

## Marek Szpakiewicz

Polish-born cellist Marek Szpakiewicz has been described by Yo-Yo Ma as an artist whose “energy, motivation, earnestness and generosity of spirit are evident through his work.” Pulitzer Prize-winning composer John Corigliano stated, “(Szpakiewicz’s) performance of my ‘Fancy on a Bach Air’ is absolutely gorgeous.”

Szpakiewicz gained rapid recognition in the United States when he won the 16th Mu Phi Epsilon International Competition in 2003. His work, as a soloist with various orchestras in Europe and in the United States, has drawn praise from critics, who have described him as “a gifted player,” “with expansive vision and immense authority,” and “no technical limitation.” Polish and American radio stations have broadcasted his live performances, including the one-hour special program dedicated solely to his music on KUSC-Los Angeles, the largest non-profit classical music station in the country. *Strad Magazine* comments on Szpakiewicz’s live recording of Ernest Bloch’s *Schelomo* as “remarkably accurate realisation of the score.”

He began cello lessons at the age of six in Lublin, Poland. In his early years, he studied with Ryszard Losakiewicz and Stanislaw Firlej. He later studied with Stephen Kates at the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore. Szpakiewicz completed his doctorate degree under the tutelage of Eleonore Schoenfeld at the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California. He also studied with such distinguished cellists as Daniil Shafran, Lynn Harrell, and Siegfried Palm.

Szpakiewicz currently teaches cello and chamber music at Azusa Pacific University. His students have won top prizes at numerous international and national competitions, including International Cello Competition in Chile, the American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition, ASTA South Bay Competition, SYMF Young Cellist Concerto Competition, and Bellflower Young Artist Competition. In addition, his former students have been accepted by such schools as Juilliard School, Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University, New England Conservatory, Manhattan School of Music, and USC Thornton School of Music.

He has also contributed his talent to film orchestration as a collaborator with Polish composer Jan A.P. Kaczmarek. Among the scores he has worked on, the music for the critically acclaimed movie “Finding Neverland,” received the 77th Academy Award for Best Original Score in 2005.

In March 2008, Szpakiewicz earned permanent residency from the U.S. government as an “Extraordinary Ability Artist.” The title means that he has “sustained national or international acclaim and the achievements have been recognized” in his field, according to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

In June 2011, Szpakiewicz received recognition from Los Angeles County Supervisors Zev Yaroslavsky and Michael Antonovich for organizing a musical event to raise relief

funds for the March 11 earthquake and tsunami victims in Japan, along with his wife Keiko Mori.

For more information, please visit [www.szpakiewicz.com](http://www.szpakiewicz.com).