

Leland Philip Ko (b. 1998) is the kind of person who's always had an overflow of energy. His restlessness has led him to various callings, from calligraphy and origami to competitive tennis and distance running, but so far he's found that making music with and for others – and the process that goes into that – are the things that best keep him seated and focus his mind. Though he has chosen to dedicate himself to classical music, he does his best to remember and live by a former mentor's advice that music is about life, not the other way around.

A cellist of Chinese-Canadian descent, yet born and raised in the Boston area, Leland has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in venues across America's east coast, such as Merkin Concert Hall and Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall in New York, and Jordan Hall and Sanders Theatre in Boston, as well as internationally in Sweden, Israel, and Spain, including Auditorio Manuel de Falla in Granada. Violinist Itzhak Perlman has said of Leland that he “plays with the beauty of sound and subtlety that we don't often encounter in a cellist of his age,” and that he is “a musician who willingly considers all aspects of music.” Leland's most recent accolades include second prize at the inaugural 2020 Bader and Overton Canadian Cello Competition, appearing as a finalist in the 2020 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, and first prize at the 2021 Hudson Valley Philharmonic String Competition.

The 2022 season sees Leland making debut appearances with the Adelphi Orchestra in New York and New Jersey, as well as with the NEC Philharmonia under Hugh Wolff in Boston's Jordan Hall. Past engagements over the last decade include concerto appearances with the Boston Landmarks Orchestra, the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra, the Arlington Philharmonic, the Brockton Symphony Orchestra, Symphony Pro Musica, the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Princeton University Orchestra, and multiple appearances with the Wellesley Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, and the Farmington Valley Symphony Orchestra.

Despite growing up a part of Boston's strong youth orchestra culture, Leland has often sought out chamber music at various summer festivals over the years, having attended Yellowbarn, Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, and the Perlman Music Program's Summer Music School and its Chamber Music Workshop. Through these festivals, Leland has had the chance to study with and occasionally perform alongside artists such as Ronald Leonard, Merry Peckham, Joel Krosnick, Donald Weilerstein, Vivian Weilerstein, Roger Tapping, Miriam Fried, Paul Biss, Marcy Rosen, Ralph Kirshbaum, Frans Helmerson, Gary Hoffman, and Itzhak Perlman.

Leland's love for chamber music has also led him to be an Artist in Residence of New York Piano Society (NYPS), as well as a frequent performer on Swedish pianist Per Tengstrand's concert series “Music on Park Ave” at Scandinavia House in NYC, and former Music Director of Opus 21, a student-run chamber music collective at Princeton.

Leland was a long-time student of Ronald Lowry and Paul Katz before attending Princeton University, where he graduated with an A.B. in German Literature. He went on to complete an M.M. at The Juilliard School under the teaching of Minhye Clara Kim, Timothy Eddy, and Natasha Brofsky, and begins as an Artist Diploma candidate at the New England Conservatory in the Fall of 2022 with Laurence Lesser. Since the end of 2020, Leland plays on the ex-Peled, ex-Greenhouse Thomas Dodd from 1790. *Updated as of June 2022.*