

# Emerson String Quartet

The Emerson String Quartet has maintained its stature as one of the world's premier chamber music ensembles for more than four decades. The quartet has made more than 30 acclaimed recordings, and has been honored with nine Grammys® (including two for Best Classical Album), three Gramophone Awards, the Avery Fisher Prize, and Musical America's "Ensemble of the Year". The Emerson frequently collaborates with some of today's most esteemed composers to premiere new works, keeping the string quartet art form alive and relevant. They have partnered in performance with stellar soloists including Reneé Fleming, Barbara Hannigan, Evgeny Kissin, Emanuel Ax and Yefim Bronfman, to name a few.

During the 2018-2019 season the Emerson continues to perform as the quartet in residence at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. for its 40th season and returns to perform with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. The group's North American appearances include a performance at New York's Alice Tully Hall, and appears around North America that include the Library of Congress in Washington DC, Denver, Vancouver, Seattle, Houston, Indianapolis, Detroit, the Yale School of Music and University of Georgia, among others. The quartet also embarks on two European tours, performing in major venues in the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy and Spain. During the summer of 2019, the Emerson will perform at Tanglewood, Ravinia, and the Aspen Music Festivals.

Other North American highlights include subsequent performances of *Shostakovich and The Black Monk: A Russian Fantasy*, the new theatrical production co-created by the acclaimed theater director James Glossman and the Quartet's violinist, Philip Setzer. The music/theater hybrid, co-commissioned by the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, Princeton University and Tanglewood Music Festival, has been presented at the Ravinia Music Festival, Wolf Trap, and in Seoul, South Korea. In spring 2019, the quartet will reprise this work at Stony Brook University and the Orange County Performing Arts Center. In a bold intersection of chamber music and theater starring David Strathairn/Len Cariou and Jay O. Sanders/Sean Astin with the Emerson String Quartet, the audiences witness the trials of Dmitri Shostakovich's 40-year obsessive quest to create an opera based on Anton Chekhov's mystical tale: *The Black Monk*.

The Emerson's extensive recordings range from Bach to Harbison, including the complete string quartets of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Bartok, Webern and Shostakovich, as well as multi-CD sets of the major works of Haydn, Mozart, Schubert and Dvorak. The ensemble has also recorded music by Tchaikovsky, Smetana, Debussy, Ravel, Barber and Ives. In April 2017, the Emerson released its latest album, *Chaconnes and Fantasias: Music of Britten and Purcell*, the first CD issue on the new label, Decca Gold. The Quartet has commissioned and performed new works from composers such as Thomas Adés, Kaija Saariaho, Wolfgang Rihm, Mark-Anthony Turnage, and Edgar Meyer.

Formed in 1976 and based in New York City, the Emerson was one of the first quartets whose violinists alternated in the first chair position. The quartet, which took its name from the

American poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, balances busy performing careers with a commitment to teaching and serves as Quartet-in-Residence at Stony Brook University. In 2013, cellist Paul Watkins, a distinguished soloist, award-winning conductor, and devoted chamber musician, joined the original members of the Emerson Quartet. The reconfigured group has been praised by critics and fans alike around the world. In spring 2016, full-time Stony Brook faculty members Philip Setzer and Lawrence Dutton received the honor of Distinguished Professor, and part-time faculty members Eugene Drucker and Paul Watkins were awarded the title of Honorary Distinguished Professor. The Emerson had previously received honorary doctorates from Middlebury College, the College of Wooster, Bard College and the University of Hartford. In January 2015, the Quartet received the Richard J. Bogomolny National Service Award, Chamber Music America's highest honor, in recognition of its significant and lasting contribution to the chamber music field.

The Emerson Quartet enthusiastically endorses Thomastik strings.

**Eugene Drucker:** Violinist Eugene Drucker, a founding member of the Emerson String Quartet, is also an active soloist. He has appeared with the orchestras of Montreal, Brussels, Antwerp, Liege, Hartford, Richmond, Omaha, Jerusalem and the Rhineland-Palatinate, as well as with the American Symphony Orchestra and Aspen Chamber Symphony. A graduate of Columbia University and the Juilliard School, where he studied with Oscar Shumsky, Mr. Drucker was concertmaster of the Juilliard Orchestra, with which he appeared as soloist several times. He made his New York debut as a Concert Artists Guild winner in the fall of 1976, after having won prizes at the Montreal Competition and the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels. Mr. Drucker has recorded the complete unaccompanied works of Bach, reissued by Parnassus Records, and the complete sonatas and duos of Bartók for Biddulph Recordings. His novel, *The Savior*, was published by Simon & Schuster in 2007 and has appeared in a German translation called *Wintersonate*, published by Osburg Verlag in Berlin. Mr. Drucker's compositional debut, a setting of four sonnets by Shakespeare, was premiered by baritone Andrew Nolen and the Escher String Quartet at Stony Brook in 2008; the songs have appeared as part of a 2-CD release called "Stony Brook Soundings," issued by Bridge Recordings in the spring of 2010. Eugene Drucker lives in New York with his wife, cellist Roberta Cooper, and their son Julian.

Violins: Antonius Stradivarius (Cremona, 1686), Samuel Zygmuntowicz (NY, NY 2002)

**Philip Setzer:** Violinist Philip Setzer, a founding member of the Emerson String Quartet, was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and began studying violin at the age of five with his parents, both former violinists in the Cleveland Orchestra. He continued his studies with Josef Gingold and Rafael Druian, and later at the Juilliard School with Oscar Shumsky. In 1967, Mr. Setzer won second prize at the Marjorie Merriweather Post Competition in Washington, DC, and in 1976 received a Bronze Medal at the Queen Elisabeth International Competition in Brussels. He has appeared with the National Symphony, Aspen Chamber Symphony (David Robertson, conductor), Memphis Symphony (Michael Stern), New Mexico and Puerto Rico Symphonies (Guillermo Figueroa), Omaha and Anchorage Symphonies (David Loebel) and on several

occasions with the Cleveland Orchestra (Louis Lane). He has also participated in the Marlboro Music Festival. In April of 1989, Mr. Setzer premiered Paul Epstein's *Matinee Concerto*. This piece, dedicated to and written for Mr. Setzer, has since been performed by him in Hartford, New York, Cleveland, Boston and Aspen.

Currently serving as the Distinguished Professor of Violin and Chamber Music at SUNY Stony Brook and Visiting Faculty of the Cleveland Institute of Music, Mr. Setzer has given master classes at schools around the world, including The Curtis Institute, London's Royal Academy of Music, The San Francisco Conservatory, UCLA and The Mannes School. Mr. Setzer is also the Director of the Shouse Institute, the teaching division of the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival in Detroit. Mr. Setzer has also been a regular faculty member of the Isaac Stern Chamber Music Workshops at Carnegie Hall and the Jerusalem Music Center, and his article about those workshops appeared in *The New York Times* on the occasion of Isaac Stern's 80th birthday celebration.

A versatile musician with innovative vision and dedication to keep the art form of the string quartet alive and relevant, Mr. Setzer is the mastermind behind the Emerson's two highly praised collaborative theater productions: *The Noise of Time*, premiered at Lincoln Center in 2001 and directed by Simon McBurney, is a multi-media production about the life of Shostakovich and has given about 60 performances throughout the world; in 2016, Mr. Setzer teamed up with writer-director James Glossman and co-created the Emerson's latest music/theater project, *Shostakovich and the Black Monk: A Russian Fantasy*. Premiered at the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, *Black Monk* has been performed at the Tanglewood Music Festival, Princeton University, Wolf Trap, Ravinia Festival and Lotte Concert Hall in Seoul Korea. Mr. Setzer has also been touring and recording the piano trio repertoire with David Finckel and Wu Han.

Philip Setzer exclusively uses Thomastik Dominant and Vision strings.  
Violin: Samuel Zygmuntowicz (Brooklyn, NY 2011)

**Lawrence Dutton:** Lawrence Dutton, violist of the nine-time Grammy winning Emerson String Quartet, has collaborated with many of the world's great performing artists, including Isaac Stern, Mstislav Rostropovich, Oscar Shumsky, Leon Fleisher, Sir Paul McCartney, Renee Fleming, Sir James Galway, Andre Previn, Menahem Pressler, Walter Trampler, Rudolf Firkusny, Emanuel Ax, Yefim Bronfman, Lynn Harrell, Joseph Kalichstein, Misha Dichter, Jan DeGaetani, Edgar Meyer, Joshua Bell, and Elmar Oliveira, among others. He has also performed as guest artist with numerous chamber music ensembles such as the Juilliard and Guarneri Quartets, the Beaux Arts Trio and the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio. Since 2001, Mr. Dutton has been the Artistic Advisor of the Hoch Chamber Music Series, presenting three concerts at Concordia College in Bronxville, NY. He has been featured on three albums with the Grammy winning jazz bassist John Patitucci on the Concord Jazz label and with the Beaux Arts Trio recorded the Shostakovich Piano Quintet, Op. 57, and the Fauré G minor Piano Quartet, Op. 45, on the Philips label. His Aspen Music Festival recording with Jan DeGaetani for Bridge records was

nominated for a Grammy award. Mr. Dutton has appeared as soloist with many American and European orchestras including those of Germany, Belgium, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Colorado, and Virginia, among others. He has also appeared as guest artist at the music festivals of Aspen, Santa Fe, Ravinia, La Jolla, the Heifetz Institute, the Great Mountains Festival in Korea, Chamber Music Northwest, the Rome Chamber Music Festival and the Great Lakes Festival. With the late Isaac Stern he had collaborated in the International Chamber Music Encounters both at Carnegie Hall and in Jerusalem. Currently Professor of Viola and Chamber Music at Stony Brook University and at the Robert McDuffie School for Strings at Mercer University in Georgia, Mr. Dutton began violin studies with Margaret Pardee and on viola with Francis Tursi at the Eastman School. He earned his Bachelors and Masters degrees at the Juilliard School, where he studied with Lillian Fuchs and has received Honorary Doctorates from Middlebury College in Vermont, The College of Wooster in Ohio, Bard College in New York and The Hartt School of Music in Connecticut. Most recently, Mr. Dutton and the other members of the Emerson Quartet were presented the 2015 Richard J. Bogomolny National Service Award from Chamber Music America and were recipients of the Avery Fisher Award in 2004. They were also inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame in 2010 and were Musical America's Ensemble of the year for 2000. Mr. Dutton resides in Bronxville, NY with his wife violinist Elizabeth Lim-Dutton and their three sons Luke, Jesse and Samuel.

Mr. Dutton exclusively uses Thomastik Spirocore strings.  
Viola: Samuel Zygmuntowicz (Brooklyn, NY 2003).

**Paul Watkins:** Acclaimed for his inspirational performances and eloquent musicianship, Paul Watkins enjoys a distinguished career as concerto soloist, chamber musician and conductor. Born in 1970, he studied with William Pleeth, Melissa Phelps and Johannes Goritzki, and at the age of 20 was appointed Principal Cellist of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. During his solo career he has collaborated with world renowned conductors including Sakari Oramo, Gianandrea Noseda, Sir Mark Elder, Andris Nelsons, Sir Andrew Davis, and Sir Charles Mackerras. He performs regularly with all the major British orchestras and others further afield, including with the Norwegian Radio, Royal Flemish Philharmonic, Melbourne Symphony and Queensland Orchestras. He has also made eight concerto appearances at the BBC Proms, most recently with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in the world premiere of the cello concerto composed for him by his brother, Huw Watkins, and premiered (and was the dedicatee of) Mark-Anthony Turnage's cello concerto. Highlights of recent seasons include concerto appearances with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Bournemouth Symphony, and the BBC Symphony under Semyon Bychkov, a tour with the European Union Youth Orchestra under the baton of Bernard Haitink, and his US concerto debut with the Colorado Symphony. A dedicated chamber musician, Watkins was a member of the Nash Ensemble from 1997 to 2013, and joined the Emerson String Quartet in May 2013. He is a regular guest artist at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in New York and Music@Menlo, and in 2014 he was appointed Artistic Director of the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival in Detroit. Watkins also maintains a busy career as a conductor and, since winning the 2002 Leeds Conducting Competition, has conducted all the major British orchestras. Further afield he has conducted the Royal Flemish Philharmonic,

Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Prague Symphony, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Tampere Philharmonic, Netherlands Radio Chamber Philharmonic and the Melbourne Symphony, Queensland and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestras. Paul Watkins is an exclusive recording artist with Chandos Records and his recent releases include Britten's Cello Symphony, the Delius, Elgar, Lutoslawski and Walton cello concertos, and discs of British and American music for cello and piano with Huw Watkins. His first recording as a conductor, of the Berg and Britten violin concertos with Daniel Hope, received a Grammy® nomination.

Cello: Domenico Montagnana and Matteo Goffriller in Venice, c.1730.

## James Dunham

Violist James Dunham's rich background includes having been founding member of the Naumburg Award winning Sequoia String Quartet and subsequently violist of the Grammy Award winning Cleveland Quartet. An impassioned advocate of new music, he has premiered and recorded many works written for him: his recording of Judith Shatin's "Glyph" for solo viola and piano quintet was praised by Fanfare Magazine as "reverent...beautifully, skillfully written" and "the playing here by soloist James Dunham is stunning: resonant and vital." American composer Libby Larsen has written two works for Mr. Dunham and his colleagues: the Viola Sonata (2001) and the song cycle "Sifting Through the Ruins" (2005) for mezzo-soprano, viola and piano. Both appear on the CD "Circle of Friends" by Libby Larsen.

A frequent guest with ensembles such as the American, Jupiter, and Takács Quartets, Mr. Dunham is violist of the Axelrod String Quartet, in residence at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. where the group performs on their collection of Nicolò Amati and Stradivari instruments.

Highlights of recent seasons include performing the Shostakovich Sonata with pianist Vladimir Feltsman, Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* with Queen Elisabeth Competition laureate Will Hagen, and a three-week tour of their home country with the New Zealand String Quartet. Upcoming events include a residency and recital at the *Hochschule für Musik und Theater "Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy"* in Leipzig, Germany, and multiple performances at the 2017 Aspen Music Festival, including quintets with the Takács String Quartet. Mr. Dunham is featured regularly in concerts, master classes and competition juries throughout the U.S. and abroad, adjudicating twice for the Osaka International Chamber Music Competition and in May 2017 as a Senior Division juror for the Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition.

Mr. Dunham is Professor of Viola and Chamber Music at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music where he also co-directs its Master of Music in String Quartet program.

Formerly on the faculty of California Institute of the Arts and the Eastman School of Music, he chaired the String Department at the New England Conservatory of Music for six years where he received the Louis & Adrienne Krasner Teaching Excellence Award.

Summer activities include yearly participation in the Aspen, Sarasota and Amelia Island (FL) Music Festivals as well as frequent appearances at the Texas Music Festival, *le Domaine Forget* (Quebec), Garth Newel Center, Heifetz International Music Institute and La Jolla Music Society's *SummerFest*.

His recordings can be found on labels including Telarc, Innova, Nonesuch, Delos, Naxos and Crystal.