Nicolas Altstaedt

Cello / Conductor

Described as an artist “in a category of his own” (Hamburger Abendblatt), Nicolas Altstaedt is one of today’s most versatile and sought-after classical artists, performing worldwide as a soloist, conductor, and artistic director on both period and modern instruments, with repertoire ranging from early to contemporary music.

In 2025/26 Altstaedt begins a three-year tenure as Tapiola Sinfonietta’s Artist in Association and makes début appearances with Radio-Symphonieorchester Wien (Adès), Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (Martín), Hallé (Adès), Philharmonia Zurich (Chan), and Freiburger Barockorchester. Return engagements include Budapest Festival Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra (Chan), Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France (Jacquot), Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (Bihlmaier), Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra (Mälkki), Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra (Berglund), NAC Orchestra Ottawa (Shelley), Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestre National de Lille (Weilerstein), among others. Further titled positions include the commencement of a two-season tenure as Artist in Collaboration with Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias, and Artist in Residence at the 2026 Bodenseefestival, while chamber music highlights include tours of Australia and North America with lutenist Thomas Dunford – including an appearance at Carnegie Hall.

Since Altstaedt’s critically acclaimed 2010 début with the Wiener Philharmoniker and Gustavo Dudamel, notable residencies and collaborations have included Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (Pintscher), Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks (Gardner), Budapest Festival Orchestra (Fischer), SWR Sinfonieorchester (Currentzis), Helsinki Festival (Salonen), Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin (Ticciati), Bamberger Symphoniker (Dausgaard), Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra (Shani), Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra (Herreweghe), London Philharmonic Orchestra (Gardner), Münchner Philharmoniker (Urbański), Swedish Radio Orchestra (Emelyanychev), European Union Youth Orchestra (Noseda and V Petrenko), all the BBC orchestras (including with Storgårds), Orchestre National de France (Măcelaru), NHK and Yomiuri Nippon (Yamada) symphony orchestras, Washington’s National Symphony Orchestra (Gardner), Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (Payare), NAC Orchestra Ottawa (Shelley), and Sydney and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras (Runnicles). As a conductor, Altstaedt has forged partnerships with Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Münchener Kammerorchester (most recently as 2024/25 Artist in Focus), Tapiola Sinfonietta, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Les Violons du Roy.

In 2012 Altstaedt succeeded Gidon Kremer as Artistic Director of the Lockenhaus Chamber Music Festival, and from 2014 to 2021 he was Artistic Director of Haydn Philharmonie at the Ésterházy Palace, succeeding Ádám Fischer. His chamber music partners include Janine Jansen, Vilde Frang, Pekka Kuusisto, Lawrence Power, Antoine Tamestit, Alexander Lonquich, Mao Fujita, Maxim Emelyanychev, Fazıl Say, Ilya Gringolts, Thomas Dunford, Jean Rondeau, Quatuor Ébène and Belcea Quartet. He makes regular appearances at major festivals including Salzburg, Verbier, Lucerne, Edinburgh, Prague Spring, Schleswig Holstein, and Musikfest Bremen.

Altstaedt frequently performs on period instruments with ensembles such as Il Giardino Armonico, B’Rock, Orchestre des Champs-Elysées, and Arcangelo, while joint appearances with composers such as Thomas Adès, Jörg Widmann, Thomas Larcher, Fazıl Say and Sofia Gubaidulina have consolidated his reputation as an outstanding interpreter of contemporary music. Wolfgang Rihm, Sebastian Fagerlund, Erkki-Sven Tüür, Marton Illés, Helena Winkelman, Malika Kishino and Raquel García-Tomás have all written works for him. 2025 also marks the release of Altstaedt’s recording of Liza Lim’s cello concerto *A Sutured World*. Composed for him and premiered with Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks (Gardner), it is described in a 5-star review in Limelight as ​“destined to become a signature work of the cello repertoire”.

*A Sutured World* follows several critically acclaimed albums including a collection of chamber music works by Veress and Bartók on Alpha which garnered BBC Music Magazine’s 2020 Chamber Award and the Gramophone Classical Music Award 2020. Altstaedt received BBC Music Magazine’s 2017 Concerto Award for his recording of CPE Bach Concertos on Hyperion with Arcangelo (Cohen), and the AFAS Edison Klassiek 2017 for his recital recording with Fazıl Say on Warner Classics. Previous accolades include the Credit Suisse Award in 2010, Beethovenring Bonn 2015, Musikpreis der Stadt Duisburg 2018, and recognition as a 2010–12 BBC New Generation Artist.

