

Cool cello

Published [Thursday, July 10, 2008](#)

When planning the Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts' Hot Summer Nights music festival, Maestro Kirk Trevor worked hard to attract all sorts of audiences - the ragtime crowd, the jazz crowd, the family crowd and, now with cellist Matt Haimovitz, the rock crowd.

Haimovitz, a Juilliard graduate, makes the cello look - not to mention sound - cool. He's just as likely to appear in a rock club and pull out a beautiful and frantic cover of Led Zeppelin's "Kashmir" as he is to rock out to Bach in a concert hall.

"It was pretty depressing watching how the classical music audiences were getting grayer and grayer and fewer and fewer as the years went by," Haimovitz said in an interview with cello.org. "There were times when I didn't see a single young person. Here I was, only 25 years old, and I didn't see any of my peers out there. Of course, I enjoy playing for people of all ages, but I wanted to reach younger generations, too."

In June, Haimovitz posted a video on YouTube.com begging David Letterman for a guest spot - it's a part of his mission to bring classical music to younger audiences, and as the video no doubt shows, he has the entire audience behind him. "Dave needs Bach," the audience shouts in unison at the end of the performance.

As the noise starts to die down, Haimovitz's phone rings, and he answers, "Oprah?" The audience lets out a roar of laughter, and it's obvious this isn't a typical classical show.

Haimovitz seems to demand the crowd's attention with his fun personality and entrancing playing. The Harvard grad has studied with Yo-Yo Ma, played with the Berlin Philharmonic and performed at famed punk club CBGB. His interesting and eclectic résumé is a testament to his skill and accessibility.

Wednesday's concert, dubbed "Classivibe," will feature works that stretch outside of the world of classical music. On July 19, Haimovitz will work with a more traditional piece - Robert Schumann's "Cello Concerto."