

# ROOTS

## PRESS KIT





## PIERRE FONTENELLE

Belgian-American cellist **Pierre Fontenelle** is celebrated for his audacious projects and versatile artistry, earning recognition as a rising star of the Belgian classical music scene. Prize-winner of numerous competitions, he has performed as soloist in prestigious venues in Belgium and abroad, and has been invited as soloist by renowned ensembles including the Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège, the Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra, Musiques Nouvelles, Casco Phil, the Musique Royale des Guides and the Musique Militaire Grand-Ducale.

The 2024-25 season will see him perform Concertos by Schumann, Haydn, Tchaikovsky and Gulda, and premiere two new concertos, by Belgian composer **Apolline Jesupret** and French composer **Jean-François Jung**. Pierre Fontenelle will also be artist-in-residence at the Abbaye de Royaumont alongside pianist Ninon Hannecart-Ségal.

## ROOTS

Does a passport reflect cultural identity or true nationality? Belgian by birth, but raised in Seattle, USA, the question of identity has been a constant in the life of cellist Pierre Fontenelle. He dedicates his first solo recording to the United States he grew up in, paying tribute to the diversity of the 21st century American society. The 8 recorded works reflect the many waves of immigration that have forged American musical multiculturalism, synthesising European classical music, blues, jazz, rock and, more recently, world music.

This recording essentially features three composers with whom Pierre has had the opportunity to work : Caroline Shaw, Reena Esmail and Andrea Casarrubios.

Joining him for three tracks are Luxembourg accordionist Frin Wolter and Belgian percussionist Max Charue.

« No doubt, Pierre Fontenelle is cut from the same cloth as the greats: those who let nothing stand in their way and never look down upon others' talent, background, or musical perspective. » (Musiq'3)

*"I sing the cello eclectic."*

*My first connection with the prince of all instruments wasn't through sonatas or solfège, but through Nirvana, Jimi Hendrix and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Without any teachers or parental guidance, I started by imitating Yo-Yo Ma and Apocalyptica on YouTube. That unconventional beginning shaped my curious and uninhibited approach to music today, blending classical repertoire with contemporary, bluegrass and world music alike."*

*Pierre Fontenelle*

## AWARDS

**Fuga Trophy 2024**  
Belgian Composers Union

**Breughel Competition 2022**  
1st Prize & Public Prize

**Buchet International Cello Competition 2020**  
2nd Prize

**Cello-Soloist (2019-2022)**  
Opéra Royal de Wallonie-Liège

**Baert International Cello Competition 2019**  
1st Prix & Prize Feldbusch



# Calendar :

- 6 January : CD Streaming release
- 16 January : Prerelease Concert : Namur Concert Hall (BE)
- 24 January : Official CD release (Bénélux)
- 25 January : Récital 'Dans le Noir', Luxembourg
- 31 January : Flagey, Bruxelles (BE)
- 7 February : Église Protestante, Luxembourg
- 8 February : Grange du Douaire, Ottignies (BE)
- 9 February : Estaimpuis (BE)
- 13 February : Chapelle des Soeurs Noires, Mons (BE)
- 16 February : Comblain-au-Pont (BE)
- 21 February : Sentiers de Sart-Risbart (BE)
- 13 April : Musée de la Boverie, Liège (BE)
- 13 April : Kulturmillen, Beckerich (LU)
- 1 June : St. Séverin (BE)
- 6 July : Festival des Dames, Namur (BE)
- 13 July : Hellange (LU)



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PRESSE - AUDIO LINK : [BIT.LY/4I6EGTI](https://bit.ly/4i6egti)

PIERRE FONTENELLE | CELLO  
MAX CHARUE | PERCUSSION  
FRIN WOLTER | CHROMATIC ACCORDION

- 1 Andrea Casarrubios (°1988) | *SEVEN*, for solo cello
- 2 Caroline Shaw (°1982) | *in manus tuas*, for solo cello
- 3 Caroline Shaw (°1982) | *Boris Kerner*, for cello and flower pots
- 4 Andrea Casarrubios (°1988) | *Speechless*, for cello and percussions
- 5 Punch Brothers | *Three Dots and a Dash* (arr. for cello and accordion)
- 6 Reena Esmail (°1983) | *Sandhiprakash* संधप्रकाश, for solo cello
- 7 Reena Esmail (°1983) | *Varsha* वर्षा, for solo cello
- 8 Mark Summer (°1958) | *Julie-O*, for solo cello

Produced with the support of the Fédération Wallonie-  
Bruxelles  
Booklet in french by Camille de Rijck, english translation by  
Pierre Fontenelle  
Recording : 7-9 mai 2024, Namur Concert Hall  
Artistic Direction, Recording, edition & mastering : Denis  
Guerdon  
Executive Producer : Cédric Hustinx  
Production Assistant : Denis Guerdon  
Photos : Dn Lian

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## RELEASE CALENDAR

CYP4666  
Streaming : 6 janvier 2025  
Benelux : 24 janvier 2025  
World : 28 mars 2025  
Available on CD & Streaming





Belgian-American cellist Pierre Fontenelle is celebrated for his audacious projects and versatile artistry, earning recognition as a rising star of the Belgian classical music scene.

A top prizewinner at the 2022 Breughel, 2020 Buchet, and 2019 Edmond Baert Competitions, Pierre Fontenelle also served as Cello-Soloist for the Opéra Royal de Wallonie-Liège until 2022 and has since performed at prestigious venues across Europe and Asia, including Flagey, Chapelle Reine Élisabeth, la Seine Musicale, Taipei National Concert Hall, and Shanghai Oriental Art Center. Soloist performances with renowned ensembles include the Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège, Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra, Musiques Nouvelles, Casco Phil, and Ensemble Appassionato.

Pierre's commitment to Belgian music earned him the 2024 FUGA Trophy from the Belgian Composer's Union. Upcoming highlights of the 2024–25 season include the release and concert tour of his album *Roots* (Spring 2025), a series of concerto performances, premieres by composers Apolline Jesupret and Jean-François Jung, and an artist residency at the Abbaye de Royaumont with pianist Ninon Hannecart-Ségal.

His collaborative work extends to artists such as Jodie Devos, Florian Noack, Gaëlle Solal, Gwendoline Blondeel, and Gergely Madaras. Beyond classical music, Pierre explores popular and contemporary genres in Duo Kiasma with accordionist Frin Wolter, with whom he won the Accordé'Opale Competition. Following his 2024 release *American Album* with chamber music ensemble Oxalys, his solo album *Roots* reflects his tribute to contemporary American music.

Self-taught from a young age in Seattle, Pierre pursued formal training in Luxembourg, Namur, Mons, and Paris with mentors including Éric Chardon, Han Bin Yoon and Anne Gastinel. Now a professor at IMEP (Namur), he performs on a 1690 Ruggieri cello and an 1860 Nicolas-François Vuillaume cello, generously provided by the King Baudouin Foundation.

Namurois of the Year 2020, Pierre is also the founder and artistic director of Concerts des Dames at the Abbaye Notre-Dame du Vivier and enjoys reading and writing poetry.