



## Biography

### Tokyo String Quartet

*Martin Beaver* (violin)  
*Kikuei Ikeda* (violin)  
*Kazuhide Isomura* (viola)  
*Clive Greensmith* (cello)

[www.tokyoquartet.com](http://www.tokyoquartet.com)

The Tokyo String Quartet has captivated audiences and critics alike since it was founded 42 years ago. With the next season 2012/2013 the quartet will bid farewell from the international stage and retire. Regarded as one of the supreme chamber ensembles of the world, the Tokyo Quartet-Martin Beaver and Kikuei Ikeda (violins), Kazuhide Isomura (viola) and Clive Greensmith (cello)-has collaborated with a remarkable array of artists and composers, built a comprehensive catalogue of critically acclaimed recordings and established a distinguished teaching record. Performing over a hundred concerts worldwide each season, the quartet has a devoted international following across the globe.

The 2011-2012 season opens with a concert for Houston Friends of Chamber Music, who has welcomed the Tokyo String Quartet on 38 occasions beginning in 1976. A performance for Music Toronto-whose audiences have enjoyed the quartet almost every season since its first visit in 1975-follows soon after, with Vancouver and Montreal also hosting the quartet in Canada.

In residence at New York's 92<sup>nd</sup> St. Y, the Tokyo launches a two-season project performing quartets by the ground-breaking composer Bela Bartók alongside those of Haydn, the beloved "father" of the string quartet. Other U.S. highlights include concerts in Philadelphia, Princeton, San Francisco, Detroit, Kansas City, Champaign-Urbana and at The Kennedy Center.

Long embraced by audiences in such international cities as Cologne, Madrid, Vienna, Copenhagen, London, Paris and Milan, the ensemble also returns this season to play in Poland, Latvia and Armenia, and performs for the first time in Moscow's Pushkin Museum. In Madrid, the program will revisit two commissions: *Primera Luz* by Lera Auerbach from 2006, and *A Way A Lone* by Toru Takemitsu, written for the quartet's tenth anniversary. A new work by Auerbach will be commissioned next season.

The quartet looks forward to performing the Brahms Piano Quintet with Andreas Haefliger at Wigmore Hall and Markus Groh in Toronto; Brahms and Dvorák Piano Quintets with Louis Lortie in Bergamo; and in the U.S., Mozart's Oboe Quartet K. 370 with Eugene Isotov and the Brahms Piano Quintet with Alon Goldstein.

Deeply committed to coaching young string quartets, the Tokyo devotes much of the summer to the prestigious Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, having served on the faculty of the Yale School of Music as quartet-in-residence since 1976. Other festivals this year include Santa Fe, Austin, Tucson and La Jolla, and the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan.

The Tokyo String Quartet has released more than 40 landmark recordings on Harmonia Mundi, BMG/RCA Victor Red Seal, Angel-EMI, CBS Masterworks, Deutsche Grammophon and Vox Cum Laude, including the complete quartets of Beethoven, Schubert and Bartók. The quartet's recordings of Brahms, Debussy, Dvorák, Haydn, Mozart, Ravel and Schubert have earned such honors as the Grand Prix du Disque Montreux, "Best Chamber Music Recording of the Year" awards from both Stereo Review and Gramophone magazines and seven Grammy nominations.

Recent recordings under the exclusive Harmonia Mundi label have been highly praised; the four sets of discs comprising the Beethoven cycle have garnered such accolades as "Outstanding Recording" by the International Record Review and the French critics' "Diapason d'Or". A new recording of the Schubert String Quintet in C Major with cellist David Watkin will be released in November 2011.

The Tokyo Quartet has been featured on numerous television programs, including "Sesame Street," "CBS Sunday Morning," PBS's "Great Performances," "CNN This Morning" and a national television broadcast from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, as well as on the soundtrack for the Sidney Lumet film *Critical Care*, starring Kyra Sedgwick and James Spader.

The ensemble performs on the "Paganini Quartet", a group of renowned Stradivarius instruments named for legendary virtuoso Niccolò Paganini, who acquired and played them during the 19th century. The instruments have been on loan to the quartet from the Nippon Music Foundation since 1995, when they were purchased from the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

Officially formed in 1969 at the Juilliard School of Music, the Tokyo Quartet traces its origins to the Toho School of Music in Tokyo, where the founding members were profoundly influenced by Professor Hideo Saito. Instilled with a deep commitment to chamber music, the original members of what would become the Tokyo String Quartet eventually came to America for further study with Robert Mann, Raphael Hillyer and Claus Adam. Soon after its formation, the quartet won First Prize at the Coleman Competition, the Munich Competition and the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. An exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon firmly established it as one of the world's leading quartets.

## **2011/2012**

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