

# LARSEN STRINGS for Violin — 'It's all about the music' —

## Review of Larsen Il Cannone Gold for Violin With Professor Duek Woo Kim

*Interview article with violinist Duek Woo Kim as published in the February 2024 issue of The Strad. The first release in Korea, by Larsen distributor City Music, in December 2023 drew a lot of attention from performers. Extract taken from The Strad (Korean Edition). Original translation.*

Duek Woo Kim is Professor of Orchestral Studies in the School of Arts at Chung-Ang University.

Article by Jeong So-yeon.



### **First of all, I'm curious how you feel about using Larsen Il Cannone Violin Gold.**

The texture of gold strings is special. In the meantime, many performers have said that gold strings are not easy to adapt to. In particular, there is a prejudice that gold strings have a unique texture or sound. In particular, my instrument is difficult to make sound in G strings, and there was a reverberation called the sound of a wolf, but this symptom disappeared after installing this string. It also maintains a clear sound evenly in any position. It also makes the natural sound of the instrument well.

### **Specifically, what advantages does it have?**

Until now, it was difficult when play vibrato. I thought it was inevitable because I had an arm injury. I changed the strings to Il Cannone Gold during the last Larsen Strings feedback section, and I was surprised to be able to play vibrato so naturally and comfortably. It was so amazing that the sound was good and the music came out as I wanted from the instrument at the same time. Especially because the tension of the string is good, it is easy to match the pitch, and it holds up well even when performing strongly in high positions. It is comfortable to play because it also produces careful expression, but it does not require much effort when practicing. I felt it when I played, but I was able to feel the strength of the Gold string more when I recorded it not too long ago. Unlike a performance hall, a microphone captures all sounds very sensitively. Perhaps one that can distinguish the sound of a better instrument than a performance hall is recording with a microphone. So when recording, the sound of the instrument cannot be hidden even more, but the Larsen Il Cannone Gold strings were different. It was easy to play and it was good to sing, and I could express it delicately, so I could feel the advantage more when recording.

### **In the meantime, there must have been a reason why people don't use gold strings.**

There is a prejudice that gold strings are difficult to handle. It is also considered that the tension is weak, but this is not the case with the Larsen Il cannone at all. I think that the color of the sound depends on the tension, but the weak strings make a warm sound. However, the Il Cannone Gold makes a soft but warm sound, and the tension is good at the same time. I think it's a modernized gold string. The balance of the four strings is also maintained evenly because the tension is good. Usually, there is a difference in tone when crossing the strings, but the four strings of Il Cannone Gold are so balanced that the tone does not change much.

### **Many performers also use a combination of four strings into different products.**

I've also used the same product for G, D, and A string, while E-string has used different products. However, this time, Il Cannone Gold has the advantage of supporting four strings as a set, especially in G strings. Since my violin has a bright sound, it was always regrettable that the bass was weak because the strings were used accordingly, but Il Cannone Gold made up for the disappointment. Most of all, I liked that it was strings that expressed as much as I expressed it.



**Then, do you think strings are also important to make a good sound or a desired sound?**

Of course. Strings are as important as instruments. Changing or adjusting a certain part of an instrument actually imposes many restrictions and requires a long time. However, strings are one of the ways to make sound better in a short time. In fact, while teaching students, I couldn't make the desired sound, so I often agonized over it together. I changed the playing method and touched the bridge or tailpiece, but it didn't change. At that time, I tried changing the strings just in case, especially when I tried using the work Cannone gold on my student's instrument, and the sound I wanted was heard. I hope you know that finding strings that fit as well as instruments is as important as sound.

**Nevertheless, there is a downside of Il Cannone Gold, too. It could be considered too expensive for non-professional performers to use.**

Honestly, it's true that it's expensive (laughs). It's the most expensive string I've ever used, and it lasts that long because it's durable. I first started using Cannone Gold on June last year, and I used it while making good sound until September. In my case, I usually changed the string once a month when there was a lot of performance. However, I used Il Cannone Gold for about three months, but I maintained the same sound. I changed it just in case I had a problem because I used it for too long, but there was actually no big abnormality enough to keep the string I used again. So, compared to the cost of changing strings often, I thought it wasn't that expensive.

Duke Woo Kim referred to Larsen's Il Cannone Gold as a "reliable string." This is because it is a string that maintains the same sound even if you use it for a long time, and makes the sound you want and the song you want to sing together.

Usually, Larsen Strings selects and promotes artists from the company, but Duek Woo Kim is not a Larsen artist. He also proved that he was actually purchasing and using them himself.

So it must have been burdensome to actively talk about a company's strings. However, the reason he emphasizes such good strings is that finding strings that fit him in making sounds is as important as choosing an instrument or bow, and maybe more. The work Il Cannone gold of the Larsen strings, which was settled by violinist Duek Woo Kim, who came out to the world to find the desired sound, may be a solution to the concerns of many performers.



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