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Guest Artist Recital Series, November 5, 2021

Mike Block Cello

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Please silence all electronic devices for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

Selections to be announced from the stage.

Guest Artist Recital Series

ISU String Project presents

Mike Block, *Cello*



Guest Artist Bio:

Mike Block is a pioneering cello player, singer, composer and educator. Passionate about cross-cultural collaboration through music, Mike is committed to inspiring individuals and connecting communities. Acclaimed by the *New York Times* for his "vital rich-hued solo playing", and by *Salt Lake City Desert News* as "a true artist... a sight to behold", Mike Block "is one of the bravest, most intriguing musicians on the American fusion scene." (*Gramophone*). Mike's performances offer a rich mixture of classical repertoire, folk music, original compositions and songs. Since 2005, Mike has been a member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, with which he has been featured as both cello and vocal soloist, contributed arrangements and compositions, and earned a Grammy Award in 2017 for their album *Sing Me Home*.

As an innovator, Mike is among the first wave of cellists to adopt a strap in order to stand and move while playing, using his patented design The Block Strap. Mike was the first standing cellist to perform at Carnegie Hall, which the *New York Times* characterized as "breathless ... half dance, half dare." In 2020, Mike founded Play For The Vote, which organizes musical performances at polling locations across the country on Election Day, with the goal of increasing voter turnout by providing a more positive voting experience.

As an educator, Mike is passionate about creativity and collaboration among performers of all ages, and is the founding director of *Silkroad's* Global Musician Workshop and the Mike Block String Camp, and is on faculty at Berklee College of Music and New England Conservatory of Music.

www.MikeBlockMusic.com

This concert is hosted by the ISU String Project as the first of two concerts celebrating the program's 20th Anniversary. This event is sponsored by the Harold K. Sage Foundation, the Illinois State University Foundation Fund, the School of Music, and the ISU String Project.

Center for the Performing Arts
November 5, 2021
Friday Evening
7:00 p.m.

This is the thirty-fourth program of the 2021-2022 season.