

230 word bio

Matthew Barley's musical world has no geographical, social or stylistic boundaries. His activities in performance, improvisation, cross-disciplinary projects, composition, and pioneering community programmes have developed to form a uniquely eclectic international career. He has been described by The Times as 'the world's most adventurous cellist' and is as comfortable with core-classical repertoire and improvisation as he is in a night-club or the Amazon rainforest.

'Fortunate to be doing what I dreamed of doing as a child, I try to find a way to play whatever music I love - so I collaborate, improvise, juxtapose, arrange and rearrange.' Matthew's studies were at the Guildhall School in London, and the Moscow Conservatoire, and he is now involved in education teaching classical musicians how to improvise. In 2023 he set up the Barley Arts Foundation to implement unusual concerts and projects and to help young people improve mental health using creativity.

He has played in many of the world's great concert halls, given premieres by Pascal Dusapin, James MacMillan, Thomas Larcher, Dai Fujikura, Detlev Glanert and Nitin Sawhney; performed with Amjad Ali Khan, Matthias Goerne, the Labeque Sisters, Dima Slobodeniouk, Marin Alsop, Martin Frøst, Avi Avital, Jon Lord (Deep Purple), and the Nederlands Dans Theatre, records for Signum Classics and has appeared on tv and radio worldwide.

Matthew is married to Russian violinist Viktoria Mullova. He plays a Cesare Gigli cello from Rome, c.1750

110 word bio

Matthew Barley has created a unique international career full of improvisation, new music, cutting-edge computer technology, collaboration with jazz and Indian musicians, education, and arranging – but always with cello playing at the heart. He has played with top orchestras (Frankfurt Radio Symphony, BBC Philharmonic/Scottish, Czech Philharmonic), in some great concert halls, given premieres by composers including MacMillan, Dusapin, Larcher and Deep Purple's Jon Lord and appeared on tv and radio worldwide. He counts himself blessed to be able to dream up unusual projects and (usually) make them happen, and also pursue his own personal dreams of spending time with family and in nature. He lives in London with his wife, violinist Viktoria Mullova.

Jan 2022