

Nathaniel Smith – Cello

Nathaniel Smith began studying cello at five years of age and quickly developed an interest in playing cello in a variety of musical settings. He is a two-time winner of the alternative instrument category at the Southern Regional Fiddler's Contest. He won first place in the American String Teacher Association Alternative Music Competition in 2005, which included a winner's performance at the Nugget Casino in Reno, Nevada where he received the award for best musicianship and also where he first met Mark O'Connor. In 2006, he completed a national tour with Mark O'Connor's American String Celebration.

Nathaniel began touring in the US and Canada with Natalie MacMaster in the fall of 2007. In the summer of 2008, he was honored to meet Yo Yo Ma, who recently recorded a cello arrangement taught to him by Nathaniel and that is included on Yo-Yo's CD, *Songs of Joy and Peace*. In December 2008, Nathaniel appeared on the television broadcast of the CBC's *Holiday Festival on Ice*, which not only featured Natalie MacMaster's band, but several Olympic ice skating medalists. Nathaniel appeared on the nationally syndicated public broadcasting show, *From the Top*, which features young classical musicians. He recently completed a tour with the Jeremy Kittel Band and performed with Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn, opening a show at Disney Hall in L.A. for Steve Martin and the Steep Canyon Rangers.

He has also performed with Darol Anger, Andy Leftwich, Cody Kilby, Bruce Molsky, Michael Doucet, Christian Howes, Chris Thile, Gilles Apap, David Grier, Mike Marshall and Matt Flinner and appears with Darol on the DVD Fiddle Masters Vol. 2 released by Fred Carpenter's Violin Shop in Nashville in the fall of 2007.

In April 2009, he was the featured artist on Mississippi Public Radio's *Grass Roots* in a performance recorded before a live audience. In summer 2009, he taught at the Clarridge Music Camp in Big Sur, California, at Christian Howes Creative Strings Workshop in Columbus, Ohio and at the Leahy Music Camp in Ontario, Canada.

Nathaniel pursues classical music studies with Carlton McCreery at the University of Alabama, with whom he has studied since he was five years of age. He won the 2009 Mississippi Symphony Orchestra's Concerto Competition in the high school division. He also studied with renowned cellist Andres Diaz in July of 2008. He was the principal cellist in the Mississippi All-State Orchestra for 2006.

In December 2009, he released a CD, *Arrhythmia*, of all original music performed on cello. He also released a CD, *The Nathaniel Smith Jazz Project*, recorded live at the Mississippi Museum of Art. He is continuing work on his next CD as well.

He enjoys playing many musical styles. He studied and performed jazz and adapts many tunes from the jazz repertoire to cello. He has been the cellist, bassist, and composer in local bands, and is a sought after soloist on the national scene, frequently performing and recording with jazz, classical and traditional musicians. Mentors include cellists Natalie Haas, Rushad Eggleston, Mike Block and Tristan Clarridge.

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