

CECILY WARD

American violinist Cecily Ward was born in Salt Lake City, Utah and began studying violin and piano at the age of four. She was the founding first violinist of the San Francisco based Cypress String Quartet, a position she held for twenty years until the quartet disbanded in 2016. With the Cypress Cecily performed throughout the United States and Europe, and recorded 16 critically acclaimed albums including the complete Beethoven Quartets. Praised for her “lithe finesse,” “charm,” and “rhapsodic violin,” she has collaborated with esteemed musicians including cellist Gary Hoffman, pianist and conductor Leon Fleisher, pianist Walter Ponce, and cellist Zuill Bailey.

A graduate of the Interlochen Arts Academy, Cleveland Institute of Music and San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Cecily’s mentors have included Donald Weilerstein, Norbert Brainin, Zoltan Szekely, Bonnie Hampton, Sylvia Rosenberg, Robert McDonald and Isaac Stern.

Now residing in London UK, she is on the violin faculty at the Royal Northern College of Music and can be found freelancing in chamber orchestras throughout the UK in performances at the Barbican, Concertgebouw, BBC Proms, and the Endellion Festival in Cornwall. To stay inspired and connected in the Covid-19 lock-down, she created a virtual master-class series – the REALLY Big Class! (for Violinists). The weekly class featured over 100 performers from all over the world, with guest teachers from the major conservatories in the US, UK, and Germany, as well as top soloists and chamber musicians.

Cecily enjoys the use of two violins: the “Fleming” Stradivarius (1683), and a contemporary violin by American violin maker Anthony Lane, made for her in 2015. She lives in North London with her husband Mark Willsher and a nutty Portuguese Water Dog called Francie.