Léo Ispir

Cellist

BIOGRAPHY

Nominated at 23 in the Instrumental Soloist Revelation category at the 2026 Victoires de la Musique Classique, and named ADAMI Classical Revelation in 2023 at 21, Léo Ispir is a prizewinner at several international competitions, with awards at the prestigious Bach Competition in Leipzig, the "Tremplin" International Cello Competition and the Gustav Mahler International Cello Competition. He is also a laureate of the Fondation Banque Populaire.

He began playing the cello at the age of seven in his hometown of Rouen. He continued his studies at the CRR de Paris before entering the CNSMDP, then trained further at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel with Gary Hoffman and at the Munich Hochschule in the class of Julian Steckel.

Léo is mentored by Anne Gastinel at the Académie Jaroussky, and has also received advice from masters such as John Eliot Gardiner, Steven Isserlis, Frans Helmerson, Sol Gabetta, Christophe Coin and the Quatuor Ébène.

As a soloist, Léo Ispir has performed with orchestras including the Orchestre National de Bretagne, the Orchestre Appassionato, the Bilkent Symphony Orchestra, the ORF Radio-Symphonieorchester Wien, the Orchestre National de Mulhouse, Il Gardellino, the Hagen Philharmonic, the Young Belgian String Orchestra, the Orchestre de Picardie, the ORCW Mons, the Pauliner Barockensemble and the Orchestra di Padova.

His many chamber music partners include the Quatuor Modigliani, Gautier Capuçon, Augustin Dumay, Pierre Fouchenneret, Claire Désert, Frank Braley, Lucas Debargue, Raphaël Pidoux, Emmanuel Strosser and Jean-Claude Vanden Eynden. He has appeared at festivals including the George Enescu Festival, the Festival d'Auvers-sur-Oise, the Festival International de Colmar, the Festival de Menton, Génération France Musique, the Festival de Pâques de Deauville, La Folle Journée de Nantes, the Flâneries musicales de Reims, the Schiermonnikoog Festival and the Festival Ravel.

As a laureate of the Fondation Gautier Capuçon (2023–2025), he recorded a duo album in 2024 with his brother, the violinist Luka Ispir, for Warner Classics / Erato.

In January 2025, the Ispir brothers recorded an album with the ORF Radio-Symphonieorchester Wien conducted by Howard Griffiths, for Berlin Classics.

A passionate advocate of early music, Léo also plays the viola da gamba and has received advice from Vittorio Ghielmi and Philippe Pierlot.

Léo Ispir plays a cello by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume, generously loaned by Michael Guttman.

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