

Biography

Luke Cissell (**si-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 young musician immersed in classical violin repertoire and the Appalachian mountain music of his native bluegrass. A multi-instrumentalist, Cissell performs nearly every part on each of his six albums of original music. His compositional output includes a feature length film score, a chamber opera, three string quartets, a string quintet, a sonata for viola and piano, and assorted works for solo and mixed ensemble.

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, Cissell began playing music at a young age—he was a bluegrass 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, cutting his teeth as a session musician 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, The Knitting Factory, The Bitter End, Rockwood Music Hall, John Zorn’s The Stone, Bargemusic, Radio City Music Hall, and Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center.

Cissell is a 2017-18 Very Young Composers Teaching Artist with the New York Philharmonic.

Selected Works

- 2017 **Three Piano Pieces**
- 2016 **String Quintet** for two violins, two violas, and cello
[premiere](#) Odyssey Ensemble, Trier, Germany
- 2015 **Backwoods** EP
- The Ambassadors** chamber opera (S-Mz-T-T-Ba-B, string quartet, piano)
- Sonata for Viola and Piano**
- 2014 **Infinite Progress** suite for solo violin / studio album
2013-2014 serialization in [Works & Days Quarterly](#)
- 2013 **Cosmography** studio album June 2013
[Review](#): Frank J. Oteri, NewMusicUSA
- String Quartet No. 2** premiere by the Hudson Quartet, Brooklyn, NY
Frontier Chorales premiere, Brooklyn, NY
- 2011 **Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano**
- Five Miniatures** for flute, B-flat clarinet, cello and piano
- 2010 **String Quartet No. 1 "Poor Lazarus"**
[premiere](#) North River Music Series, Greenwich House, New York, NY

Selected Credits, Appearances, & Honors

- 2017 **New York Philharmonic** New World Initiative Manhattan borough composition prizewinner
- 2016 **The Manhattan Symphonie** Carnegie Hall; 1st violin section
New York Session Symphony Concertmaster
- 2015 **Handel Festival Orchestra** Principal 2nd violin; principal viola
- 2014 **The Longest Week** Feature film, Armian Pictures; Violin/actor
Various Artists "2776" Musical-comedy album for charity OneKid OneWorld; Violin, mandolin
- 2013 **CBS Sunday Morning: A Concert of Note**, **Yves Klein "Monotone-Silence Symphony"**; Violin
America's Got Talent (NBC) Live network television finale at Radio City Music Hall NYC; Violin
Tara Hugo sings Philip Glass Studio album, Orange Mountain Music; Violin
- 2012 **Dance Theater Workshop: Juliana F. May "Gutter Gate"** String arrangements, violin, viola
- 2011 **Ian Axel (A Great Big World) "This is the New Year"** Violin, viola
MTV News Cable network solo performance cameo; Violin
- 2010 **Ingrid Michaelson "Everybody"** Violin
- 2009 **Glory at Sea** Short film by Benh Zeitlin (Beasts of the Southern Wild); Violin, viola
The Light Surgeons "True Fictions: New Adventures in Folklore" Violin