Beethovenfest Bonn, Oberstdorfer Musiksommer and Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. He also shares a close musical partnership with his brother, pianist Demian Martin. The duo’s concerts have been recorded and broadcast by numerous radio and television stations.

From 2021 to 2024, Lionel Martin was an artist in the “SWR Kultur New Talent” programme. This collaboration resulted in numerous studio productions, concert recordings, interviews and radio broadcasts.

His debut album, featuring John Tavener’s cello concerto *The Protecting Veil* and *Svyati*, was released by SWR Music in 2023. A second recording followed in 2024, featuring works by Kabalevsky, Shostakovich and Tchaikovsky, recorded with the SWR Symphony Orchestra, Camerata Schweiz and his brother Demian Martin.

Lionel Martin studied with Joseph Hasten from 2008 to 2020 and with Thomas Grossenbacher at Zurich University of the Arts from 2020 to 2024. Since 2024, he has continued his studies with Frans Helmerson at Kronberg Academy, supported by the Arpeggione Patronage. He has received further formative artistic guidance from Lynn Harrell, Steven Isserlis, Jens Peter Maintz, Jan Vogler and Yo-Yo Ma.