Stanford



Christopher Costanza

Senior Lecturer of Music

Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

For over three decades cellist Christopher Costanza has enjoyed a varied and exciting career as a soloist, chamber musician, and teacher. A winner of the Young Concert Artists International Auditions and a recipient of a prestigious Solo Recitalists Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Mr. Costanza has performed to wide critical acclaim in nearly every state in the U.S., and in Canada, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Australia, New Zealand, China, Korea, Germany, France, the U.K., Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Romania, and Hungary. His summer festival appearances include the Marlboro, Yellow Barn, Santa Fe, Taos, Chamber Music Northwest, Seattle, Bay Chamber Concerts, Ottawa, and Bravo! Vail Valley festivals. Mr. Costanza is a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, where he studied cello with Laurence Lesser, David Wells, and Bernard Greenhouse, and chamber music with Eugene Lehner, Louis Krasner, and Leonard Shure.

Mr. Costanza joined the St. Lawrence String Quartet (SLSQ) in 2003, and tours and records extensively with that ensemble, performing over 100 concerts annually throughout the world. As a member of the SLSQ, he is an Artist in Residence at Stanford University, where he teaches cello and chamber music and performs a wide variety of formal and informal concerts each season, from the stages of the University's concert halls to student dormitories and lecture halls. A strong proponent of contemporary music, Mr. Costanza works regularly with the world's most notable composers, such as John Adams, Jonathan Berger, Osvaldo Golijov, Mark Applebaum, Pierre Boulez, George Tsontakis, Roberto Sierra, R. Murray Schafer, William Bolcom, John Corigliano, and Bright Sheng. As a student, he had the honor of studying Olivier Messiaen's "Quartet for the End of Time" under the guidance of the composer.

Mr. Costanza's discography includes numerous chamber music and solo recordings on the Nonesuch, EMI/Angel, Naxos, Innova, Albany, Summit, and ArtistShare labels. In 2006, he received a Grammy nomination for his recording of major chamber works for winds and strings by Mozart. Additionally, several St. Lawrence String Quartet recordings on EMI have also been nominated for Juno awards. Mr. Costanza's recordings of the iconic Six Suites for Solo Cello by J.S. Bach, along with his commentary on each suite, can be found on his website, costanzacello.com. In August, 2019, the SLSQ released its latest recording, of all six Op. 20 String Quartets of Haydn, in three formats: CD's, on-line through streaming platforms, and limited-edition vinyl LP's.

Mr. Costanza is frequently heard on radio broadcasts worldwide, including the CBC in Canada, NPR in the United States, and on various European broadcasting networks. He is privileged to perform on an early 18th century Venetian cello, part of the Harry R. Lange Collection of Instruments and Bows at Stanford.

In addition to his varied musical interests, Mr. Costanza is an avid long-distance runner and hiker. A self-described train enthusiast, he enjoys riding and exploring the passenger railways of the world. He is fascinated by architecture and seeks out innovative architectural offerings of each city he visits on tour. At home in California, he is passionate about cooking, focusing his attention on new and creative dishes which take advantage of the abundance of remarkable organic local produce. Mr. Costanza's wife, Debra Fong, is a wonderful violinist, and their daughter, Isabella, is a terrific violist currently studying at the Glenn Gould School in Toronto.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Senior Lecturer, Music

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Artist in Residence, Lecturer, Stanford University, (2003- present)
- Visiting Assistant Professor of Cello, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, (2002-2003)
- Faculty, Taos School of Music, (1999-2003)
- Faculty, Taos School of Music, (2008- present)
- Faculty, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival - Yale Summer School of Music, (2000-2000)
- Teaching Assistant, New England Conservatory of Music, (1985-1989)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Winner, Young Concert Artists International Auditions, Young Concert Artists, Inc (1986)
- Solo Recitalists Grant, National Endowment for the Arts (1992)
- George Whitefield Chadwick Medal, New England Conservatory (1986)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Bachelor of Music, New England Conservatory of Music , Cello Performance (1986)
- Artist Diploma, New England Conservatory of Music , Cello Performance (1989)

LINKS

- Christopher Costanza's recording of the Bach Cello Suites: costanzabach.stanford.edu
- St. Lawrence String Quartet website: slsq.com

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Applied Music Private Lessons: MUSIC 179Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Chamber Music: MUSIC 171 (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Chamber Music: MUSIC 171Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Private Lessons for Music Majors/Minors: MUSIC 279Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Stanford Cello Choir: MUSIC 166A (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Stanford Cello Choir: MUSIC 166AZ (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Violoncello: MUSIC 174C (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Violoncello for Music Majors/Minors: MUSIC 274C (Aut, Win, Spr)

2025-26

- Applied Music Private Lessons: MUSIC 179Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Chamber Music: MUSIC 171 (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Chamber Music: MUSIC 171Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Private Lessons for Music Majors/Minors: MUSIC 279Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Stanford Cello Choir: MUSIC 166A (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Stanford Cello Choir: MUSIC 166AZ (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Violoncello: MUSIC 174C (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Violoncello for Music Majors/Minors: MUSIC 274C (Aut, Win, Spr)

2024-25

- Applied Music Private Lessons: MUSIC 179Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Chamber Music: MUSIC 171 (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Chamber Music: MUSIC 171Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Groundbreaking Chamber Music Works of the Second Viennese School: MUSIC 159V (Spr)
- Violoncello: MUSIC 174C (Aut, Win, Spr)

2023-24

- Advanced Violoncello: MUSIC 274C (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Applied Music Private Lessons: MUSIC 179Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Chamber Music: MUSIC 171 (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Chamber Music: MUSIC 171Z (Aut, Win, Spr)
- Violoncello: MUSIC 174C (Aut, Win, Spr)