

As seen in...



# Chamber Music

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## American Ensemble

### Democracy in Action

Parthenia thrives on variety. Refusing to limit itself to standard quartet repertoire, the New York-based viol quartet adds duos and trios to the mix, and revels in the opportunity of making music with guest artists like lutenist Paul O'Dette and soprano Julianne Baird. The group juxtaposes Renaissance music with commissioned works from contemporary composers such as Will Ayton, Brian Fennelly, and Phil Kline. Later this season, the group will introduce another commissioned work—a setting of old Italian texts by composer John Stone, with Jolle Greenleaf as soprano soloist. “The idea is to bring variety to the programs without compromising the unity of the repertoire,” Rosamund Morley, the group’s treble viol player, says. “We’re dedicated not just to singing these songs, so to speak, but to making them have a sense of movement through the evening.”

Parthenia has no director; it operates as what Morley calls “a pure democracy.” Morley and Lawrence Lipnik (tenor viol) program the concerts, while Parthenia’s two bass viol players, Beverly Au and Lisa Terry, handle grant-writing and research. Just this season, the quartet has acquired a manager, Christine Matovich. Parthenia has also landed a home base for its performances: Corpus Christi Church in uptown Manhattan, taking over Anonymous 4’s berth as ensemble-in-residence.

On their own, Parthenia’s players appear with such acclaimed ensembles as Les Arts Florissants, Waverly Consort, and ARTEK. When together, however, the four musicians find a special synergy. “We’re all soloists, but when we work with Parthenia, we’re committed to each other,” says Lipnik. “There’s no ego—we’re all a part of the ensemble.” ([www.parthenia.org](http://www.parthenia.org))



**PARTHENIA.ORG**

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