Akiko Suwanai
Violin

“Her big, focused, almost piercing tone took over, carving sonic space, a race car driver weaving in and out of (and even cutting off) traffic” *The Washington Post*

Japanese violinist, Akiko Suwanai has established herself as one of the most sought-after artists of her generation. Since winning the International Tchaikovsky Competition in 1990 she has enjoyed a flourishing career, engaging at the highest level performing chamber music and with orchestras and conductors internationally.

Highlights of her 2021/22 season include tours with The Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen/Järvi and the Budapest Festival Orchestra/Fischer as well as weeks with NHK Symphony Orchestra/Otaka, St Louis Symphony Orchestra/Denève, National Symphony Orchestra Taiwan/Elts and Castilla & Leon Symphony Orchestra/Hayward.

Akiko recently recorded the complete Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin by Bach for Universal, due for release in Autumn 2021 and will give a six-date solo recital tour of these works in Japan including concerts in Tokyo and Nagoya this season. Regularly invited to major chamber music festivals, Akiko has long standing collaborations with Martha Argerich and took part in her birthday celebrations this summer. Elsewhere she has performed at Leif Ove Andsnes Chamber Music Festival in Rosendal, the Stresa Festival in Italy and Stavanger Chamber Music Festival.

Universally acclaimed for her performances of key violin repertoire, Akiko is also widely recognised for her master interpretations of lesser-performed works and passion for new music. In previous seasons she has recorded works by Takemitsu with the NHK Symphony Orchestra/Järvi for Sony and given premieres of Peter Eötvös’ *Seven* at the Lucerne Festival under Pierre Boulez, and in the following year at the BBC Proms conducted by Susanna Mälkki. She has also given Asian premieres of important new works including violin concertos by James MacMillan, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Krzysztof Penderecki.

Highlights of the previous season included concerts with Hamburg Symphoniker for the reopening of the Laeiszhalle including Mozart Violin Concerto No.1 conducted by Cambreling and a successful debut of Ligeti’s Violin Concerto with Orquesta Sinfonica del Principado de Asturias. Other season highlights included Beethoven’s Violin Concerto with NHK SO and Japan Philharmonic.

In 2012, Akiko launched and became Artistic Director of the Tokyo based ‘International Music Festival NIPPON’ which presents a variety of orchestral and chamber concerts as well as regular commissions of new works and world premieres by Japanese and international composers. With the Festival, Akiko has premiered new works including Karol Beffa’s Violin Concerto alongside The Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen and Dai Fujikura’s Pitter-Patter with Boris Berezovsky.

Akiko performs on the “Charles Reade” Guarneri del Gesu violin generously loaned to her by the Japanese-American collector and philanthropist, Dr. Ryuji Ueno.