

Andante inferno

Name Nina Kotova **Age** 28 **Occupation** Cellist and composer **Story so far** After a spectacular start in the Soviet music world, entering the Moscow Conservatoire aged seven and winning the Prague International at fifteen, Nina studied music in Germany and then at Yale. When her funds dried up, Nina had to drop out. Things looked bleak until she wandered into an open casting at the Ford model agency and was signed on the spot. After several years of ping-pong between the catwalks of New York and Paris – still practising cello backstage – Nina was invited to play at a party held by British conductor William Boughton. Once again she was spotted, this time by an A&R man. Nina has since played at both Wigmore and Carnegie Halls, and released a CD. She also met her partner (a rich Texan music patron) at the same party. Life is like that for some people. Nina now lives in Dallas, performs on a 1696 Guarneri (worth £600,000), and wears a diamond as big as a table on one of her talented fingers. **The critics say** A cross between, Jacqueline du Pré, Uma Thurman, and Michelle Pfeiffer. **What did you learn from modelling?** 'How to do make-up, and dress in half a second. No one ever has to wait for me to get ready.' **The cello or the Manolos: which would you choose?** 'I never had to. My instrument always travelled with me to modelling assignments – on flights it had a seat with a ticket marked "Mr Cello".' **Whatever next?** 'I want to finish my cello concerto.' *The CD 'Nina Kotova' is available on Philips.*

