

Biography

Luke Cissell (sī-suhl) writes and records music in a distinctive style that is by turns arrestingly melodic, beguilingly layered, and eminently human, developed out of his roots as a versatile musician at the intersection of classical, bluegrass, and post-rock traditions. Cissell performs nearly every part on each of his [ten albums](#) of original music.

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, Cissell began playing music at a young age—he was a fiddling champion at the age of eight and performed Mozart’s third violin concerto on his first honors recital soon thereafter. He earned a degree in history from Princeton University before establishing himself as a professional musician and composer in New York City, where he cut his teeth as a session player for a wide variety of artists from Ingrid Michaelson to Philip Glass while performing at many of the city’s most well-known venues including Carnegie Hall, CBGB, John Zorn’s The Stone, Bargemusic, Radio City Music Hall, and Lincoln Center. Cissell has been called “one of the most adventurous, eclectic, and delightful modern composers—so original, he’s unclassifiable” (Steve Silberman, bestselling author), and recognized for his “incredible” (Goffin & King Foundation) and “superb” (SoulandJazz.com) musicianship, his “remarkable recording... accessible and compelling music” (WRTI Classical and Jazz), and “very creative work that deserves to be heard” (Ted Gioia, acclaimed critic and music historian). His sound has been described as “haunting and authentic... impossible to categorize but very easy to love,” (Chris Ingalls, PopMatters) with NewMusicUSA’s Frank J. Oteri writing, “I can’t wait to hear more.”

A member of the Recording Academy and ASCAP, Cissell is a 2021 New York City Artist Corps Grant recipient and a returning 2021-2022 Teaching Artist for the Very Young Composers program with the New York Philharmonic.