

COREY GEMMELL, VIOLIN

Corey Lyle Gemmell, a Hamilton native, began violin lessons with local Hamilton teacher Jackie Sutherland and later continued lessons with Mark Fujino before studying with David Zafer at the University of Toronto. While studying in Hamilton he joined the Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (HPYO) where he played concertmaster under the direction of the legendary Glenn Mallory. Mr. Gemmell was also the concertmaster of the Westdale Secondary School Orchestra, under the guidance of music teacher Bonnie Quinn.

Mr. Gemmell currently makes his home in Markham, Ontario. He has distinguished himself as a soloist and chamber musician throughout Canada, Germany, the United States and China. At present he is concertmaster for the Burlington Symphony Orchestra, Mississauga Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Toronto, and the Scarborough Philharmonic. He has also served in this capacity with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, the Brott Music Festival/National Academy Orchestra, Esprit Orchestra, the Elora Festival Orchestra, the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir Orchestra, the Ontario Philharmonic, and the Toronto Philharmonic Orchestra.



Very active in Toronto's thriving musical theatre scene, Mr. Gemmell has been concertmaster in such musicals as *Miss Saigon*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Hamilton*, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, to name but a few. One of his personal favourites was performing as concertmaster in the *Hugh Jackman Show*.

As a soloist Mr. Gemmell has performed much of the standard repertoire for violin and orchestra. In recent seasons he performed concertos by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Sibelius, Prokofiev, and Vivaldi. The 2022/2023 season has him performing Sarasate's *Carmen Fantasy* with the Burlington Symphony Orchestra and the Brahms *Violin Concerto* with the Mississauga Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Gemmell has been a member of Ensemble Vivant, the Elgin String Quartet, and the National Piano Trio. He has been a frequent guest artist with New Music Concerts, with whom he performed and led workshops at the National Conservatory of Beijing in 2016 and has been a guest on such series as the Chamber Music Society of Mississauga, Array Music, and the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society.

Mr. Gemmell is a member of the faculty for the National Music Camp of Canada as well as a member of the Royal College of Examiners. He has also been on faculty at the Great Lakes International Summer Music Institute at Algoma University, the Royal Conservatory of Music, and the University of Western Ontario.

In 2022 Mr. Gemmell recorded several new works of solo and chamber music by Canadian composers Ronald Royer, Daniel Mehdizadeh, Brandon Walker, and Elizabeth Raum in association with the Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra, set for release in 2023. He can be heard in recordings of the *Mozart Effect*, having recorded several of Mozart's *Violin Sonatas* and many of Mozart's *String Quartets* for the series. With Ensemble Vivant he has completed three albums, including a 2022 release, "iFugue", to critical acclaim. He was one of the contributing artists to record the Royal Conservatory of Music's complete violin syllabus in 2013. He has also recorded other works by Mozart, Brahms, Ravel, Robert A. Baker, as well as numerous movie and commercial recordings.

Mr. Gemmell plays on a violin made in Milan in 1907 by Cipriano Briani and a violin made for him in 2005 by renowned Toronto luthier, Hratch Armenious, as well as bows by Lamy, Martin and Voirin.

BENJAMIN SMITH, PIANO



Described as having “scintillating technique” (*Barrie Examiner*), pianist **Benjamin Smith** has performed both as soloist and chamber musician across Canada and the United States. He has been a laureate of numerous competitions, including the Virginia Waring International Piano Competition and the CMC Stepping Stone Competition. Guest appearances include the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra, the New Juilliard Ensemble, the Las Vegas Young Artists Orchestra, the Ontario Philharmonic, Orchestra London, the Burlington Symphony, the Windsor Symphony, and the University of Toronto’s Hart House Orchestra. As soloist, he has performed under esteemed conductors Rossen Milanov, Marco Parisotto, and Yuniior Lopez, with concertos including rarities such as the Schoenberg Piano Concerto. Festival performances include repeat appearances at Toronto, Banff, Stratford, Niagara, Port Milford, and New Park (Ithaca, NY). American performances include recitals for the Texas Chopin Society and Chicago’s Landowska Harpsichord Society. Recent seasons have seen two concerts in Carnegie Hall: once as soloist

in Gershwin’s Rhapsody In Blue with the Hart House Orchestra, and previously in recital with Canadian cellist Dongkyun An. A disc with Mr. An of Saint-Saens, Schumann, and Beethoven was released in December 2016. Other commercial recordings include a disc of Canadian chamber music (*Aboriginal Inspirations*, 2017) and extensive solo recordings for the 2022 Royal Conservatory Celebration piano series.

Devoting considerable time to chamber music, Ben has been heard nationally across Canada on CBC Music, as well as radio broadcasts in the UK. He has partnered in recital with a myriad of renowned artists including Martin Beaver, Timothy Chooi, Colin Carr, Narek Hakhnazaryan, Jacques Israelievitch, Jinjoo Cho, Stanislav Pronin, Gábor Tarkövi, Øystein Baadsvik, and William VerMeulen, as well as with ensembles such as the Penderecki, Cecilia, Annex, and Tokai string quartets. For two seasons he performed as one-third of the Israelievitch-Smith-Ahn piano trio. Involved with music of our time as well, he is regularly found playing keyboards with the Esprit Orchestra in Toronto.

Increasingly in demand as a teacher, Ben often serves as a juror for music festivals and competitions, and has adjudicated many of the largest music festivals in Canada. His students have had success in this realm as well, including the CFMTA National festival. He has also served on panels for competitions internationally, most recently for the OPUS competition in the US.

Dr. Smith currently resides in Toronto, maintaining a concert schedule and serving on the faculties of both the Glenn Gould School (GGS) and the Taylor Young Artist Academy at the Royal Conservatory. Previously, he held a position on the piano faculty at Western University. His principal teachers included Andrea Battista, James Anagnoson, Julian Martin, and Christina Dahl. Along with a DMA from Stony Brook University, he holds a Bachelors degree from the University of Toronto, an Artist Diploma from the GGS, and a Masters from Juilliard.