

CRIS DERKSEN



“You can do way more with the cello, I think, than a lot of instruments.”

A rising star on the Canadian classical/jazz/folk/pop/electronica/what-have-you scenes, cellist Cris Derksen is known for captivating solo performances building layers of sound into often surprisingly slamming dance music. Her music braids the traditional and contemporary in multiple dimensions, weaving her traditional classical training and her aboriginal ancestry with new school electronics, creating genre defying music.

On her debut solo effort **The Cusp**, the 13 tracks range from classically oriented, multitracked soundscapes (“We Danced Movement I & II”) to upbeat party bumps inspired by her half-Cree ancestry (“Pow.wow.wow”) and hybridized pieces that sound readymade for climatic moments in art or cinema. Her 2013 sophomore album **The Collapse** continues her trail-blazing musical creativity.

Cris has toured nationally and internationally as a solo artist and performing her own compositions with Inuit throat singer Tanya Tagaq. She has performed internationally at: Women in (e)motion (Germany), Future En Seine (France), WOMEX (Spain), SXSW (Texas), Riddu Riddu (Norway), Respect Festival, Colors of Ostrava (Czech Republic), Barroquisimo (Mexico), MADE festival (Sweden).

Back home, Derksen has performed at: Vancouver Island Music Fest, Regina Folk Festival, Aboriginal People’s Choice Music Awards, Frostbite Festival, Salmon Arm Roots and Blues, Harrison Music Festival, Rifflandia, Dawson City Music Festival, Edmonton Folk Music Festival, Calgary Folk Music Festival, Vancouver Folk Music Festival, JunoFest, the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards and the 2010 Cultural Olympiad.

As a side player Cris has performed with hip hop star Kanye West, A Tribe Called Red, Veda Hille, Tanya Tagaq, Christa Couture, Kinnie Starr, Lightning Dust (Black Mountain), Rae Spoon, Leela Gilday, Ivan e Coyote and e.s.l.

Cris Derksen originally comes from Northern Alberta. There is a line of chiefs from North Tall Cree reserve on her Fathers side and a line of strong Mennonite homesteaders on her mother’s side.

Cris obtained a Bachelor of Music in Cello Performance at UBC and shared the title of Principal Cellist of the UBC Symphony Orchestra. In 2009 she was recognized by the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network as one of it’s rising stars and The Georgia Straight’s “Who to Watch”. She was also a Curator in Residence at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre.

In 2011 her album **The Cusp** was Nominated for a Western Canadian Music Award, and she was honoured with funding from First Tracks, an APTN Music Video.

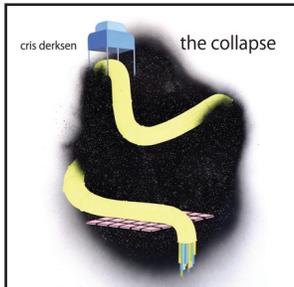
“It’s not every night you see a cellist pack a club dance floor. But Cris Derksen is not just another classically trained musician bowing away in the background. Kicking out electronic beats and using her loop station and pedal board to bring the noise, the UBC grad is building an international reputation for invention, session work and performance.”

- **The Vancouver Province.**

MANAGEMENT & BOOKING

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DISCOGRAPHY



The Collapse (2013)
Independent Release

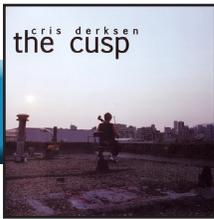
*2013 Aboriginal People’s
Choice Music Awards
Nominee (Best Instrumental
Album)*

The Cusp (2010)
Independent Release

*2011 Canadian Aboriginal
Music Awards Winner (Best
Instrumental Album)*

*2011 West Coast Music
Awards Nominee (Aboriginal
Recording of the Year)*

www.pooka.ca - www.crisderksen.virb.com



Critical Acclaim

While not many cellists and even fewer MCs have likely graced the Great Hall of the Museum of Anthropology in the past, it easily holds up as one of Vancouver's best concert venues. The building's post-modern architecture fits well with Derksen's music, which is unorthodox for cello, but still tied to classical traditions. Derksen's cello and song made optimal use of her performance setting, with the vocal lamentation and stringed sadness wafting through the cathedral architecture of the Great Hall, past the half-dozen totem poles surrounding her and out through the wall of glass into the open sky beyond. It was quite a sight and allowed her music to become greater than herself, reverberating through the Great Hall's many Aboriginal artifacts. - **Levi Barnett, The Ubysey**

While you may or may not remember her name, you'll likely come to know her (if you don't already) - her unofficial title: "the punk rock cellist." If the phrase sounds out of the ordinary, know that Ms. Cris is very used to messing with preconceptions. As an independent free spirit, she has spent much of her life riding the periphery of various groups and cliques, preferring to eschew their pressures and to remain true to her own unique self. Derksen's decision to stay on the periphery of various scenes has propelled her creatively - not focusing solely in the classical genre, the indie-alternative scene, or in the queer scene, she has left herself open for a host of musical match-ups. - **Denise Sheppard, Xtra West**

In the end, both Rebecca and I enjoyed Cris Derksen best. She did a little singing which was a blend of the avant-garde and what sounded like traditional Native Canadian chanting. Dersken started with an amplified version of Bach's Suite No 1 for cello. From there she degenerated beautifully into sounds we had never heard before. We were both seduced. - **Alex Waterhouse Hayward Blog**

Opening act Cris Derksen, a young cellist extraordinaire, blew people away. Her mix of classical training, hip hop and contemporary gigs and her soft, mesmerizing voice, often wails reflective of her aboriginal roots, held the audience in awe. Cris is a local artist; if you haven't seen her yet, be sure to take in her next concert around town. - **Pat Hogan, www.soundsandfuries.com**

She composes with an incredibly natural feel. Gorgeous, playful, wow. Grade: B+ - **Stuart Derdeyn, The Vancouver Province**

The real treat was Cris Derksen. With repetitive loops and beats blended with her deep cello sound and voice, it was a dreamy and wonderful performance. - **Drew Anderson, Serve Calgary**

While growing up in Edmonton, AB, Cris Derksen started thinking about what instrument would be right for her. Narrowing it down to bass and cello, she chose the latter partly out of practicality; she thought there would be less competition. The specific charms of the cello quickly won her over and her instrument of choice has ended up taking her many places, including onstage with Kanye West. - **David Dacks, Exclaim! Magazine**

"You can do way more with the cello, I think, than a lot of instruments." Considering Derksen's approach, that's an understatement. In solo performance, she uses electronics to turn her cello into a bass or a viola or even an entire string section. And as an accompanist, she's worked with dancers, rock bands, songwriters, and the wildly innovative Inuit throat-singer and improviser Tanya Tagaq. - **Alexander Varty, The Georgia Straight**

While no one would mistake her for a straight-ahead classical technician, she displays the same sort of dedication to mastering the essentials of her instrument. As in, before she adds in some new bit of technology, she'll be sure that there is an array of bowing and fingering techniques that work in a simple acoustic sense before they are embellished in any way. This makes her solo shows - one was recently recorded with the idea of possible release - ever-changing sound tableaux that never follow anything but her mood. - **Stuart Derdeyn, The Vancouver Province**

The cellist, whose blend of classical technique and unfettered imagination has made her a sought-after musician in the local underground scene. - **Alexander Varty, The Georgia Straight**