

The Belgian violist Kaat Schraepen's (2000) attention was immediately caught hearing the deep and warm sound of the viola, leading her to pursue this passion from the age of 7. Over the years she has been praised for her earnest interpretations as a true storyteller, her rich palette of sound colour and her great expressivity.

Awarded in several national and international competitions, Kaat Schraepen stands up as one of the most remarkable viola players of her generation. As she works to put the viola on the map as a solo instrument, she takes part in masterclasses and festivals with renowned musicians all over Europe. Her love for creating innovative programmes and projects with central themes, makes her into an open-minded musician with a broad repertoire, ranging from classical to contemporary.

Since August 2024 Kaat is the violist of Musikk i Nordland, based in Narvik (Norway). As Landsdelmusiker, this position gives her the opportunity to perform regularly throughout Nordland, Norway and Europe playing chamber music together with her colleagues. At the moment, she is focused on developing a broad classical solo and chamber music repertoire to perform in events during the next season. To achieve this, she regularly attends masterclasses. Next to this, she is very active in competitions, auditions, and recitals. Next to her soloist activity, she also works on going deeper into the field of chamber music by attending prestigious masterclasses, such as 'Stift Musical Encounters', the 'Musica Mundi Chamber Music Course and Festival', 'European Chamber Music Academy' (ECMA) sessions, and working on a varied chamber music repertoire. In 2020 she completed her bachelor studies (10 with distinction from the jury) with Julia Dinerstein at Conservatorium Maastricht (The Netherlands). In 2023, she finished her masters, also with distinction, with Mikhail Zemtsov at the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague. In 2024, she received her masters degree in music education with distinction from Erasmushogeschool Brussels.

Kaat has won prizes in several national and international competitions. In 2014 and 2015, she was a Prize Winner in the 'Prinses Christina Concours Zuid 2' (Maastricht). In 2015, she received a first prize with the mention 'Excellent' in the 'European Competition for Young Soloists' in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

In 2017, she was First Prize Winner in the 'Britten Altvioolconcours' in the Netherlands, Second Prize Winner in the '9° Concorso Internazionale di Esecuzione Musicale "Giovani Musicisti - Città di Treviso"' and First Prize Winner in the 'International Competition "Salzburg" Grand Prize Virtuoso 2017'. In the same year, she also won the 'Premio Fiorella Benetti Brazzale' during a masterclass in Bassano del Grappa (Italy).

In 2018, Kaat received a third prize in the 3. Rising Stars Grand Prix 2018 International Music Competition Berlin, the third prize in the MiN International Music Competition for Strings in Narvik (Norway) and became a laureate in the 4th International Music Competition Triomphe de l'Art (Belgium).

She won a silver medal in the Vienna International Music Competition in 2019.

In 2021 she was a semifinalist of the '28th International Johannes Brahms Competition' in Pörtlach am Wörthersee (Austria).

Highlights for the upcoming season include a tour of her solo recital project 'Back to Bach', including a performance during the Bach Festival Dordrecht at the end of the season, as well as a recital at 'Theater aan het Vrijthof' in Maastricht (The Netherlands). Highlights from past seasons include concerts at Møn Sommerkoncert (Denmark), the Aurora Festival (Sweden), the Asiagofestival (Italy) and the 'Vinterfestuka' (Norway), performances in halls such as the Mozarteum (Salzburg) and the Schumann- and Mendelssohnhaus (Leipzig). As a soloist, she performed in Amsterdam with the Britten Jeugd Strijkorkest. As a chamber musician, she has shared the stage with artists such as Stephan Picard, Eszter Haffner, Mikhail Zemtsov, Claudio Bohorquez, Ilya Grubert, Daniel Rowland, Maja Bogdanovic, Cuarteto Casals, Nino Gvetadze, Patrick Jüdt, Utrecht String Quartet, Elisabeth Perry, Alena Walentin, Anne Denholm, Lilli Maijala, Duccio Beluffi, Dana Zemtsov, Julia Dinerstein, Julius Berger and Øivind Nussle.

Passionate about improving and learning Kaat regularly attends masterclasses all over Europe with masters such as Michael Kugel, Danusha Waskiewicz, Alexander Zemtsov, Jonathan Brown, Lilli Maijala, Vladimir Mendelssohn, Tatjana Masurenko, Yuri Bondarev, Jeniffer Stumm, and Dana Zemtsov. Her love for chamber music leads her to work with many experienced chamber artists such as Jacques Rouvier, Johannes Meissl, Avedis Kouyoumdjian, Avri Levitan, Vladimir Perlin, Ronald van Spaendonck, Marc Danel, Eberhard Felz, Cuarteto Casals, Heime Müller, Andreas Fröhlich, Talich Quartet, Sharon Kam, Alexander Zemtsov, Daniel Rowland, Maja Bogdanovic, Nino Gvetadze, Lilli Maijala, Henk Guittart, Anastasia Safonova, and Marc Tooten.

Kaat has gained orchestral experience as a member of several youth orchestras. These orchestras, being the LOJM (Youth Symphony Orchestra Limburg) in Hasselt, the Youth Symphony Orchestra Amikejo in Maastricht, and the LGT Young Soloists. The last one, giving concerts all over the world. Currently she works for the Ataneres Ensemble on a freelance basis. In 2024 she took part in their CD recording 'The Seasons Revisited' comprising of 'The Four Seasons Recomposed' by Max Richter and four shorter contemporary works by different Belgian composers.

Kaat plays on a modern instrument by Belgian maker Thomas Meuwissen, built in 2012, named Miss Ma(r)ple.