

the
TOOMAI
string quintet



www.toomaiquintet.com

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Ensemble Biography

The Toomai String Quintet is an ensemble devoted to performing music from the classical and contemporary repertoire while exploring and arranging music from around the world. Winner of the 92nd St. Y's 2007 Music Unlocked! Competition for emerging ensembles, the Toomai String Quintet is dedicated to creating engaging interactive concerts for audiences of all ages.

Hailed for their "light-handed authority" on their "magnificently executed" recording of composer Jessica Pavone's *Songs of Synastry and Solitude* (Tzadik Records), the Toomai String Quintet is equally at home in concert halls and unconventional performance spaces. The quintet has appeared in venues such as the Kaufmann Concert Hall at the 92nd St. Y, Lincoln Center, and The Kitchen in downtown NYC. They also perform frequently in public schools, hospitals, and alternative care facilities throughout the New York City area as part of the current roster for Carnegie Hall's "Musical Connections" program. In addition, the quintet has been featured in the Miami Civic Music Association and Con Vivo chamber music series, among others.



Formed in 2007 at The Juilliard School, the quintet is named after Rudyard Kipling's short story "Toomai of the Elephants" in which a young boy journeys into the jungle to witness the dance of the wild elephants. The Toomai String Quintet aspires to cultivate a similar sense of curiosity and discovery by searching for diverse music and sharing it with their audience.

The quintet is comprised of violinists Emilie-Anne Gendron and Pala García, violist Erin Wight, cellist John Popham, and bassist Andrew Roitstein.

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Individual Biographies



Lauded by the New York Times as a “brilliant soloist,” violinist **Emilie-Anne Gendron** has performed internationally in such venues as Cadogan Hall, the Salle Gaveau, the Seoul Arts Center, the Kennedy Center, Avery Fisher Hall and Zankel Hall. Since 2005 she has been a core member of the acclaimed Sejong Soloists and is also a member of the Momenta Quartet, recent recipients of the Koussevitzky Music Foundation commission grant. Ms. Gendron has enjoyed success in several competitions, most recently winning 2nd Prize and the Audience Prize at the 2009 Sion-Valais (formerly Tibor Varga) International Violin Competition. She is also a past winner of the Stulberg String Competition. Ms. Gendron was trained at the Juilliard School where her teachers were Won-Bin Yim, Dorothy

DeLay, David Chan, and Hyo Kang. She holds the Artist Diploma and Master of Music degree from Juilliard, as well as a B.A. in Classics from Columbia as a graduate of the Columbia-Juilliard joint-degree program.

Violinist **Pala García** is a devoted chamber musician and has performed at various music festivals around the world, including Saito Kinen, Nymphenburger Sommermusik, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Aspen, and Sarasota festivals. As an academy fellow with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, she regularly performed in this ensemble and its conductor-less chamber orchestra on multiple tours and subscription series. Her interest in new music has led to performances at festivals such as Klangspuren Schwaz, where she worked with composer Heinz Holliger; Musica Viva; and the FOCUS! Festival. Ms. García made her solo orchestral debut at age 11, and has since performed as a soloist with the Pacific Chamber Orchestra, San José Chamber Orchestra and the Palo Alto Philharmonic, among others. Born in San Francisco, Ms. García graduated from the Juilliard School, where she completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees with Naoko Tanaka and Joel Smirnoff.



Violist **Erin Wight** a midwestern transplant to New York City, is an active chamber musician and avid performer of new music. She performs frequently as a member of the Red Light New Music Ensemble, the Toomai Quintet, Talea Ensemble, and Future In Reverse (FIRE), all ensembles with a dedication to exploring contemporary repertoire. Ms. Wight has also played with the New Juilliard Ensemble, Axiom, the Juilliard Electric Ensemble, and worked closely with members of the Ensemble Modern. Ms. Wight is deeply committed to community engagement and is on the teaching artist faculty of the New York Philharmonic's School Partnership Program, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and the Teaching Artist Collaborative of the Weill Institute at Carnegie Hall. Ms. Wight completed her

Master of Music degree at The Juilliard School where she studied with Paul Neubauer.

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Cellist **John Popham** was born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky. The New York Times has described his playing as "warm but variegated" and "finely polished". John holds a BM and an MM from the Manhattan School of Music where he was a student of David Geber and David Soyer. He has performed as a soloist with the Louisville Orchestra and the Starling Chamber Orchestra on numerous occasions. As a chamber musician, John has performed throughout North America, South America, and Europe in such venues as Carnegie Hall, Zankel Hall, The Great Hall of Cooper Union, The Kennedy Center, The Hanns Eisler Hochschule für Musik, and at Yale, Princeton, Harvard, and Columbia Universities. John is currently a member of the Toomai String Quintet, the Red Light Ensemble, and the Eupraxia Music and Arts Collective. John currently resides in the Washington Heights neighborhood in upper Manhattan. He teaches in the Pre-College Division of Rutgers University.



A native of Valencia, California, bassist **Andrew Roitstein** has been featured in chamber music concerts in New York's Zankel Hall and Washington DC's Kennedy Center and has performed with the New York and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestras. Mr. Roitstein has recorded for artists such as Joanna Newsom (Drag City) and Jessica Pavone (Tzadik Records), and has premiered "Anna Maria Suite" for double bass and piano, written by his father David Roitstein. In 2007, he won second prize in Juilliard's Double Bass Concerto Competition. In addition to performing, Mr. Roitstein serves as faculty of the New York Philharmonic's School Partnership Program. As an arranger, his works have been performed by the Toomai String Quintet and members of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Mr. Roitstein received his Master's and Bachelor's degrees at the Juilliard School, where he was a student of Eugene Levinson.

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Mission Statement



Toomai String Quintet is an ensemble with a three-fold mission:

1. To create and perform interactive concerts that actively engage listeners and enhance their understanding of classical, contemporary, and world music.
2. To expand the repertoire of the bass quintet by commissioning and arranging new works as well as performing lesser known pieces for the instrumentation.
3. To design and perform intensive residencies that develop young people's artistic and creative faculties through experiences with performance, composition, and listening.

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Acclaim



Reflection on Toomai's 2008 performances of *Traveling with the Toomai Quintet*

"The educational program that [Toomai] created is rich and filled with interaction that is truly illuminating to the audience. Each [member] genuinely knows how to speak intelligently to audiences, which sends a balanced and united message to concert-goers. [Toomai's] musical prowess is impressive, and [their] ability to incorporate movement and memorization in [their] program is stellar. As we could see in each concert, these school children reveled in the opportunity to participate in music-making with such top-notch musicians."

- 92nd Street Y

Reviews for Toomai's recording of Jessica Pavone's *Songs of Synastry and Solitude*

"Performed by the brilliant young members of the Toomai String Quintet, this is lovely and expressive instrumental music from this eloquent voice out of the downtown scene."

- Tzadik Records

"The eleven-song cycle — magnificently executed by members of Toomai String Quintet — is a pleasantly charming surprise..."

- Massimo Ricci, "The Squid's Ear," thesquidsear.com

"[Pavone's] pieces are performed with sensitivity and rigor by members of the Toomai String Quintet, projecting a sober view softened occasionally by a considered wistfulness."

- Nilan Perera, Exclaim!

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Performance Highlights

- November 7th, 2010, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
- November 5th, 2010 - Philadelphia Art Alliance, Philadelphia, PA
- October 16th, 2010 Lincoln Center's Josie Robertson Plaza, New York, NY
- June 9th, 2010 - Harlem Stage, New York, NY
- May 16th, 2010 - Grace Church Von Vorst, Jersey City, NJ
- March 17th, 2010 - Issue Project Room, Brooklyn, NY
- February 11th, 2010 - The Stone, New York, NY
- November 10th, 2009 - Roulette, New York, NY
- June 7th, 2009 - University of Miami's Gusman Hall, Miami Civic Music Association, Miami, FL
- May 8th, 2009 - Grace Church Van Vorst, Jersey City, NJ
- April 3rd and 4th, 2009 - The Kitchen, New York, NY
- March 22nd, 2009 - Culturarte, the Dominican Cultural Center of New York, New York, NY
- November 22nd, 2008 - Grace Church Van Vorst, Jersey City, NJ
- May 16th, 2008 - Juilliard's Morse Hall, New York, NY
- April 14th and 15th, 2008 - 92nd St. Y Kaufmann Concert Hall, New York, NY
- Dec. 3rd, 2007 - New York Society for Ethical Culture, New York, NY

Community Engagement Performances

Carnegie Hall's Musical Connections Performances

September 2009 - Present - Toomai performs concerts and conducts workshops at Alternative Care Facilities including Jacobi Medical Center, Sing-Sing Correctional Facility, Sea View Hospital, and The New York Department of Juvenile Justice Facility as the resident string ensemble on the roster of Carnegie Hall's pilot program.

92nd St Y Residency

February-March, 2008 - Performances at 92nd St Y Affiliate Elementary Schools, New York, NY

Juilliard Gluck Community Service Fellowship Performances

September, 2007-May, 2008 - 12 performances at hospitals and alternative care facilities as recipients of the Juilliard Gluck Community Service Fellowship, New York, NY

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Repertoire

String Quintets

BARBER, Samuel	Adagio for Strings
BARTOK, Bela	Romanian Dances**
BOTTESINI, Giovanni	Grand Quintetto in C
BRITTEN, Benjamin	Simple Symphony
CARRICK, Richard	Adagios for String Quintet +
DVORAK, Antonin	Quintet in G, Op. 77
EGILSSON, Arni	Is it?
ELLINGTON, Duke	Rockin' in Rhythm**
GESUALDO, Carlo	Itene o Miei Sospiri from the 5th Book for Madrigals**
HANDEL, G.F.	Sonata a 5
HEARNE, Ted	Commission to be premiered in 2010/2011 season+
HINDEMITH, Paul	Acht Stücke, Op. 44, No. 3
IVES, Charles	Hymn: Largo Cantabile
LECUONA, Ernesto	La Comparsa, Andalucia, Gitanerias, Danza Lucumi**
LOPEZ, Israel "Cachao" (Cuba)	A Gozar Con Mi Combo**
	Cunde Echa Un Pie**
MONTEVERDI, Claudio	Selections from Quinto Libro de Madrigals**
MOZART, W.A.	Adagio and Fugue, K 546
MOZART, W.A.	Divertimento in D major, K 136
ONSLow, Georges	Quintet No. 27 in D Major, Op. 68
PAVONE, Jessica	Songs of Synastry and Solitude
PARAPASKERO, Sapo (Romania)	Rustem**
ROSSINI, Gioacino	Sonata a Quattro, no. 6
RUO, Huang	The 3 Tenses (String Quintet Version)
SATIE, Erik	Gnossiennes No.'s 1-5 (arranged by Vincent Raikhel) +
SCHOENBERG, Adam	Finding Rothko, mvt. IV for String Quintet +
SHOSTAKOVICH, Dmitri	Chamber Symphony, Op. 110a
TELEMANN, G.P.	Sinfonia Spirituosa in D Major, TWV 44:1
VALDES, Chucho	Mambo Influenciado (arranged by Isaac Narell) +

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Repertoire continued

WARLOCK, Peter

Capriole Suite

WILLAERT, Adrian

Vecchie Letrose***

WOLLSCHLEGER, Scott

Commission to be premiered in 2010/2011 season+

TRADITIONAL (Maharashtra, India)

Nija Nija Majha Bala ***

TRADITIONAL (Lebanon)

Lamma Roohi Bit-Dummak ***

Collaborations for String Quintet and Voice

BOCCHERINI, Luigi

Stabat Mater Op. 61, G 532

CALLAVA, Calixto (Cuba)

Retozón**

CASTRO, Antonio (Cuba)

No Encuentro Palabras**

DUARTE, Ernesto (Cuba)

Como Fué**

MORALES, Obdulio (Cuba)

Dame Bururu**

TAYLOR, C. Taylor, TRUSCOTT, A. Truscott

Pepito Mi Corazon**

ALBERTI, Louis (Dominican Republic)

Compadre Pedro Juan**

+ Dedicated to the Toomai String Quintet

**Arranged for the Toomai String Quintet by Andrew Roitstein

***Arranged for Toomai String Quintet by Benjamin Grow

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Interactive Concert Synopses

Traveling with the Toomai Quintet (for grades K-4)

The Toomai String Quintet takes the audience on a series of adventures by exploring the ways the listener can experience a "journey" through music. The audience will create musical motors that propel melodies forward, form a dancing carnival parade, and use their imaginations to travel on an exciting emotional journey!

Antonin Dvorak: Quintet in G, Op. 77
Ernesto Lecuona: La Comparsa,**
Giovanni Bottesini: Grand Quintetto in C
Sapo Perapaskero: Rustem**

Dance Party! (for grades 5-8*)

The Toomai String Quintet will perform an array of dance pieces from the classical and folk traditions and investigate the fundamental rhythmic, stylistic, and motivic concepts that connect these diverse musical forms.

Adrian Willaert: Vecchie Letrose (arr. Ben Grow)
Bela Bartok: Romanian Dances**
Sapo Perapaskero: Rustem**
Ernesto Lecuona: La Comparsa, Gitanerias, Danza Lucumi**
Antonin Dvorak: Quintet in G, Op. 77

Five, Four, Three, Two...Mozart! (for grades 9-12*)

In an all-Mozart chamber music concert, the Toomai String Quintet will explore the textures and possibilities presented by different combinations of the string family. In addition, the quintet will illuminate Mozart's compositional progression by examining his stylistic changes and musical influences.

W. A. Mozart: Duo in G major, K.423
Divertimento in E flat major, K.563
String Quartet in B flat major, K 458, "The Hunt"
Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K 546

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Interactive Concert Synopses continued

Stress! 400 Years of Musical Tension (and Relaxation)
(for adult listeners)

The Toomai String Quintet will perform repertoire spanning four centuries, highlighting connections between the seemingly disparate musical styles using the lens of "tension and release." Through a series of engaging activities, the audience will delve deeper into the reasons why musical dissonance provokes such strong emotional responses in listeners.

Dmitri Shostakovich: Chamber Symphony, Op.110a
Anton Webern: Five Movements for String Quartet, Op.5
Anon.: El Cancionero de Montecassino**
Claudio Monteverdi: "Era l'anima mia" from *Quinto Libro de' Madrigal***
Gioacino Rossini: Sonata a Quattro, no. 6
W. A. Mozart: Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K 546

* Programs adaptable for older audiences

** Arranged for the Toomai Quintet by Andrew Roitstein

----Repertoire is subject to change----

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Contact



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