

Born in Prague in 1960, Michal Kaňka took up the cello under leadership of Mirko Škampa at the age of seven. Later, he studied in the Prague Conservatory under prof. Viktor Moučka (cellist of the famous Vlach string quartet). During his studies at the Prague Academy of Fine Arts – under the tutelage of Prof. Josef Chuchro – he participated in the G. Piatigorsky Seminars in Los Angeles under famous cellists Andre Navarra, Maurice Gendron and Paul Tortelier in 1983 and 1984.

In 1980, Michal Kaňka received honorable mention at the international Prague Spring Competition. One year later, he was awarded the grand prize for all categories in the Czechoslovak National Competition. This initial success has been followed by top prizes in the Tchaikovsky Cello Competition in Moscow in 1982 and in the Prague Spring Competition in 1983 (first prize). In 1986, Michal won the ARD International Competition in Munich.

Michal Kaňka has performed with leading European orchestras such as the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, the Prague Radio Orchestra, the Slovak Philharmonic, the Bayerischer Rundfunk Orchestra, the Berlin Rundfunk Orchestra, Liverpool Philharmonic, the Nagoya Phil., Kanagawa phil., Sapporo phil., the Century Symphony orchestra Osaka, the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, the Prague Chamber Orchestra, the Prague Chamber Philharmonic.... He has appeared as a soloist in Germany, Austria, Denmark, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Italy, France, Kosovo, Spain, Portugal, North and South America and Japan. He had been a regular soloist of the Brno Philharmonic Orchestra between years 1995–2005 and now he has been a nominated soloist of The Prague Radio Orchestra since 2003.

Michal Kaňka has recorded for Czech Radio, Radio France, Bayerischer Rundfunk, Hessischer Rundfunk, Suedwest Rundfunk, AVRO Radio Holland.... His CDs were released for Supraphon, Bonton, Panton, Radioservis Prague, Nuova Era (Italy). For a long time he had collaborated with the French company Praga digitals (distributed by Harmonia Mundi France), where he published around 40 CDs. For many of them, he received several awards - (Choc de la Music, diapason D'OR). His last CD came out by Japanese company the Nami Records.

Michal Kaňka has been always an active chamber music player. As a member of the Pražák string quartet (since 1986) and the Beethoven string trio he has appeared on major concert stages in the whole world and recorded many pieces above all for the CD company Praga digitals.

In 2011 he started to teach cello-solo at the Academy of performing Arts in Prague and in 2013 he became a Professor at the Prague Conservatory. In 2014 he was chosen to be a chairman of the permanent committee of the international competition Prague spring.

He plays an outstanding contemporary instrument made by French violin-maker Christian Bayon 2006 and the bow made by French bow-maker Nicole Descloux 2000.