

Wytold Bio

Wytold writes original music on the six-string electric cello inspired by outdoor rock climbing trips, world travel, his background studying philosophy of physics, and his daily work leading music workshops in military hospitals. Using electronic edge alongside acoustic harmonies and double-stop grit, Wytold's electrified-chamber sound energizes rock clubs as much as it inspires reflective audiences in the concert hall.

Wytold received the 2018 Montgomery County Executive Award for Artistic Excellence, several grants from Montgomery County, the state of Maryland, and the District of Columbia, and the "Best Six-String Electric Cellist" award from the Washington City Paper's 2018 Best Of. His recent projects include scoring the HBO Documentary Film "We Are Not Done Yet", and releasing a classical hip-hop album "Beats, Bows & Remixes" with GRAMMY-nominated Christylez Bacon at a celebratory show with the National Symphony Orchestra.

AWARDS/RECOGNITION

- Recipient of the 2018 Montgomery County Executive Award for Artistic Excellence
- Recipient of a 2018 Individual Artist Grant from the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County
- NS Design featured artist
- Strathmore Artist in Residence from 2012-2013
- Recipient of several previous grant awards from the Maryland State Arts Council, the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County
- Selected to study and collaborate with Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble in their 2015 Global Musician Workshop

- His most recent full-length album, "Fireflies, Fairies & Squids" ranked in the Top Ten RMR World Music Radio Chart for 13 weeks in a row, with "Giant Squids" at #1 for 6 weeks

FILM-SCORING

- Composer for 2018 HBO Documentary Film "We Are Not Done Yet"
- Composer for 2017 award-winning documentary, "New Chefs on the Block"
- Composer for 2013 Sundance award-winning and EMMY-nominated film, "Blood Brother"

PERFORMANCE

- Has performed his original compositions with the National Symphony Orchestra several years in a row in collaboration with GRAMMY-nominated progressive hip-hop artist Christylez Bacon
- He gave a TEDx performance discussing the relationship between his six-string electric cello compositions and classical and popular music
- In 2015, gave a sold-out performance titled "Biggie, Beethoven, Busta, and Bach" which blended classically-inspired instrumental covers of popular rap songs with remixes of well-known classical themes
- The Wytold Ensemble was selected as one of the top 5 finalists in the 21st Century Musician Emerging Artist Ensemble Competition
- Other recent performances include: Sundance Film Festival, the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the French Embassy, the Maui Arts & Cultural Center, the Ordway Theater in St. Paul, ODC Theater in San Francisco, the National Geographic Museum, the Strathmore Performing Arts Center, the Levine School of Music, the Phillips Collection, Sydney-Harman Hall, the DC Jazz Festival, the Clarice Smith Center for the Performing Arts, the Atlas Performing Arts Center,

and the National Cherry Blossom Festival, among many other venues

THEATER & DANCE SCORING

- Composer and live cellist for the critically acclaimed Woolly Mammoth Theater production of "An Octoroon"
- Composer for the contemporary dance company, Christopher K Morgan & Artists (CKM&A)
- In residence with CKM&A at the Maui Cultural Center in Hawaii to create Pohaku, a piece that explores historical and current interactions between western and native Hawaiian cultures
- Has toured nationally with CKM&A in Hawaii, California, New York, and Minnesota

WORK WITH VETERANS

- Has regularly performed for 5 years at Walter Reed Military Hospital and co-leads workshops that help Veterans and family members heal through creating music at USOs located at Walter Reed and Fort Belvoir
- Is a board member of the newly established non-profit organization, Community Building Art Works (CBAW), which creates broader dialogue about Veterans and other social issues through art, music, and writing
- In January 2017, was joined by Metropolitan Opera violinist Patmore Lewis to perform Wytold's live musical score for "We Are Not Done Yet", an evening of Veteran group poetry about war and PTSD directed and produced by EMMY-nominated actor Jeffrey Wright at the Shakespeare Lansburgh Theater. The event became the subject of an HBO Documentary Film

EDUCATION

- Wytold also teaches private cello lessons and leads educational workshops for elementary, middle and high schools through Artivate

BACKGROUND

Wytold (William Wytold Lebing) began private lessons in classical cello repertoire at age 10 and participated in school and regional youth orchestras throughout Northern Virginia, often as principal chair. Wytold always dreamt of going to college to study cello performance but was held back by carpal tunnel syndrome, caused by an over-zealous and technically unsound approach to the instrument. After a 1.5 year hiatus, Wytold reintroduced himself to playing music by learning folk songs on the acoustic guitar. Guitar strumming and finger-picking gradually reintroduced Wytold's fingers and wrists to the motions involved in performing and also instilled a new soul and passion for heart-felt musicianship and the musical experience.

Shortly thereafter, Wytold translated to the cello the techniques he learned on guitar, such as strumming chord progressions, finger-picking, playing improvised solos, and writing songs that incorporate contemporary grooves with a verse-chorus format. Just before receiving two Master's Degrees from Pitt and moving to DC (one in Philosophy, one in History and Philosophy of Science), Wytold taught himself to play the shoulder-strapped six-string electric cello with live-looping. His mathematical studies helped him visualize and manipulate his different cello layers when composing and performing, often inspired by outdoor rock climbing and hiking trips in West Virginia and California. Energized by DC's cultural and musical diversity, Wytold quickly became immersed in many different non-classical collaborations that in turn influence his own playing and compositions, including classical Hindustani, middle eastern percussion, hip-hop, go-go, folk, indie rock, americana, and jazz. Through performance, composition, and education, Wytold continues to learn from

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and synthesize these various influences while encouraging budding strings musicians to explore non-traditional musical styles and techniques.