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News

Lara St John's documentary expands its festival run and launches impact campaign

9 SEPTEMBER 2026

***Dear Lara* will be presented at numerous film festivals throughout September, with screenings available to educational and cultural institutions across North America**

Photo: Annie Jeeves

Producer Patrick Hamm with Lara St John at the premiere of *Dear Lara*

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Dear Lara, the award-winning documentary directed by violinist Lara St John, has added more screenings in the midst of its festival run, with a commercial release planned for 2027.

In addition, the filmmakers have launched a campus and impact campaign, with screenings available to universities, conservatories, plus other educational and cultural institutions throughout North America.

The film came about after St John publicly disclosed the abuse she experienced while attending the Curtis Institute of Music. This prompted correspondence from other survivors who shared their own stories, which led St John across North America and Europe, where she encountered disturbing patterns of grooming, exploitation, silence and institutional failure.

Since its **premiere at the Santa Barbara Film Festival** in February 2026, *Dear Lara* has been screened at the Cascadia Women's Film Festival, the Berkshire International Film Festival, the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival, Cinema d'iDEA in Rome, and the Brittany International Film Festival.

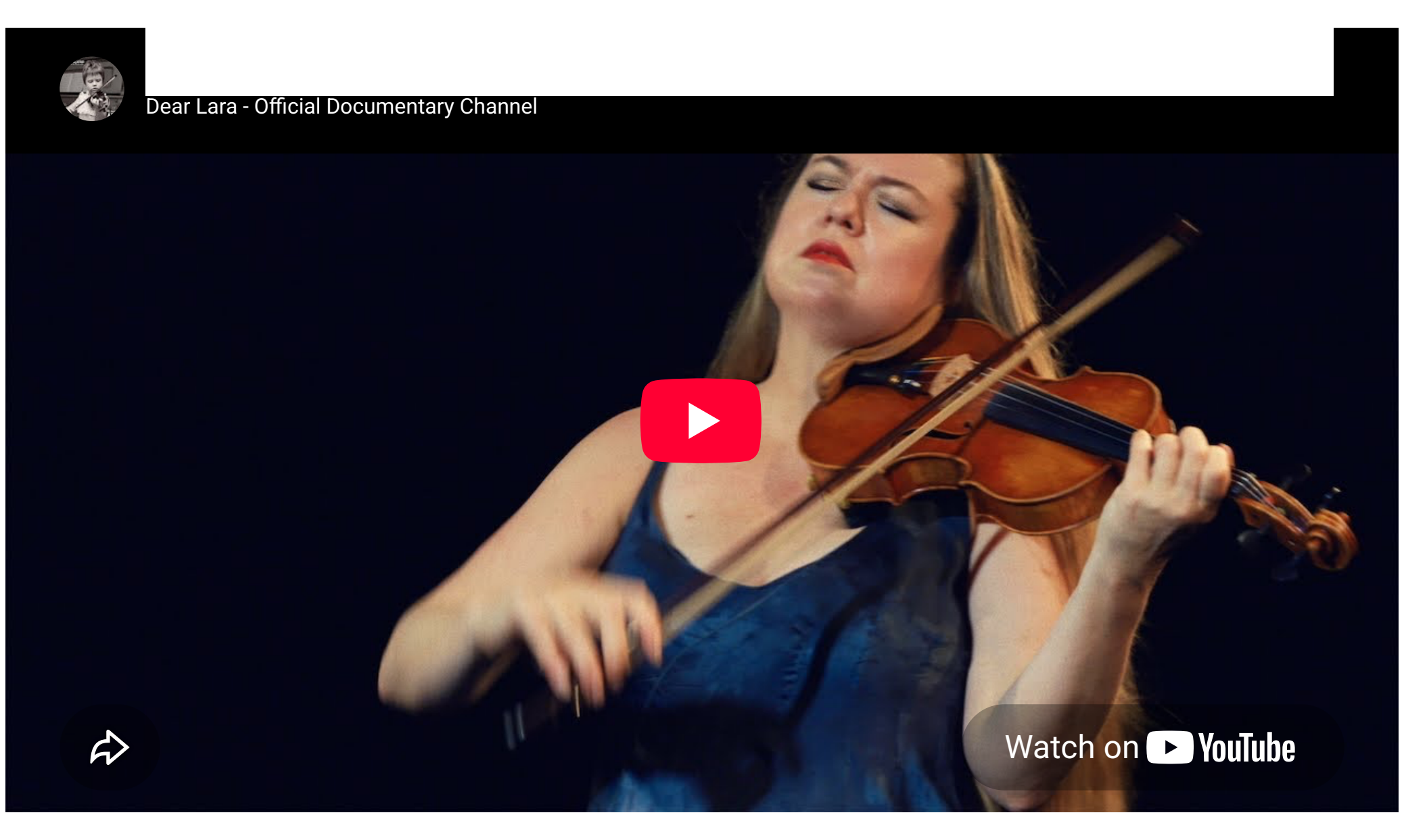
At Cinema d'iDEA, it received a **Courage Award**, and it was named Best International Documentary at the festival in Brittany. In August, it received an award for Best First Time Filmmaker at the LA Independent Women Film Awards.

In September, *Dear Lara* will be presented at a number of film festivals, including the Imagine This Women's International Film Festival in New York, the Arpa International Film Festival in Los Angeles and the Lady Filmmakers Festival in Beverly Hills.

'Making the film was definitely not about highlighting my own story,' said St John. 'It was about listening to people who had been silenced and asking them what needs to change. What can we do to keep another generation of young musicians from experiencing what we did?

'We want to spark a noisy conversation with our audience that will trigger meaningful change at these schools.'

Watch the trailer here:



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	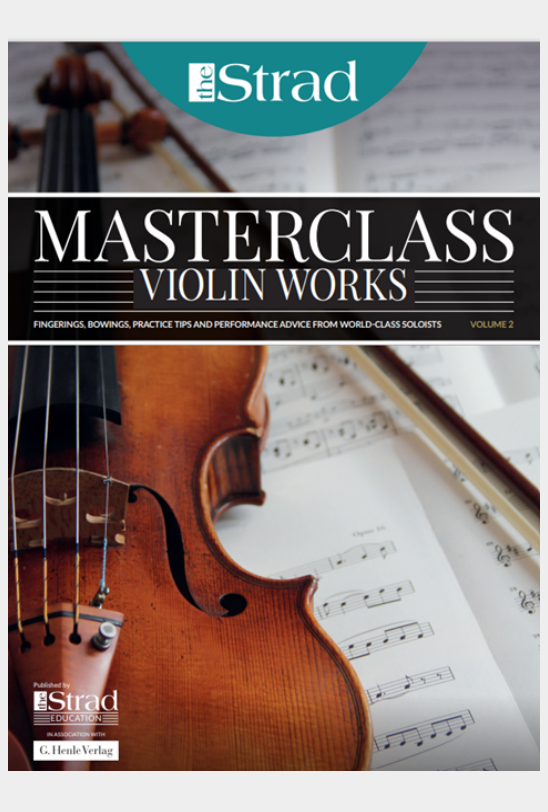	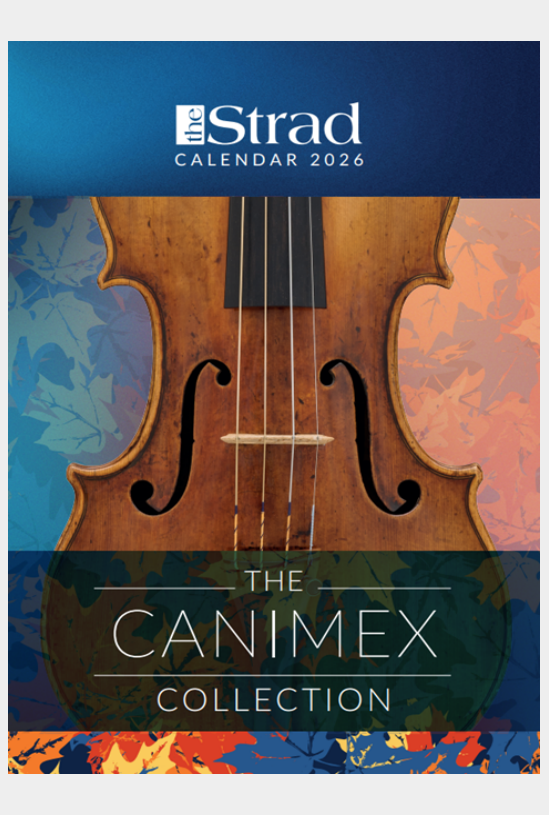
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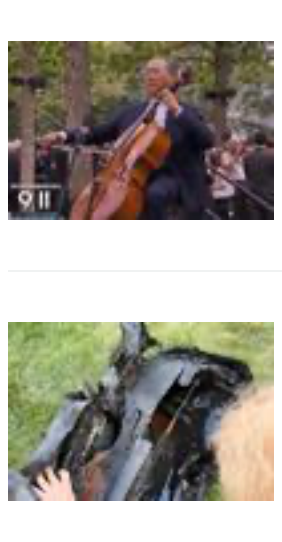
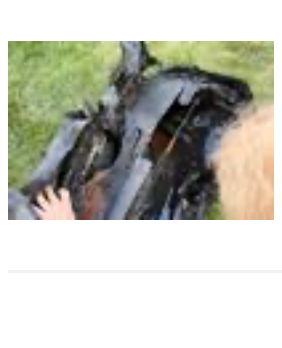
-  Watch: Yo-Yo Ma performs Bach during 9/11 ceremony in New York
-  Fundraiser launched after fire destroys 1704 Guarneri cello and family home
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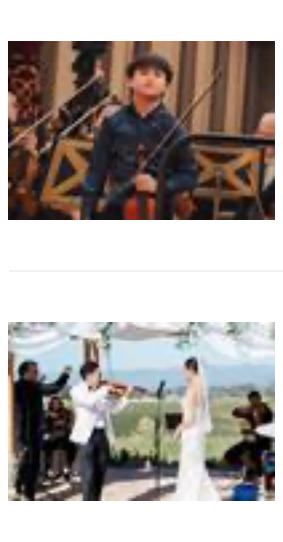
-  Eleven-year-old violinist wins 2026 George Enescu International Competition
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