

Cellist Lydia Rhea is quickly garnering international recognition as a skilled soloist and chamber musician while currently pursuing a BM in Cello Performance at the Cleveland Institute of Music studying under Dr. Melissa Kraut. Formerly a scholarship recipient Fellow at the Music Institute of Chicago Academy, a training center for gifted pre-college musicians, Lydia studied with artist faculty member Hans Jørgen Jensen for four years. As a soloist, Lydia has performed with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, the Muncie Symphony Orchestra, the Carmel Symphony Orchestra, and the New World Youth Symphony Orchestra, among others. She has appeared on NPR's *From the Top* with renowned jazz pianist Fred Hersch, where she performed one of his original compositions in Jordan Hall, Boston. Most recently, she was named the Gold Medalist and received the Agnew Prize for Bach at the 2020 Cleveland Cello Society Scholarship Competition.

An accomplished chamber musician, Lydia earned numerous honors as the cellist of the Kairos String Quartet in the 2017-2018 season. Kairos won the Gold Medal in the Junior Division of the 2018 Fischhoff National Chamber Competition and First Prize in the Junior String Division of the 2018 M-Prize International Chamber Arts Competition, making Kairos the only chamber group to win the top prizes at both Fischhoff and M-Prize in the same year. They were also awarded the Grand Prize at the A.N. and Pearl G. Barnett Chamber Music Competition, First Place at the Rembrandt Chamber Players Competition, and the Silver Medal at the St. Paul String Quartet Competition. Named the Rembrandt Young Artists for 2018, Kairos was featured on a live broadcast of WFMT's *Introductions* and appeared on NPR's *From the Top*.

Lydia made her debut at the age of nine with the New World Youth Philharmonic Orchestra and the Fishers Chamber Players, and she has twice served as principal cellist in the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's Side-by-Side program. In the summer of 2019, Lydia attended the Yellow Barn Young Artist Program in Vermont, the Zephyr Chamber Course in Italy, the Talis Festival and Academy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Moritzburg Festival Academy in Germany. At Moritzburg, Lydia served as principal cellist of the Academy Orchestra and received the Akademiepreis for Best Performance of a 19<sup>th</sup> century work and the Akademiepreis for Best Performance of a 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century work with her chamber groups. In 2018 she was invited to be a Professional Performance Artist at the Boston Music Institute's 12-Hour Masterclasses with members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and she attended the Festival de Écoles d'Art Americaines de Fontainebleau in France on a full scholarship as the festival's youngest participant. While there, her string quartet was awarded the Premier Prix and the Prix du Château de Fontainebleau for the best interpretation of Ravel's String Quartet in the Prix Ravel, sponsored by the Maurice Ravel Foundation. She has also previously attended the Heifetz International Music Institute and Meadowmount School of Music. Lydia has had the privilege taking lessons and master classes with Gary Hoffman, Philippe Muller, Pinchas Zukerman, Robert Levin, Blaise Déjardin, Sharon Robinson, Amir Eldan, Merry Peckham, Jonathan Koh, Richard Hirschl, and Richard Aaron, among others.

Lydia is currently the Regional Director in Cleveland for Back to Bach, a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing arts education to young people while teaching them the value of hard work

and passion. She plays on a cello made by Lawrence Wilke in 2008. You can find more information and current events at [www.lydia-rhea.com](http://www.lydia-rhea.com).