

Cello **Online** city

Welcome to the Nexus of the Next Step in Cello!

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- [The New Directions Cello Facebook page](#)



Message from the Director

By Chris White

Dear New Directions Cellists,

The 20th annual New Directions Cello Festival was held June 13-15, 2014 at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York. We wanted to celebrate 20 years of New Directions, so we invited some very special guest artists: Hank Roberts and Bill Frisell (NY & CA), Stephan Braun (Germany), Pierre Michaud (Belgium), Emma Beaton (NY), Cello en Vogue (Germany) and Mike Block with Sandeep Das (MA).

As usual, the workshops started at 1pm on Friday, and the cellobrating didn't stop until mid-afternoon on Sunday. Cello en Vogue kicked off the Friday night concert with 3 female cellists from Germany (Corinna Eikmeier, Marei Seuthe and Krischa Weber), who were joined by cellist and New Directions Assistant Director Sera Smolen and electronic sound master Forrest Larson as guest members of the ensemble. Next up was Pierre Michaud, who wowed us with his abilities to compose, arrange and perform duets with himself. He did this by pre-recording videos of himself playing the 2nd cello parts and he was able to go smoothly from solo playing to bringing in his look-alike duo partner on a big flat-screen TV, which was next to him onstage. Most of the 2nd cello videos were filmed in beautiful natural settings in various countries, so we also got to virtually travel to Belgium, France, Spain and Canada, while we joined him on his musical journey. The last guest artist on Friday was Berlin based jazz cellist Stephan Braun, who blew us all away with his playing, which included sophisticated uses of chopping, looping and incredibly technical long jazz lines. He played the cello at times like a guitar – replete with classical guitar style manicured nails – and also demonstrated considerable percussion skills when drumming on his cello.

Saturday is always a big day at New Directions, with workshops almost from dawn until dusk, a wonderful concert in the evening and then jamming late into the wee hours in the dorm. Emma Beaton started off the concert with her soulful renditions of traditional and original fiddle tunes. Some were just solo cello and others with her beautiful vocals accompanied by her cello. She was joined onstage by Mike Block in the second half of

her program. Next, Mike Block and Sandeep Das gave us a memorable, eclectic, at times ecstatic set of music for cello, voice and Indian percussion. And to wrap up an amazing concert, Hank Roberts and Bill Frisell played as a duo for the first time in their nearly 40 years of playing together. Hank played cello and sang on some tunes, while Bill artfully blended in his unique electric guitar stylings. They played originals as well as standards done in their own inimitable way.

Sunday heralded a few more workshops and then the farewell event, which was kicked off by an open mic (open to all participants), followed by the Cello Big Band Concert. Our fearless leader for the Cello Big Band was Tom Culver. Pulling out all the stops, Tom leapt from the podium and broke out the cajon (Afro-Peruvian drum) on the tune 'Star' by Break of Reality.

New Directions is so much more than just who was there, who played what and what workshops were given! It's about making connections with like-minded souls, about inspiration, ah-ha moments, and about the love that can be shared through music and being with special people. Hope to see you at New Directions 2015!

Cellistically Yours,

– Chris

Chris White, Founder & Director

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New Directions Cello Festival 2015

Ithaca College, Ithaca NY, June 12 - 14, 2015

Join us for the 21st annual New Directions Cello Festival

Guest artists for 2015:



Apocalyptica founding member Max Lilja

Finnish cellist and composer Max Lilja has garnered a reputation as one of the most versatile and adventurous cellists of all time. In 2013, he released his first solo album, 'Plays Electronica By One Cello,' which has been hailed as "a redefinition of the sound of electric cello." Max is a co-founder of the million selling cello rock band Apocalyptica.



Natalie Haas and Alasdair Fraser

Scottish fiddle legend Alasdair Fraser and uber talented Natalie Haas have been ripping it up as a duo for nearly ten years. Fraser is from Clackmannan, a small town in Scotland; his playing is as deep and real as it gets. Haas, a Juilliard grad from California, is a rising star in her own right. Together, the duo create groove laden Scottish/Celtic music that is at once fresh and traditional.



Mark Summer and Tierney Sutton

Mark Summer is a founding member of the two time Grammy winning **Turtle Island Quartet**. He is known for his unique and multi-timbered style, which incorporates virtuoso jazz soloing, distinctive bass lines, and extensive percussive techniques. Tierney Sutton is a six time Grammy Nominee as both a recording jazz artist and arranger.



Jacob Szekely Trio

Founded in 2013, The Jacob Szekely Trio is an eclectic groove based ensemble that bridges the gaps between jazz, funk, rock and classical. Cellist Jacob Szekely, drummer Christopher Allis and pianist/keyboardist Josh Nelson forge new sonic territory with highly original compositions and improvisations.



Trevor Exter

For most of his life, Trevor Exter has been a professional singer and cellist with his own approach to all aspects of composing, songwriting, producing, performing and touring. He has a couple of bands where he gets to make a spectacle of himself, and some producers like to use him as a secret weapon. Read more about Trevor and his playing in [this issue's review](#) of his latest cd, 'Roam'.

Szekely is a highly accomplished player, as comfortable ripping it up with complex improvised jazz lines as he is rocking out with the likes of rock legend Rush, with whom he played and toured in 2013-14. Jacob is a co-founder of **String Project Los Angeles**, a music school and resource for alternative string players which was named "One of the top reasons to study music in Los Angeles" by Strings Magazine.

CD Review by Corbin Keep

Trevor Exter: *Roam* (2014)

Songs for solo cello and voice.

The cello playing on this album is so fresh, clear and pure of tone and especially – so natural sounding – that the huge effort it took to achieve such sound could easily go unnoticed.

Roam was not built in a day.

The chop of Rushad Eggleston and the strumming/pizz approach of Trevor Exter (to cite but two of the innovative, influential cellists currently on the scene) have conspired to at last, put solo unadorned cello on the same footing as guitar for vocal accompaniment. Oh, it works to strum and bow the cello in the traditional ways and sing along, but such endeavours often come off as ineffectual when compared to the ringing, overtone rich timbre of acoustic guitar, especially when the material being played is repetitious riffs. Much of the time, strummed/plucked cello sounds fairly dead; all but bereft of ringing and overtones. Not anymore! Not only does Exter's cello ring out, all notes of its four strings resonating with wonderful clarity, the grooves are second to none. These are grooves that you want to hang out with, the sorts of grooves that could happily go on, like a meditation, much longer than a three or four minute song.

Those grooves support intelligent, thought provoking lyrics and world class vocals, making for a lovely record overall.

Roam is a snapshot of sorts, into the art and soul of someone who has produced something truly worthwhile and unique – an approach to playing the cello that some of us may had intuited might one day exist, but had never actually heard in reality before. That reality is lovely. And I daresay – important.

Keep roaming, Trevor. We are enjoying the journey as much as you are.



Note: Trevor Exter is a guest artist for New Directions Cello Festival 2015 (June 12-14), where you'll be able to hear his songs live, as well as learn firsthand in a workshop setting, just how the man etches those deep grooves.

Music in the Mail

Grant by You Bred Raptors? Featuring Bryan Wilson, cello (2014)

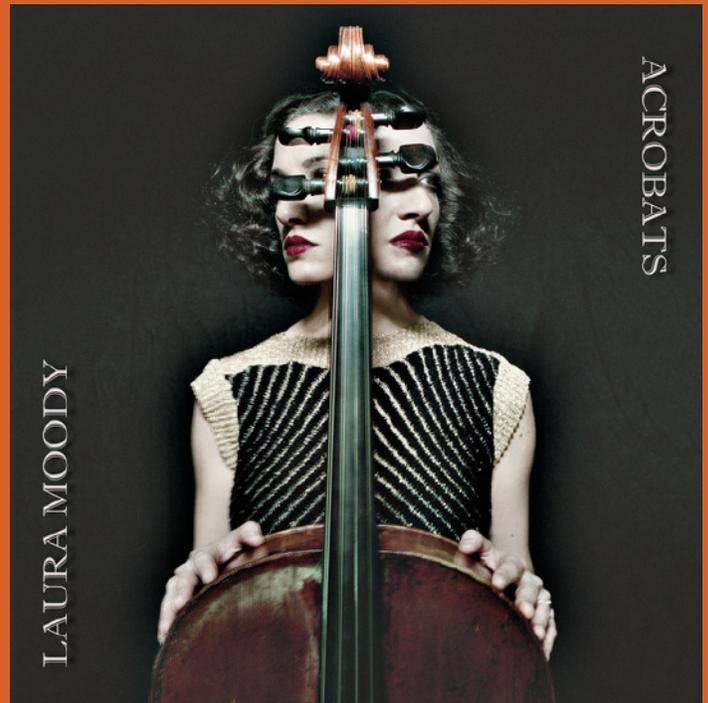
Eclectic Instrumental Garage Prog at its finest! The raw power, immediacy and honesty of this music never fails to bring a happy up and down accompanying nod to my head and a broad smile to my face. One thing I love about this record is that it could be from most any era – there is a timeless quality about it. At points, one could almost believe that it was from the heyday of early-mid 1970s European prog – except something this good you certainly would've heard of by now! While the music is not totally cello driven, the cello playing by Bryan Wilson is prominent throughout.

Bryan is the author of the fabulous New Directions Cello resource [Cello Chords \(reviewed here\)](#) and can be [purchased here](#).



Acrobats by Laura Moody (2014)

Solo cello and voice, with occasional overdubbed incidental extra sounds. As lushly beautiful as they are deeply original, Moody's 7 songs (6 originals and one cover) will go the quick of you.



The CelLowdown

Final Words

Cello City Online has an important mission, which is to inform people about what is new exciting and different in the world of cello, especially cello which spans genres, techniques and technologies that expand beyond the classical tradition. What would make this mission even more successful? You! Ideas, pitches for articles, how-to-columns, cds to review... You name it.

[Corbin Keep](#), editor

[Chris White](#), director

[Sera Smolen](#), assistant director and education coordinator

[Stephen Katz](#), membership director

To keep abreast and abow of all things New Directions Cello, visit the [official New Directions site](#), as well as the [New Directions Cello Facebook Page](#).

For New Directions Cello style recordings, sheet music and method books, visit the [Cello City Store](#).

New Directions is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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"Scroll," by Kapyrna (page 6)