

PACIFICA QUARTET

SIMIN GANATRA, VIOLIN
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MASUMI PER ROSTAD, VIOLA
BRANDON VAMOS, VIOLONCELLO

Recognized for its virtuosity, exuberant performance style, and often-daring repertory choices, over the past two decades the Pacifica Quartet has gained international stature as one of the finest chamber ensembles performing today. The Pacifica tours extensively throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, and Australia, performing regularly in the world's major concert halls. Named the quartet-in-residence at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music in March 2012, the Pacifica was also the quartet-in-residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (2009 – 2012) – a position that has otherwise been held only by the Guarneri String Quartet – and received the 2009 Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Performance.

Formed in 1994, the Pacifica Quartet quickly won chamber music's top competitions, including the 1998 Naumburg Chamber Music Award. In 2002 the ensemble was honored with Chamber Music America's Cleveland Quartet Award and the appointment to Lincoln Center's CMS Two, and in 2006 was awarded a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, becoming only the second chamber ensemble so honored in the Grant's long history. Also in 2006 the Quartet was featured on the cover of Gramophone and heralded as one of "five new quartets you should know about," the only American quartet to make the list. And in 2009, the Quartet was named "Ensemble of the Year" by Musical America.

The Pacifica Quartet has carved a niche for itself as the preeminent interpreter of string quartet cycles, harnessing the group's singular focus and incredible stamina to portray each composer's evolution, often over the course of just a few days. Having given highly acclaimed performances of the complete Carter cycle in San Francisco, New York, Chicago, and Houston; the Mendelssohn cycle in Napa, Australia, New York, and Pittsburgh; and the Beethoven cycle in New York, Denver, St. Paul, Chicago, Napa, and Tokyo (in an unprecedented presentation of five concerts in three days at Suntory Hall), the Quartet presented the monumental Shostakovich cycle in Chicago and New York during the 2010-2011 season and in Montreal and at London's Wigmore Hall in the 2011-2012 season. The Quartet has been widely praised for these cycles, with critics calling the concerts "brilliant," "astonishing," "gripping," and "breathtaking."

An ardent advocate of contemporary music, the Pacifica Quartet commissions and performs many new works, including those by Keeril Makan, in partnership with the Celebrity Series of Boston and the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, during the 2012-13 season, and Shulamit Ran, in partnership with the Music Accord consortium, London's Wigmore Hall, and Tokyo's Suntory Hall, during the 2014-15 season. The work – entitled *Glitter, Doom, Shards, Memory* – had its New York debut as part of the Chamber Music Society at Lincoln Center series.

In 2008 the Quartet released its Grammy Award-winning recording of Carter's quartets Nos. 1 and 5 on the Naxos label; the 2009 release of quartets Nos. 2, 3, and 4 completed the two-CD set. Cedille Records recently released the third of four volumes comprising the entire Shostakovich cycle, along with other contemporary Soviet works, to rave reviews: "The playing is nothing short of phenomenal." (Daily Telegraph, London) Recent projects include recording Leo Ornstein's rarely-heard piano quintet with Marc-André Hamelin with an accompanying tour, the Brahms piano quintet with the legendary pianist Menahem Pressler, and the Brahms and Mozart clarinet quintets with the Metropolitan Opera's principal clarinetist Anthony McGill.

The members of the Pacifica Quartet live in Bloomington, IN, where they serve as quartet-in-residence and full-time faculty members at the Jacobs School of Music. Prior to their appointment, the Quartet was on the faculty of the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana from 2003 to 2012. The Pacifica Quartet also serves as resident performing artist at the University of Chicago.

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