

Jonian Ilias Kadesha | Biography

Violin



"Hardly any other violinist plays as edgy, boldly, unconventionally and yet with such stylistic confidence and taste as Kadesha. He improvises, uses ornaments in his own way and puts everything at the service of expression."

Jonian Ilias Kadesha is a Renaissance musician in the diversity and creativity of his intellectual interests and music-making. His studies in philosophy and rhetoric influence the stylistic accuracy of his interpretations, whether of early or contemporary music, and his rich imagination is clear both in the sound worlds he creates and the projects he curates as concerto soloist, soloist-director and chamber musician.

Kadesha has performed widely as soloist throughout Europe in concertos including Sibelius, Mozart, Shostakovich, Bartók, Stravinsky, Mendelssohn and Beethoven, among others. His engagements include the Chamber Orchestra of Europe conducted by Sir András Schiff, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic with Jonathan Bloxham, Tapiola Sinfonietta with Ryan Bancroft, and the Slovenian Philharmonic conducted by Aziz Shokhakov, as well as with Münchner Rundfunk, Royal Philharmonic, MDR Sinfonieorchester, Athens and Thessaloniki State Orchestras, Lübeck Philharmonic and Neue Philharmonie Frankfurt.

His accomplishments as a soloist-director are increasingly recognised and he collaborates frequently with leading chamber orchestras such as the Netherlands and Scottish Chamber Orchestras, Aurora Orchestra, Manchester Camerata, Tapiola Sinfonietta and London Mozart Players. His approach to the classical orchestral canon is informed by his chamber music playing and he often improvises his own cadenzas and ornamentation.

Kadesha's flair for programming is evident in his chamber music projects. He has curated a six concert series for the Leeds International Concert Season (2024–25) including regular collaborators Vashti Hunter and Pablo Hernán and the Caerus Chamber Ensemble, of which he is founder and Artistic Director, and whose flexible line-up is drawn from the younger generation of outstanding European instrumentalists.

He has also collaborated with renowned musicians such as Martha Argerich, Steven Isserlis, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Nicolas Altstaedt, Gábor Takács-Nagy and Antje Weithaas. He has given recitals in venues including the Wigmore Hall, Louvre, Berlin Philharmonie and Salle Moliere Lyon. Co-founder of the award-winning Trio Gaspard, he appears regularly with the group at festivals and venues around the world and is also a member of the Kelemen Quartet.

Kadesha's curiosity for repertoire is wide-ranging, as demonstrated by recordings he has made for Linn Records, to which he signed in 2021. His debut solo album featured Bach's Partita in D minor alongside Helena Winkelman's Ciaccona and works by Biber, Schnittke, Kurtág and Auerbach. His follow-up *Suite Italienne* with CHAARTS Chamber Orchestra, featuring Giovanni Sollima's violin concerto *TYCHE* along with works by Vivaldi and Stravinsky, received outstanding five-star reviews applauding his "boundless imagination of sound" (Musica), his "stylistic confidence and taste" (rbbKultur) and declaring him "one of the most eccentric and fascinating violinists on the international scene" (Musica).

Born in Athens of Albanian and Greek heritage, Kadesha studied from a young age at Musikhochschule Würzburg, followed by Kronberg Academy, where he completed his Masters in 2020. He has studied with Antje Weithaas, Salvatore Accardo, Grigori Zhislin and Ulf Wallin, and has taken part in masterclasses with Ferenc Rados, Steven Isserlis, Ivry Gitlis, Leonidas Kavakos and Eberhard Feltz. He studied chamber music with Hatto Beyerle in Hannover.

Kadesha plays a replica of Stradivari's *Lord Amherst of Hackney, ex Kreisler* (1734), made by violin maker Paul Belin, kindly on loan by the Stretton Society.