

Carmen Flores attended Dartmouth College in New Hampshire and studied viola at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, Canada. Her principal teachers were Yizhak Schotten and Steven Dann. In 2007 she was appointed principal viola of the Royal Ballet Sinfonia, the orchestra of the Birmingham Royal Ballet. She has also performed as guest principal viola with the orchestras of the Canadian Opera Company and the English National Opera.

Carmen has performed chamber music with many artists and groups including Claude Frank, Joseph Silverstein, Midori, and the Grammy-nominated ARC Ensemble. A recipient of the US Fulbright Award to the Philippines, Carmen retains a strong interest in music history. She plays on a viola made in 2006 by British luthier William Castle.

Nick Stringfellow began his musical education at Chetham's School of Music, performing in masterclasses at an early age with Heinrich Schiff and Janos Starker. After further study at the Royal Northern College of Music with Clive Greensmith, he completed his training at the Royal College of Music, studying jointly with Anna Shuttleworth and Anthony Pleeth.

Nick cut his chamber music teeth as cellist with the London Mozart Ensemble alongside violinist David le Page. He is principal cellist with the Orchestra of the Swan, often appearing as soloist with the orchestra and taking part in its extensive education and outreach programs. Nick has performed with many ensembles including the Fitzwilliam String Quartet and the Brook Street Band, and he has recorded for EMI, Naxos, Somm and Orfeo labels. He is the featured cellist on Schott's Baroque around the World series and his trio Spirituoso is resident ensemble at Handel House.

Villiers Quartet

James Dickenson, violin
Tamaki Higashi, violin
Carmen Flores, viola
Nick Stringfellow, cello

Saturday, October 26, 2014

7:30 pm

Campus Auditorium, Northside Hall

Three Divertimenti for String Quartet

- I. March
- II. Waltz
- III. Burlesque

Benjamin Britten
(1913-1976)

IV. Arcadiana

Thomas Adés
(1971-)

INTERMISSION

String Quartet in e minor, Op. 83

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Piacevole: poco andante
- III. Finale: Allegro molto

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Biographies

The Villiers Quartet (VQ) is based in London, United Kingdom. Named Quartet-in-Association with the Northern Lights Symphony Orchestra, the Villiers Quartet has created its own ground-breaking chamber music residency and concert series in collaboration with St. Andrew's Church in the London borough of Hammersmith & Fulham. In March 2012 the VQ became a featured ensemble of the UK's Making Music Concert Promoter's Group after being selected from a pool of over 100 applicants.

The VQ regularly performs concerts exploring the relationship of chamber music with dance, art, film, literature, digital media, and technology. Last year they collaborated with actor Richard Mulholland in a performance of Haydn's *The Seven Last Words of Christ*; they launched the VQ New Works Competition, reaching a global audience with their online competition allowing internet audiences to vote for the winner; and they performed at the legendary London jazz venue Ronnie Scott's as part of the Brit Jazz Fest with sublime vocalist Seaming To.

The VQ works regularly with many fine musicians, performing this season with cellist Jamie Walton and violist Charles Sewart. The Quartet continues to work closely with their mentor, violist Jerry Horner, formerly of the Fine Arts Quartet. Projects for the 2012-13 season included recording the quartets of British composer Robert Still with the British Music Society, and a recording of *Sanctus* by Canadian-Estonian composer Riho Esko Maimets, winner of the VQ New Works Competition. In the autumn of 2013 the VQ makes its American debut as part of their East Coast tour. The Villiers Quartet is proud to be generously sponsored by the Delius and Bush Trusts, and by the VQ Supporters Circle.

James Dickenson studied both in the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US) and lists Lydia Mordkvitch, Danny Phillips, Jerry Horner, Wen Zhou Li, and Christopher Rowland as some of his many teachers and mentors. After graduating from the Royal Northern College of Music, James left the UK to lead the Degas Quartet in the US. With this quartet James gave concerts all over the US, including Carnegie Hall and at the Aspen Music Festival, and held various residencies in over 10 universities. Since leaving the quartet in 2007, James returned to the UK to continue his teaching, performing, and chamber music career. An advocate of new music, James has worked closely with many American composers, including Jeffrey Mumford, Andrew Waggoner, and he is currently commissioning a new piece for violin from Shafer Mahoney.

Japanese-born violinist **Tamaki Higashi** started violin at the age of seven and was a multiple winner of the South Japan Music Competition in her hometown of Kagoshima. She was invited to study with Lewis Kaplan in New York City, and she received both her bachelors and masters degrees from the Mannes College of Music. After graduating in 2002 she founded the Degas Quartet. Together with her husband James, the Degas Quartet held residencies at Syracuse University and with the Western Piedmont Symphony, working closely with the Cassatt Quartet and Earl Carlyss of the Juilliard Quartet. The Degas Quartet toured frequently within the United States and was featured live on NPR broadcasts, appearing in many prestigious venues and festivals including Carnegie Hall, Aspen Music Festival, and the Library of Congress.

Tamaki and James moved to the United Kingdom in 2007, and since then she has enjoyed a busy schedule as recitalist, teacher, and chamber musician. A passionate advocate for music education and community outreach, Tamaki organized several music projects in North Carolina, and Kagoshima, Japan, bringing chamber music to local schools and children's groups.

She plays on a 1740 Italian violin by Antonio Ungarini of Fabriano.