

# Biography

## CASSATT STRING QUARTET, instrumental ensemble

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Acclaimed as one of America's outstanding ensembles, the Manhattan based **Cassatt String Quartet** has performed throughout North America, Europe, and the Far East, with appearances at New York's Alice Tully Hall and Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Tanglewood Music Theater, the Kennedy Center and Library of Congress in Washington, DC, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris and Maeda Hall in Tokyo. The Quartet has been presented on major radio stations such as National Public Radio's Performance Today, Boston's WGBH, New York's WQXR and WNYC, and on Canada's CBC Radio and Radio France.

Formed in 1985 with the encouragement of the Juilliard Quartet, the Cassatt initiated and served as the inaugural participants in Juilliard's Young Artists Quartet Program. Their numerous awards include a Tanglewood Chamber Music Fellowship, the Wardwell Chamber Music Fellowship at Yale (where they served as teaching assistants to the Tokyo Quartet), First Prizes at the Fischhoff and Coleman Chamber Music Competitions, two top prizes at the Banff International String Quartet Competition, two CMA/ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming, a recording grant from the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, and commissioning grants from Meet the Composer and the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2004, they were selected for the centennial celebration of the Coleman Chamber Music Association in Pasadena, California.

The Cassatt celebrated its twentieth anniversary in 2006 with a series of world-premieres and a performance at the Library of Congress on the Library's Stradivarius Collection. Recently, the Cassatt offered concerts for the American Academy in Rome, Cornell and Syracuse Universities, were guest clinicians at the the Texas Music Educators Association and gave mini-residencies at the Centro Nacional de las Artes in Mexico City, Vassar College and the University of Texas at Austin.

The Cassatt joins forces with pianist, Ursula Oppens and narrator, Isaiah Schaffer at New York's Symphony Space as its "All-Stars" , at Bargemusic with violinist, Mark

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Peskanov and at the New Paths Music Festival. In Connecticut, they appear at Treetops Chamber Music Society with clarinetist, Oskar Espina Ruiz and at Music Mountain Festival. They make their debut at the Big Sky Classical Festival in Montana, appear at Texas A & M University with pianist, James Dick and return to their annual Texas high school educational residency, Cassatt In The Basin! which includes intensive workshops, coachings and rehearsals of a commissioned work for Triple Quartet, in a side-by-side performance of students with the Cassatt. Equally adept at classical masterpieces and contemporary music, the Cassatt has collaborated with a remarkable array of artists/composers including pianist Marc-André Hamelin, soprano Susan Narucki, flutist Ransom Wilson, jazz pianist Fred Hersch, didgeridoo player Simon 7, the Trisha Brown Dance Company, distinguished members of the Cleveland and Vermeer Quartets, and composers Louis Andriessen and John Harbison.

With a deep commitment to nurturing young musicians, the Cassatt, in residencies at Princeton, Yale, Syracuse University, the University at Buffalo and the University of Pennsylvania, has devoted itself to coaching, conducting sectionals and reading student composers' works, while offering lively musical presentations in music theory, history and composition. Selected by Chamber Music America, they recently served as guest artists for their New Music Institute; a series to help presenters market new music to their audiences. Summer finds them in residence at the innovative Seal Bay Festival of Contemporary American Chamber Music.

Named three times by The New Yorker magazine's Best Of...CD Selection, the Cassatt's discography includes eclectic new quartets by Pulitzer Prize-winner Steven Stucky and Tina Davidson (Albany Records), by Daniel S. Godfrey (Koch International Classics) and by Grawemeyer and Rome Prize-winner Sebastian Currier (New World) as critiqued in The New York Times "(Quartetset) was written for the Cassatt... which plays it strongly here."

The Cassatt has recorded for the Koch, Naxos, New World, Point, CRI, Tzadik and Albany labels and is named for the celebrated American impressionist painter Mary Cassatt.

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