Roma Graves

CELLIST / NEW YORK



Photograph by Akash Raje. Le Foyer de l’Âme, Paris, July 20, 2023.

At thirteen, Roma Graves became the **youngest known cellist** to perform the complete cycle of J. S. Bach’s Six Suites for Solo Cello from memory in a single public concert. Held on July 20, 2023, at Le Foyer de l’Âme in Paris, the concert was filmed in its entirety for the production of *Casals Calling*, a forthcoming international feature film exploring the life and legacy of Pablo Casals.

16

Concert Bach Tour
Including France, Spain & Germany

2

LaGuardia Concerto Competition wins
2024-25 and 2026-27

H.E.A.R.

Co-founder
and founding artist

Biography & repertoire

An award-winning cellist based in New York City, Roma attends Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School and studies privately with Philippe Muller. The renowned cello pedagogue invited him to study after hearing his Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto performance at a master class in the French Alps in 2021.

His repertoire encompasses complete concertos, sonatas, and suites, alongside complete cycles of major études and caprices. With Muller’s guidance, he approaches these works as unified musical worlds, attending to their structure, harmony, and large-scale architecture.

As a soloist and chamber musician, he has performed across North America and Europe. At LaGuardia, he is a two-time Concerto Competition winner and the orchestra’s principal cellist. He plays a cello by Leopold Widhalm, dated 1770.

SELECTED REPERTOIRE

CONCERTOS

Haydn No. 1; Saint-Saëns No. 1; Lalo; Elgar; Shostakovich No. 1; Herbert No. 1; Romberg No. 2; Davidov No. 2; Dvořák (movements I and II).

SOLO CELLO

Bach’s Six Suites (complete cycle); Cassadó’s Suite for Solo Cello.

CELLO & PIANO

Beethoven Op. 69; Brahms Op. 38 and Op. 99; Barber Op. 6; Shostakovich Op. 40; Prokofiev Op. 119.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Mendelssohn’s Octet; Elgar’s Piano Quintet; Smetana’s Piano Trio; Handel-Halvorsen’s Passacaglia.

SELECTED DISTINCTIONS

Two-time LaGuardia Concerto Competition Winner

2024-25 and 2026-27 / Principal Cellist, LaGuardia High School Orchestra

First Prize: International Grande Music Competition; VIVO International Music Competition; Crescendo International Music Competition (2022).

Grand Prix & First Prize: New York Concert Festival Competition (2020).

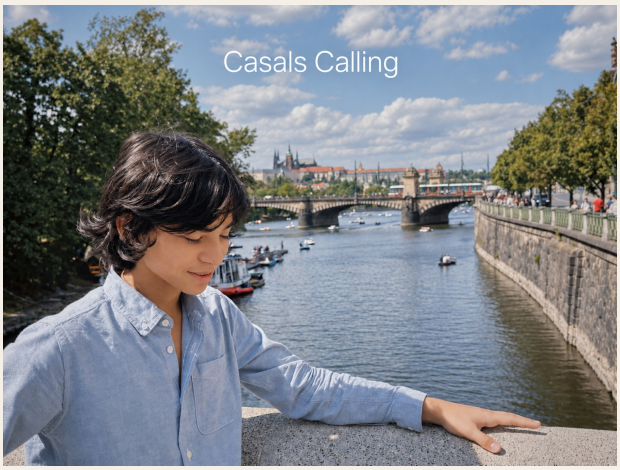
Second Place: Camerata Artists International Competition, Concerto, Junior I (2022).

Full biography

Complete repertoire

Casals Calling

A forthcoming international feature film



Prague, Czech Republic / August 2023

Roma's complete Paris performance was filmed in its entirety for Casals Calling, an international feature film exploring the life and legacy of Pablo Casals.

The 2023 Bach Tour brought together two resonant milestones: Roma performed the complete Suites at thirteen, the same age at which Casals discovered them, in the year marking the 300th anniversary of their presumed completion.

The 16-concert tour included France, Spain and Germany, with performances at the Cello Fan Festival in Callian, Saint-Séverin in Paris, Eisenach's Georgenkirche near Bach's baptismal font, Köthen's Agnuskirche, and the Abbey of Saint-Martin-du-Canigou. Offered in tribute to Bach's music and Casals's advocacy for peace, social justice and human dignity, it was a musical pilgrimage connecting Roma's generation with their living legacies.

Film and musical pilgrimage

Paris concert archive

H.E.A.R.

CO-FOUNDER AND FOUNDING ARTIST

Roma is a co-founder and founding artist of H.E.A.R., the International Organization for the Protection of Human Element Artifacts in Recording. His conviction that recordings should preserve the authenticity of live performance helped drive its creation and shape its founding philosophy. He has personally committed to sharing the majority of his recorded performances publicly as faithful, unedited and unaltered records of his playing.

Through new live recordings and the preservation and rediscovery of archival performances, he seeks to advance transparency in recorded music and preserve the artistry, individuality and integrity of each performance. His aim is to carry human expression across distances and generations, affirming a shared musical legacy that spans the arc of time.

H.E.A.R. mission and artist commitment

Hear Roma now

Recent performances in the Roma Now collection, with direct links to each recording.

Brahms / Cello Sonata No. 2 in F major, Op. 99

I. Allegro vivace / Nelson Padgett, piano

Bach / Cello Suite No. 5 in C minor, BWV 1011

VI. Gigue / Roma at seventeen

Elgar / Cello Concerto in E minor, Op. 85

I. Adagio - Moderato / Nelson Padgett, piano

Elgar / Cello Concerto in E minor, Op. 85

II. Lento - Allegro molto / Nelson Padgett, piano

Bach Tour 2023

The Developing Artist

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Artist photographs

Full biography

Complete repertoire

Concert archive

Awards and distinctions

Credits and contributors

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