

## The PRISM Quartet

Intriguing programs of great beauty and breadth have distinguished the PRISM Quartet as one of America's foremost chamber ensembles, presenting the saxophone as a serious concert instrument while embracing its rich history in jazz and popular music. Founded in 1984, the ensemble has twice been awarded the Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music and has been chosen by Musical America as "Outstanding Young Artists." PRISM's creative work has been supported by the nation's leading cultural philanthropies, including the National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer, Chamber Music America, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Presser Foundation, the Aaron Copland Fund, the Philadelphia Music Project (The Pew Charitable Trusts), and state arts councils in Pennsylvania, New York, and Michigan.

Champions of new music, PRISM has premiered over 100 works, many by internationally celebrated American composers, including William Albright, Chen Yi, Lee Hyla, Libby Larson, Greg Osby, and Jennifer Higdon. The Quartet also maintains four annual Young Composer Commissioning Awards, three for composers up to 35 years old in Greater Philadelphia, New York City, and the State of Michigan, the other for 14-18 year old students at the Walden School for Young Composers in Dublin, New Hampshire, where PRISM conducts regular residencies. The awards are designed to encourage emerging composers in the group's primary geographic areas of activity to contribute to the saxophone quartet repertoire.

PRISM's engagements encompass both recitals and concerto appearances. In 2000, the Quartet commissioned Pulitzer Prize winning composer William Bolcom for "Concerto Grosso," premiered with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and performed subsequently by PRISM with twenty orchestra nationwide, including the Cleveland and Dallas Symphony Orchestras. Most recently, PRISM commissioned Princeton University professor and Guggenheim fellow Steven Mackey for "Animal, Vegetable, Mineral," conceived as both a stand-alone quartet and a concerto grosso. The world premiere of the quartet version was given in November 2004 in New York's Symphony Space and will be presented at Carnegie Hall (Zankel Hall) in February 2006 as part of a "Making Music" composer portrait program focusing on Mackey's chamber works. PRISM performed the world premiere of AVM as a concerto in the group's debut appearance with the Nashville Symphony Orchestra in October 2005. PRISM has also performed with the Nassau Symphony premiering "Serenata Gioconda" by Chicago composer Larry Rapchak, with the Macon Symphony in Samuel Adler's "Concerto for Saxophone Quartet," and as guest artists with the Pennsylvania Ballet Orchestra and the New York Consort of Viols, presenting works by Morton Gould and David Loeb, respectively.

Since 1994, PRISM has maintained a comprehensive residency program in Philadelphia, presenting over 175 outreach performances at Settlement Music School, The Free Library of Philadelphia, and The Kardon Institute for People with Disabilities. In 1997, PRISM initiated its own concert series in both New York City and Philadelphia, presenting the newest compositions created for their ensemble by both classical and jazz composers from around the world. The series has featured an eclectic range of guest artists, including Ethel, the Talujon Percussion Quartet, pianist Marilyn Nonken, saxophonists Donald Sinta and Rick Margitza, guitarist Ben Monder, and drummer John Riley.

The PRISM Quartet sustains a vigorous recording schedule. In 2000, PRISM released "Real Standard Time," a compact disc of modern jazz by Tim Ries and Quartet member Matthew

Levy (Innova Recordings), and in 2006, will release a CD of saxophone music by William Albright. In the summer of 2006, PRISM will record William Bolcom's "Concerto Grosso" with Ohio's Lancaster Festival Orchestra followed by a recording of twenty-two short dedications premiered by PRISM in November 2004 in honor of the Quartet's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season, including works by William Bolcom, James Primosch, Tim Ries, Perry Goldstein, Ken Euno, Zack Browning, and Roshanne Etezady. PRISM made its recording debut on the Koch International label, receiving rave reviews from Classical Magazine and United Press International. The Quartet may also be heard on the soundtrack of the film "Two Plus One," the feature film debut of writer/director and Emmy nominee Eugene Martin, scored by Levy. The film was premiered at the Festival of World Cinema and has since received multiple broadcasts on Showtime's Sundance Channel. PRISM is featured in the theme music to the weekly PBS news magazine "NOW" and has been broadcasted on New York City's WQXR and WNYC, Philadelphia's WRTI, National Public Radio's "Performance Today," Detroit's WQRS, Voice of America, and on the Dame Myra Hess Series from WFMT in Chicago.

The PRISM Quartet is one of the nation's most active proponents of new music, developing a presence for its medium with performances in nearly every state and abroad. Recent seasons have been highlighted by engagements which reflect the Quartet's versatility, including appearances in Alice Tully Hall with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, on "Entertainment Tonight," and with the famed Chilean rock group Inti-Illimani in Santiago. In 1995, PRISM toured Latin America under the auspices of the U.S. State Department with programs of contemporary American music. PRISM has also toured extensively with the Chester String Quartet performing Michael Sahl's "Storms" for saxophones and strings. Additional engagements have included performances at the Chautauqua Institution, the Eastman School of Music, the University of Utah, a tour of Hawaii, a residency at the Pabst Theater in Milwaukee, performances at New York's Merkin Hall and Carnegie Weill Recital Hall, the Orange County Philharmonic Society, Los Angeles' Chamber Music in Historic Sites, the University of Illinois' Krannert Center, Ann Arbor's University Musical Society, Purdue University Convocations, Dartmouth College, Ithaca College, Michigan State University, Brigham Young University, the University of Vermont, Georgia Southern University and a two week residency with the Visiting Artists Series in Davenport, Iowa. While on tour, PRISM has presented master classes and composer forums at notable institutions, including the Curtis Institute of Music, the Oberlin Conservatory, Purdue University, the Universities of Michigan, Illinois, and Southern California, and the Interlochen Arts Academy.

Members of PRISM are Matthew Levy, Timothy McAllister, Zachary Shemon, and Taimur Sullivan. The PRISM Quartet serves as artists/clinicians for the Selmer Company and performs exclusively on Selmer saxophones.

Please visit [www.prismquartet.com](http://www.prismquartet.com) for more information.

Dated: September 2, 2007