



## YO-YO MA

### Cello

*“Even at Red Rocks, a show business landmark where spectacle is an everyday occurrence, an appearance by classical musician Yo-Yo Ma was an extraordinary event. (...) It sounds superhuman, but it was just the opposite. It was fully human, perfect and imperfect at the same time, easy and difficult, marked by attempt and reward. This is Ma’s skill. He doesn’t make his music something to marvel at. He makes it a gift. Created for you himself.” – The Denver Post*

Yo-Yo Ma’s multi-faceted career is testament to his belief in culture’s power to generate trust and understanding. Whether performing new or familiar works for cello, bringing communities together to explore culture’s role in society, or engaging unexpected musical forms, Yo-Yo strives to foster connections that stimulate the imagination and reinforce our humanity.

Most recently, Yo-Yo began Our Common Nature, a cultural journey to celebrate the ways that nature can reunite us in pursuit of a shared future. Our Common Nature follows the Bach Project, a 36-community, six-continent tour of J. S. Bach’s cello suites paired with local cultural programming. Both endeavours reflect Yo-Yo’s lifelong commitment to stretching the boundaries of genre and tradition to understand how music helps us to imagine and build a stronger society.

Yo-Yo is an advocate for a future guided by humanity, trust, and understanding. Among his many roles, Yo-Yo is a United Nations Messenger of Peace, the first artist ever appointed to the World Economic Forum’s board of trustees, a member of the board of Nia Tero, the US-based nonprofit working in solidarity with Indigenous peoples and movements worldwide, and the founder of the global music collective Silkroad.

His discography of more than 120 albums (including 19 Grammy Award winners) ranges from iconic renditions of the Western classical canon to recordings that defy categorization, such as “Hush” with Bobby McFerrin and the “Goat Rodeo Sessions” with Stuart Duncan, Edgar Meyer, and Chris Thile. Yo-Yo’s recent releases include “Six Evolutions,” his third recording of Bach’s cello suites, and “Songs of Comfort and Hope,” created and recorded with pianist Kathryn Stott in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yo-Yo’s latest album, “Beethoven for Three: Symphony No. 4 and Op. 97 ‘Archduke,’” is the third in a new series of Beethoven recordings with pianist Emanuel Ax and violinist Leonidas Kavakos.

Yo-Yo was born in 1955 to Chinese parents living in Paris. He began to study the cello with his father at age four and three years later moved with his family to New York City, where he continued his cello studies at the Juilliard School before pursuing a liberal arts education at Harvard. He has received numerous awards, including the Avery Fisher Prize (1978), the National Medal of the Arts (2001), the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2010), Kennedy Center Honors (2011), the Polar Music Prize (2012), and the Birgit Nilsson Prize (2022). He has performed for nine American presidents, most recently on the occasion of President Biden’s inauguration.

Yo-Yo and his wife have two children. He plays three instruments: a 2003 instrument made by Moes & Moes, a 1733 Montagnana cello from Venice, and the 1712 Davidoff Stradivarius.