

---

## NEWS FOR CELLISTS APRIL 2006

---

### *A and D string review*

On pages 2-3 we review the most successful A and D cello strings available including Jargar, Larsen Standard and Soloist, Pirastro Permanent, Evah Pirazzi Standard and Soloist and the new D'Addario Kaplan Solutions.

### *Cello Exchange*

We are delighted that the Cello Exchange is successfully bringing together cellists seeking to buy or sell cellos. The Exchange is designed to achieve complete transparency: we keep the owner in close touch whenever their cello goes out on approval and we ask the buyer to pay the full price to the seller direct. We aim to make the whole process as calm and simple as possible for both parties.

A selection of cellos and bows is listed on the back page of this newsletter. Please also check our website regularly as instruments come and go very quickly. If you would like to see photographs of any cello or bow listed here or on the website, please call 01353 668559 or email: [sarah@aitchisoncellos.com](mailto:sarah@aitchisoncellos.com)

### *Evah Pirazzi part-sized strings*

Evah Pirazzi strings are now available for ½ - ¾ sized cellos at the very modest price of £85 per set. When we tested these strings, students were overjoyed by the improvement in tone and response. Highly recommended as a simple way to give young players a boost.

### *Cello Care Guide*

After receiving some wonderful feedback from readers of the *Cello Care Guide* we are planning a new updated edition to be published in February 2007. If you have any comments, requests or new ideas for inclusion in the new *Cello Care Guide*, please email [sarah@aitchisoncellos.com](mailto:sarah@aitchisoncellos.com) or return the form on page 3. All contributions will be credited unless you would rather remain anonymous! We still have one box of the first edition available; if you'd like to receive copies for colleagues or students, do let us know and we will post them to you free of charge.



If there is any topic you would like to see covered in *News for Cellists*, we would be delighted to hear from you.

# Review of A and D strings

**SOUND QUALITIES:** We find it useful to analyse the sound of strings using three factors: brightness, colour (resonance) and core. Brightness is caused by the highest frequency overtones; colour is created by the resonant qualities of the string while the core is the fundamental sound quality of the bowed string.

**PLAYING STYLE:** There are two main groups of A and D strings. One group (most typically Jargar and Larsen Soloist) are designed for players who use heavy bow pressure and want a powerful core sound. The other group (Permanent, Evah Pirazzi and Dominant) are more related in style to traditional gut strings. They are more pliant and lend themselves to faster bow strokes and are also brighter and more resonant than the first group, but they have a less palpable core sound.

**CORE CONSTRUCTION** is an important feature of a string as it determines playing tension, flexibility, longevity, speed of response and tonal characteristics. **Windings** also affect the sound quality. The **elasticity** of a string determines its feel under the left hand (how easy or difficult it is to press the string down onto the fingerboard) and the bowing style. The **tension** of a string affects the balance of the cello's set up. Paradoxically, higher tension strings can either choke or free a cello's response and generally exacerbate wolf notes.

**JARGAR:** Until the introduction of Larsen strings in 1991 these were the most popular upper cello strings. Jargars are still widely valued for their smooth and dependable sound which gives a solid, neutral foundation on which players can build their own tone colour. They are good value and are quick to play in. (Beware - A strings break easily if they are over-tuned.)

**LARSEN STANDARD AND SOLOIST:** Larsens are probably now the most popular cello upper strings. The sound of Larsen Standard strings is more colourful than Jargar and they

blend better with gut lower strings. Larsen Soloist strings have a smoother sound and a more solid core than the Standard range; the Soloist sound is halfway between a Larsen Standard and a Jargar.

On some cellos it is useful to mix Standard and Soloist Larsens in order to balance up tone colours. Larsens need virtually no playing in, but some players say they are rather quick to play out. For their survival they also need correctly filed string grooves.

**THOMASTIK DOMINANT:** The Dominant D is useful when a very flexible string is needed as a transition between A and G. The A has a very fragile winding and is difficult to tune up to pitch without damage. Allow plenty of time to play in.

**PIRASTRO PERMANENT:** Permanent A and D are very bright and have a lot of texture in their sound. The Permanent A can be an excellent solution on dark sounding instruments but can sound tinny on some brighter cellos. The D string has tremendous definition and brightness and can be a useful solution for cellos with an over-soft second string. Permanents are long lasting and take time to play in. They are more pliant under the fingers than a Jargar or Larsen.

**PIRASTRO EVAH PIRAZZI STANDARD AND SOLOIST:** These are pliable but not as bright as Permanents. The Standard strings blend well with gut lower strings while the 'Stark' tension Standard strings give more core sound. The Soloist A and D have a nice balance of tone colour as well as a good core sound and are a good alternative to Larsen. Allow 2 weeks to play in.

**D'ADDARIO KAPLAN SOLUTIONS:** These strings have just replaced the D'Addario Unicore A and D. They are fairly bright strings which have been developed as an alternative to Jargar and Larsen. More on these strings as soon as we have reviewed them thoroughly! For updated information see [www.aitchisoncellos.com](http://www.aitchisoncellos.com)

# *A and D string details*

NAME OF STRING	DATE INTRODUCED	CORE CONSTRUCTION	WINDING MATERIALS*	TENSION (LBS)		PRICE	
				A	D	A	D
<b>Jargar</b>	1956	Single metal core	Alloys	37.4	31.7	£16.76	£18.50
<b>Dominant</b>	1970	Multi-strand synthetic core	Chrome	30.9	24.9	£16.21	£22.49
<b>Larsen Standard</b>	1991	Single metal core	SF/Alloy (A) Al/Alloy (D)	39.3	29.7	£23.20	£30.49
<b>Larsen Soloist</b>	1993	Metal single core	SF/Alloy (A) Al/Alloy (D)	40.7	29.7	£26.50	£30.40
<b>Permanent</b>	1996	Steel core	Chrome	35.2	31.4	£23.35	£26.35
<b>Evah Pirazzi</b>	2004	Steel multi-core	Chrome	38.9	30.8	£19.32	£24.48
<b>Evah Pirazzi Soloist</b>	2005	Steel multi-core	Chrome	38.9	28.6	£21.04	£26.06
<b>Kaplan Solutions</b>	2005	Solid steel core	Nickel (A) Titanium (D)	39.0	31.0	£16.95	£19.95

\* SF = Synthetic Fibre; Al = Aluminium

For more on core materials, see <http://aitchisoncellos.com/articlecore.htm>

For our G and C string review, see <http://aitchisoncellos.com/articleG&C.htm>

## *Cello Care Guide – New Edition*

We are planning a new extended version of the *Cello Care Guide* incorporating new ideas sent in by cellists.

If you have any tips or hints to add to the *Guide* or if there are other topics which you would like to see covered, please email [sarah@aitchisoncellos.com](mailto:sarah@aitchisoncellos.com) or complete and return the form below. Your contribution will be credited to you if you wish. Thank you for your help!

### TOPIC IDEAS / CELLO CARE HINTS:

**Name** (if you wish to be credited).....

*Please return to Sarah Mnatzaganian, 7 Cambridge Road, Ely CB7 4HJ by September 2006*

---

# SELECTED CELLOS AND BOWS

---

## Henry Jay Cello 1760

Length of back: 757mm; String length: 688mm  
Price: £26,000 (Cello Exchange)

A rare Henry Jay cello in very good condition. Owned by a fine professional player, this cello has a crisp, cavernous bass response and focussed projection in the upper register.

## Betts School Furber Cello c.1820

Length of back: 758mm; String length: 698mm  
Price: £21,000 (Cello Exchange)

A great sounding cello in excellent condition whose intense red varnish suggests that it was made for the Betts shop by a member of the Furber family.

## Robin Aitchison Guadagnini copy

Length of back: 715mm; String length: 668mm  
Price: £12,500

A faithful copy of an exceptionally beautiful Milan period Guadagnini cello (1755). Offering rich, complex tonal qualities and a quick response.

## Furber Cello c.1840

Length of back: 734mm; String length: 680mm  
Price: £12,000 (Cello Exchange)

This elegant cello was probably made by John Furber. It has a rich tone, attractive golden varnish and a repaired sound post crack in the back – hence its modest price.

## Nigel Crinson Cello 2001

Length of back: 751mm; String length: 688mm  
Price: £11,000 (Cello Exchange)

This cello has antiqued warm brown varnish over a deep golden ground and an appealing, open and direct response.

## Caussin School Cello c.1860

Length of back: 735mm; String length: 673mm  
Price: £10,000 (Cello Exchange)

A handsome cello in excellent condition with warm red-brown oil varnish and a powerful, open tone.

## Jeremy Mahrer Cello 1990

Length of back: 760mm; String length: 682mm  
Price £9,000 (Cello Exchange)

Based on a Strad model, this cello has been convincingly antiqued. It has a crisp, resonant and powerful tone.

## Caussin School Cello c.1900

Length of back: 768mm; String length: 688mm  
Price: £8,000 (Cello Exchange)

A good French instrument from the turn of the century with a mellow tone and orange brown varnish.

## Student Cellos

We have a selection of excellent Hungarian and Chinese student cellos priced from £2,000 - £2,500.

## Selected Cello Bows

E. F. Ouchard	82.5g	£4,000
W E Hill & Sons	78.1g	£3,500
W E Hill & Sons	78.6g	£2,500
Andrew McGill	81.9g	£1,950
German bow	86.9g	£1,600
Robert Pierce	83.4g	£1,570
David Tempest	80.2g	£1,500

**Other modern & period bows £250 - £1,500**

**Please contact us for photographs.**