

MOMENTA QUARTET

Emilie-Anne Gendron, violin
Alex Shiozaki, violin
Stephanie Griffin, viola
Michael Haas, cello

Biography

Momenta: the plural of momentum – four individuals in motion towards a common goal. This is the idea behind the Momenta Quartet, whose eclectic vision encompasses contemporary music of all aesthetic backgrounds alongside great music from the recent and distant past. The New York City-based quartet has premiered over 200 works, collaborated with over 250 living composers and was praised by *The New York Times* for its “diligence, curiosity and excellence.” In the words of *The New Yorker*’s Alex Ross, “few American players assume Haydn’s idiom with such ease.”

The quartet came into being in November 2004, when composer Matthew Greenbaum invited violist Stephanie Griffin to perform Mario Davidovsky’s String Trio for events celebrating Judaism and Culture at New York’s Symphony Space and Temple University in Philadelphia. A residency through the composition department at Temple University ensued, and the rehearsals and performances were so satisfying that the players decided to form a quartet. Through this residency, Momenta gave two annual concerts highlighting the talents of Temple University student composers alongside 20th-century masterworks and works from the classical canon, repeating the programs at the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture. From the outset, Momenta treated all music equally, devoting as much time, care and commitment to the student works as to the imposing musical monuments.

Word of Momenta’s passionate advocacy for emerging composers spread quickly. Composers started inviting Momenta for similar concerts and residencies at other academic institutions. Today, Momenta’s educational-performing circuit includes Binghamton, Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Hawaii Pacific, Michigan State, New York, Temple, Tufts, Washington and Yeshiva Universities; Bard, Barnard, Bates, Haverford, Hunter, Ithaca, Lehman and Williams Colleges; and Boston, Cincinnati, Eastman and Mannes conservatories. Momenta has received commission grants from the Koussevitzky, Barlow, and Jerome Foundations, and a Chamber Music America commission for Alvin Singleton, whose resulting work, “Hallelujah Anyhow” (2019), is featured on their 2022 album of his complete string quartets. Deeply committed to the musical avant-garde of the developing world, Momenta has premiered and championed the works of Tony Prabowo (Indonesia), Cergio Prudencio (Bolivia) and Hana Ajiashvili (Georgia); has collaborated with numerous gamelan ensembles; and in 2018, was brought by the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Embassy La Paz to Cochabamba, Bolivia for new music concerts and a teaching-performing residency at the Instituto Laredo.

Momenta has appeared at such prestigious venues as the Library of Congress, National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian’s Freer Gallery, Rubin Museum, Miller Theatre at Columbia University, the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, Chamber Music Cincinnati, and the Louisville and

Philadelphia Chamber Music Societies. Festival credits include the renowned Cervantino Festival in Mexico; MATA; Music from Japan; Ostrava Days in the Czech Republic; Red Note New Music; the Smithsonian's "Performing Indonesia"; the Yellow Barn Artist Residency; and since 2015, the quartet's own annual member-curated Momenta Festival in New York City, featuring world premieres, guest artists, and samplings from Momenta's unique personal repertoire.

In the 2022-23 season, Momenta continues their residency at Binghamton University, making classroom visits, performing concerts, and working with student and faculty composers and performers. Other season highlights include performances at Bang On a Can's Long Play Festival, the Red Note New Music Festival, and the Music from Japan Festival; appearances at Brooklyn College, Eastman School of Music, Illinois College; and "Concourse Counterpoint," a community series at the South Bronx's historic Andrew Freedman Home, curated by Momenta violist Stephanie Griffin. The next in-person installment of the Momenta Festival resumes in NYC in Fall 2023.

Momenta has recorded for the Albany, Bridge, Centaur, Furious Artisans, Innova, Navona, New Focus, New World and PARMA labels; and has been broadcast on WQXR, Q2 Music, Austria's Oe1 and Vermont Public Radio. The quartet's latest album "Alvin Singleton: Four String Quartets" was released to critical acclaim in 2022 by New World Records. Their debut album, "Similar Motion," featuring visionary works by Debussy, Philip Glass and Arthur Kampela, is available on Albany Records. Upcoming recording adventures include a project to record all thirteen string quartets by Mexican microtonal maverick Julián Carrillo (1875-1965) for Naxos, the complete string quartets of Roberto Sierra, and an American album featuring diverse works by Elizabeth Brown, Jason Hwang, Shawn Jaeger, Yusef Lateef, and Matthew Greenbaum.

For more information, including audio and video:

www.MomentaQuartet.com

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Short Biography

Momenta: the plural of momentum—four individuals in motion towards a common goal. This is the idea behind the **Momenta Quartet**. The New York City-based quartet has engaged in residencies at Temple, Cornell, Brown, and Binghamton Universities; performed at The National Gallery and The Library of Congress; and received commission grants from Chamber Music America, and the Koussevitzky, Jerome, and Barlow Foundations. Momenta's debut album, *Similar Motion*, is available on Albany Records. In 2022 New World Records released their album of Alvin Singleton's four string quartets. They are currently recording the complete quartets of the 20th-century Mexican composer and microtonal innovator Julián Carrillo for Naxos Records. More information is available at www.momentaquartet.com.

Member Biographies

Lauded by the New York Times as “brilliant” and by The Strad for her “marvellous and lyrical playing,” violinist **Emilie-Anne Gendron** enjoys an active and versatile freelance career based in New York. A deeply committed chamber musician, Ms. Gendron has been on the roster of the Marlboro Music Festival and the touring Musicians from Marlboro since 2011. She has appeared frequently with Talea Ensemble, A Far Cry, Argento Ensemble, Sejong Soloists, and has served on numerous occasions as concertmaster of ensembles including Orpheus, IRIS Orchestra, and Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia. She is a founding member of Ensemble Échappé, a new-music sinfonietta, as well as the Gamut Bach Ensemble, in residence with the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society. Ms. Gendron's extensively varied international appearances have included recitals in Sweden and at the Louvre in Paris; festivals in Russia, Finland, and Jordan; and recently, major venues in China, South Korea, Argentina, Chile, and Colombia. She was trained at the Juilliard School where her teachers were Won Bin Yim, Dorothy DeLay, David Chan, and Hyo Kang. A dual U.S.-Canadian citizen, she holds a B.A. in Classics from Columbia with Phi Beta Kappa honors, and a Master of Music degree and the coveted Artist Diploma from Juilliard. www.emilieannegendron.com

Praised by The New York Times as “spellbinding,” violinist **Alex Shiozaki** is emerging as a strong advocate for the music of today. At home with music new and old, he has appeared as a soloist with orchestras including the Sapporo Symphony, Sendai Philharmonic, AXIOM Ensemble, and the Juilliard Orchestra. Other highlights include summer residencies at the Tanglewood Music Center as a New Fromm Player and a Japan tour with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. A member of the Momenta Quartet since 2016, he also regularly performs with the IRIS Orchestra, Contemporaneous, and Mimesis Ensemble. As part of the Shiozaki Duo with his wife and pianist Nana Shi, Alex has given recitals in New York, Boston, Washington D.C., and California. Holding a B.A. from Harvard College and an M.M. and D.M.A. from the Juilliard School, he counts among his teachers Ronald Copes and Joseph Lin of the Juilliard String Quartet, Lynn Chang, and Robin Sharp. In addition to his performance activities, he is on faculty at the Juilliard School, State University of New York at New Paltz, and Interlochen Center for the Arts.

Stephanie Griffin is an innovative violist and composer with an eclectic musical vision. Born in Canada and based in New York City, her musical adventures have taken her to Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, England, Ireland, France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy, and Mongolia. Stephanie founded the Momenta Quartet in 2004, and is a member of the Argento Chamber Ensemble and Continuum; principal violist of the Princeton Symphony; and viola faculty at Hunter College. She was a 2019 Composition Fellow at the Instituto Sacatar in Brazil, and has received prestigious composition fellowships and commissions from the Jerome Foundation, the New York Foundation for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts and the Bronx Council on the Arts. As an improviser she has performed with Henry Threadgill, Wadada Leo Smith, Butch Morris and Adam Rudolph, among others, and was a 2014 Fellow and 2021 Alumna-in-Residence at Music Omi. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The Juilliard School where she studied with Samuel Rhodes, and has recorded for Tzadik, Innova, Naxos, Aeon, New World and Albany records. Since August 2020, she has served as the Executive Director of ACMP, a nonprofit organization providing grants and services for amateur chamber music worldwide.

Michael Haas is an accomplished and exciting cellist, performing in New York City and around the world. His playing has been described as “refined and attractive” by the New York Times. Leading a varied musical life, Michael is equally at home performing chamber music and orchestral repertoire both old and new. He has recently appeared performing at Symphony Space, the New York Live Arts Theater, Le Poisson Rouge, as well as for Tertulia, a new series bringing chamber music to intimate settings around New York City. In addition to his work with Momenta Quartet, he performs regularly with the Princeton Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, and American Ballet Theater Orchestra. He holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School.