

THOMAS MESA *cello*

ILYA YAKUSHEV *piano*

The pair's playing was grounded in storytelling, as great musical performances often are . . . The power and evenness [in the Beethoven Variations] were a preview for the balance of the rest of the concert . . . it was clear that Mesa had an ability most string players covet . . . the lower end never being muddled and the higher end having a richness most cellos do not . . . Mesa and Yakushev always played on equal footing, never with the piano serving as the accompanist to the cello . . . a musical performance that encapsulates the best that good drama has to offer." —**PALM BEACH DAILY NEWS**



The brilliant young Cuban-American cellist THOMAS MESA was the winner of the \$50,000 First Prize in the Sphinx Competition, and performed as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl for over 30,000 audience members. He plays a gorgeous cello from 1820, which was used to record soundtracks for the first movies ever made.

A listener with closed eyes would have been hard pressed to distinguish [Mesa's] shapely, expressive performance from that of another gifted artist two or three times his age."
—**CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER** (Dvořák Concerto with the Cleveland Orchestra)

A musical intensity that was commanding in every detail."
—**NEW YORK CONCERT REVIEW**

Russian pianist ILYA YAKUSHEV, winner of the World Piano Competition in Cincinnati, continues to astound and mesmerize audiences at major venues on three continents. The Boston Pops and BBC Concert Orchestra are among the many orchestras with which he has been soloist.

Yakushev was little short of heroic in Rachmaninoff."
—**NEW YORK TIMES** (Mostly Mozart Festival, Lincoln Center)

ONE OF THE TOP 10 CLASSICAL MUSIC EVENTS OF THE YEAR . . . an astounding triple debut."
—**SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE** (for three Prokofiev concertos on a single program with the San Francisco Symphony)