
NEWS FOR CELLISTS AUTUMN 2014

Reviews of New Cello Strings

After launching Magnacore C and G to considerable acclaim in October 2013, Larsen released Magnacore A and D in April this year. At the same time, Pirastro released a new set of strings under the Evah Pirazzi family name: Evah Pirazzi Gold. We tested these new arrivals with five professional cellists and report their responses on page 2 of this newsletter.

Launch of new website

Over the last 12 years we have received wonderfully positive feedback about our website, which we had designed to be as calm and straightforward to read as a piece of printed paper, but a bit more versatile. Sadly, website software is not immortal and our site's original software became obsolete a few years ago, making it increasingly hard to keep the site up to date. So over the past year we have been busy developing an updated site in a more future-proof format.

We are happy to announce that the new site was published on 11 August and we hope that users are finding it familiar and easy to use. We hope that there will not be too many teething problems, but if you do find something which doesn't work or have a suggestion, please don't hesitate to let us know and we will send you some cello postcards in return with our warmest thanks.

Take a Bow feedback

"Working through the bows made me feel confident about my own ability to choose for myself. The fact that there were at least ten bows in the exhibition which I would happily have used for a concert made me realise that there are infinite combinations of qualities in the very best bows, and there is huge scope for players who are looking for one or more bows to suit them and their instruments."

Hannah Roberts



Take a Bow 2014

18 October to 30 November

Bookings are now open for our next international selling exhibition, *Take a Bow 2014*. From 18 October to 30 November we will be exhibiting over sixty cello bows by thirty-five international master bow makers. *Take a Bow* takes place at our workshop home in Ely and is designed to offer cellists a unique opportunity to test a large number of exceptional bows from across the world under one roof. Players who have visited past exhibitions have been delighted with the selection available and for the rare opportunity to test bows from many of the world's leading makers. Testing so many fine bows on the same day and in the same acoustical environment can be a very effective and speedy way to find a bow to suit both player and instrument.

Please email aitchmnatz7@ntlworld.com or telephone us on 01353 668559 to arrange your 3-hour appointment with the bow collection. Further information and interim bow prices can be found on page 3; full details are listed on our website. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any queries; we'll be delighted to answer your questions.

'There were so many good quality bows in the collection and they were all very different.

At the end of it all your gut instinct is the most important thing. You get to know yourself a bit better as you work through the bows.

It's an exploration of the bow-self!

Paul Barritt



REVIEW OF NEW CELLO STRINGS

Magnacore A: The first cellist found that Magnacore A offered more power and tonal substance than his Jargar Superior A, and also had more focus, clarity and core. Cellist 4 found Magnacore A brighter and more powerful than a standard Larsen. Compared to his Larsen Solo A, cellist 2 said Magnacore A had a 'stronger, thicker' sound and felt very immediate in response and comfortable to play. Cellist 3 experienced more tension under the hand from a Magnacore compared to a standard Larsen A; the Magnacore also had more texture in its sound, but he decided that he still preferred the standard Larsen A.

Magnacore D: Cellist 1 said that Magnacore D had more power, clarity and colour than his Jargar Special D and performed better in high positions. Compared to Larsen Standard D, Cellist 3 found the Magnacore very powerful and deeply textured with a lighter and faster response. Although Magnacore D offered more character and interest, cellist 3 decided he preferred the smoothness and clarity of the standard Larsen D. Cellist 2 found the Magnacore much better than Larsen D, providing greater strength and a very good relationship with Magnacore A. However, cellist 4 found Magnacore D too aggressive for her cello, and decided to stay with standard Larsen D.

The Magnacore set: Two of the cellists we interviewed now use a full set of Magnacores: cellist 2 finds them very well balanced and even, and feels more confident of being heard clearly in piano quartet performances. Cellist 5 describes her set as the most splendidly responsive strings she has ever played; she loves their 'warmth and breadth' and describes them as 'the Rolls Royce of strings'. Magnacores certainly offer an appealing blend of power, tone colour and texture, combined with a very quick response, and can colour and strengthen cellos which need more focus and brilliance. However, on open, bright cellos, these strings can sound a little 'brash' and aggressive.

Evah Pirazzi Gold Pirastro's gut string heritage lives on in this new set of strings, which have a resonant, warm sound combined with considerable projection and clarity.

Evah Pirazzi (EP) Gold A: Cellist 1 found that EP Gold A had a more muted, narrow slightly nasal sound than Magnacore A and he also detected some extraneous noises in the sound compared with the 'cleaner sounding' Magnacore. Compared to Magnacore A, cellist 3 felt that EP Gold A had a thinner, darker sound and a lower tension under the left hand and this sense of lower tension seemed to free up the sound of the cello overall. He much preferred EP Gold to Magnacore A; he liked the gut-style texture and felt he could express

himself more freely and pleurably. He found the EP Gold A had a less metallic and broader sound than a standard Evah Pirazzi A and had more texture than a standard Larsen A. Ultimately he returned to a standard Larsen A for its 'magisterial resonant sound'. He now uses EP Gold A on a different cello and loves the string in this context as it 'hides the cello's teeth' without reducing its power.

Evah Pirazzi Gold D. Cellist 1 preferred EP Gold D to the A; he found it a darker sounding string than the A, with more bloom. He felt it had less clarity than Magnacore D, but he loved its resonance and 'plaintive, old-world gut string sound'. He felt it brought out the natural mellowness of his cello and freed up the whole instrument. Cellist 3 found EP Gold D darker than Magnacore D and also very resonant, but he found it less musically flexible than EP Gold A.

Evah Pirazzi Gold G. Like most G strings, this string needs time to play in; when fitted new, cellist 1 felt it was rather breathy and metallic, especially on the open string, but he still liked the sound enough to persevere with the string. Cellist 3 found the EP Gold G softer and less clear than Magnacore G and he also felt it encouraged the wolf note, but preferred its tone colours to Magnacore G. He also felt the EP Gold G made his Spirocore C sound softer, and that it lightened and sweetened the rest of the cello. He found the EP Gold G more flexible under the hand and less metallic than Magnacore G.

Evah Pirazzi Gold C. Cellist 1 loved this string as soon as he first played it and much preferred it to the Spirocore C which had been fitted to his cello before. 'His comment was; 'You couldn't make this sound on a Spirocore!' He enjoyed the string's sweet, warm, immediate response and smooth, rich sound with no 'hiss' – and compared it to playing a silver covered gut string. After 2 weeks of playing, he described it as 'good and strong, nice depth, a fatter sound than Spirocore'. On a strong, edgy cello, EP Gold C offered cellist 3 a high quality, dark sound and opened the cello's general response. He found it much better than a standard Evah Pirazzi or Kaplan C, which sounded a bit dry in comparison.

Evah Pirazzi Gold strings seem to be an excellent choice on inherently bright instruments which benefit from their rich, warm tone. On a warm, generous or dark sounding cello, Evah Pirazzi Gold might not offer sufficient clarity.

For string tension data, see our string review articles at www.aitchisoncellos.com

Take a Bow 2014

18 October to 30 November

You are warmly invited to our seventh international selling exhibition of over sixty cello bows by thirty-five bow makers including famous names, international prize-winners and exciting young makers recommended to us by their senior colleagues. The exhibition takes place at our workshop home at 7 Cambridge Road, Ely CB7 4HJ. Visiting cellists have at least three hours to play through the collection of bows in our comfortable music rooms, assisted by a friend or colleague if they wish. If you do not have a companion to help you, we are happy to take notes for you and to tighten, loosen and rosin each bow so that you can relax and focus on playing the bows.

If you decide to buy a bow from the exhibition you will be invited to pay a 20% deposit to secure the bow, with the balance payable by the end of the exhibition on 30 November 2014. Sold bows will be sent to their new owners from 17 November or as soon as full payment has cleared. All purchasers will receive a free insurance valuation and will need to arrange insurance cover from the date the bow is delivered. All bows remain the property of the makers until full payment is received. Payment methods include internet bank transfer or cheque.

If you feel you need to try a bow for a longer period before making a final decision, you can book one or more bows for a seven day trial period after 17 November. The cost of booking a bow trial is £15 per bow to cover the cost of posting and insurance.

'I'd definitely recommend the exhibition. There's no comparison really. You just never get so many bows in one place at one time and having the choice in front of you is unique.'

'It was a fantastic day and I'm telling my colleagues all about it (and what they've missed!).'

'It was satisfying and good fun, narrowing the bows down. It felt great to be able to develop the confidence to discard any bow I didn't like! If there hadn't been the range of bows there to compare I wouldn't have been nearly as confident in my selection.'



Sample Bow Prices

(final prices will be calculated on 17 October 2014)

Maker	S/G	Price
David Samuels	S	£5,180
Jean-Pascal Nehr	G	£4,700
William Salchow	S	£4,390
Bernd Etzler	S	£4,200
Christian Wanka	G	£4,150
Georges Tepho	S	tbc
Tino Lucke	S	£3,590
Paul Sadka	S	£3,500
Victor Bernard	G	£3,420
Roger Zabinski	S	£3,290
Bernd Etzler	S	£3,200
Emmanuel Carlier	G	£3,160
Dirk Loescher	S	£3,160
Gary Leahy	S	£3,080
David Hawthorne	S	tbc
Robert Pierce	S	£2,990
Josef Gabriel	S	£2,910
Thomas Goering	S	£2,870
John Aniano	S	£2,780
Bernd Etzler	S	£2,750
Emmanuel Begin	S	£2,670
John Stagg	S	£2,600
Victor Bernard	S	£2,560
Éric Gagné	S	£2,560
Josef Gabriel	S	£2,560
Emmanuel Carlier	S	£2,440
Daoudi Hassoun	S	£2,390
Klaus Grünke	S	tbc
Thomas Grünke	S	tbc
Richard Grünke	S	£2,150
Lorenzo Lazzarato	S	£2,140
Richard Wilson	S	£2,000
Christian Wanka	S	£1,970
David Tempest	S	£1,950
Emelie Sabathier	S	£1,710

'We are living in the time of the best bow making in history. I would encourage anyone interested in purchasing a bow to consider the bows of our great contemporary makers.'

Paul Childs, New York bow expert

For the latest information, bow maker biographies and a complete price list, see

www.aitchisoncellos.com

SELECTED CELLOS AND BOWS

JOSEPH HILL CELLO 1770

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (740mm) String Length 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (677mm)
Price: £47,500

An exquisite cello in exceptionally good condition with a one-piece maple back and beautiful varnish. The tone is colourful and expressive. Hill certificate.

GEORGES ADOLPHE CHANOT 1895

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (755mm) String length: 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (698mm)
Price: £35,000

A handsome, powerful and expressive instrument in excellent condition with fine golden brown varnish.

Labelled internally and inscribed at the endpin.

Recently restored in our workshop.

HENRY JAY CELLO c.1760

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (751mm) String length: 27" (685mm)
Price: £30,000

An attractive cello by Henry Jay in very good condition with a rich, refined sound and beautiful transparent golden brown varnish.

THOMAS SMITH CELLO 1762

L.O.B: 29" (740mm) String length: 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (674mm)
Price: £26,000

A handsome instrument in very good condition with a powerful, colourful tone and a quick response. Letter of authenticity from Charles Beare.

COLIN IRVING CELLO

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (750mm) String length: 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (696mm)
Price: £24,000

A strong and handsome cello by a respected contemporary maker with a powerful, deep tone and good response.

ROBIN AITCHISON MONTAGNANA COPY

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (740mm) String length: 27 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (690mm)
Price: £23,000

A close copy of the Montagnana cello played by the late Boris Pergamenschikow. This cello has a rich, complex tone and powerful projection.

MICHAEL KEARNS CELLO 1998

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (750mm) String length: 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (698mm)
Price: £16,000

This elegant cello is in excellent condition and has a balanced response and satisfying tone. It would make an excellent instrument for a conservatoire student or young professional.

FURBER SCHOOL CELLO

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (740mm) String Length 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (677mm)
Price: £12,500

A very beautiful sounding English cello of the Furber School with painted on purfling.

GERMAN CELLO c.1820

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (744mm) String length: 26 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (682mm)
Price: £10,500

HUNGARIAN CELLO c.1910

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (751mm) String length: 27 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (693mm)
Price: £10,000

MIRECOURT CELLO c.1910

L.O.B: 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (770mm) String length: 27" (685mm)
Price: £9,000

RIVIÈRE & HAWKES CELLO c.1890

L.O.B: 30" (758mm) String length: 27" (685mm)
Price: £8,500

NEUNER & HORNSTEINER CELLO c.1880

L.O.B: 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (748mm) String length: 27 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (694mm)
Price: £7,500

Selected Cello Bows

Dominique Peccatte	81.4	S	tbc
John Clutterbuck	81.9	G/T	£4,750
Jean-Pascal Nehr	82.0	G	£4,700
Charles Ervin	80.0	G	£4,450
John Stagg	82.8	G	£4,500
W E Hill & Sons	75.0	S	£4,500
William Salchow	81.9	S	£4,390
Garner Wilson	81.2	G/T	£4,200
Bow branded Pillot	73.5	S	tbc
Bernd Etzler	81.6	S	£4,200
W E Hill & Sons	71.6	S	£3,750
Noel Burke	78.5	S	£3,500
H R Pfretzschner	84.0	S	£3,250
Bernd Etzler	81.7	S	£3,200
Robert Pierce	81.9	S	£2,990
Roger Zabinski	81.2	S	£2,980
Martin Beilke	81.9	S	£2,750
Eric Gagné	81.7	S	£2,590
Heinz Dölling	91.0	S	£2,500
Stephen Bristow	83.3	G/T	£2,400
Brian Tunnicliffe	81.0	S	£2,250
Richard Grünke	82.1	S	£2,150
Richard Wilson	82.2	S	£2,000
Richard Weichold	77.0	S	£1,600
J S Rameau	76.7	S	£1,500
Raymundo Almeida	83.2	S	£860

Weight = in grammes; S = Silver; G = Gold
N = Nickel G/T = Gold and Tortoiseshell