

**Jay ELFENBEIN**  
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***Personal information***

Born October 7, 1955, in the Greater New York Metropolitan area

***Professional Experience on Bass***

**2008-2010, Cirque du Soleil**, Macau, China, double bass, electric bass, bass violin, cello, vielle, rebab, treble viola da gamba, and bass viola da gamba as an onstage featured improvising soloist.

**1999-2008, New York Collegium**, the leading period-instrument orchestra in the greater metropolitan area, principle and solo bass (baroque bass, violone, basse de violon, viola da gamba), under Christophe Rousset, Andrew Parrott, Gustav Leonhardt, Martin Gester, Fabio Biondi, Reinhard Goebel

**2000-2008, American Classical Orchestra and Clarion Society**, New York, principal and solo bass (baroque and classical bass, violone, viola da gamba) soloist on “Viennese” violone in performances of Mozart’s “Per Questa Bella Mano” with both orchestras.

**2004-2008, Washington Bach Consort and Opera Lafayette**, Washington, DC, principal bass (baroque bass, basse de violon)

**2000-2005, Boston Early Music Festival**, baroque opera and festival orchestra, principle bass and violone, under **Stephen Stubbs and Paul O’Dette**; and the **Handel and Haydn Society**, Boston, principle and section bass, under **Christopher Hogwood** and Grant Llewellyn.

**1995-2005**, work as principle bass with **Portland Baroque Orchestra**, Oregon, (baroque bass, violone, basse de violon) under **Monica Huggett**; **18<sup>th</sup> Century Ensemble of Mostly Mozart Festival**, New York, (baroque bass); **Tragicomedia** and **Concerto Pallatino** (basse de violon).

**1988-2001 Member of Springfield Symphony, Springfield, MA**

**1990-2000, American Festival of Microtonal Music**, principle bass and soloist); American premiere of **Iannis Xenakis’** solo for bass “**Theraps**” (**New York Times**: : “.with virtuosity and flair”)

**1975-2005**, work as principle bass with **Connecticut Grand Opera**, **Harlem Opera Ensemble** European tour of *Porgy and Bess*, numerous Broadway shows (*West Side Story*, *Annie*, etc.), **Erick Hawkins** and **Jose Limon dance companies**, **SEM Ensemble**, **Prague Spring Festival** (contemporary music) **Absolute Ensemble** (bass, electric bass) recording with **Joe Zawinul**, section bass with **American Symphony and Orchestra of St. Luke’s** (New York), **Boston Baroque**, **Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional de Colombia**; worked under **Leonard Bernstein**, **Herbert von Karajan**, **Gunther Schuller**, **Kristan Jarvi**, **Lorin Maazel**, **Lukas Foss**, **Zubin Mehta**, **Antoine Coppola**, **Roger Norrington**.

**1975-2005**, Soloist in premiere of work by **Jon Deak** (**New York Times**: “virtuosic bass...played magnificently”)

Soloist in premiere of **Elias Tananbaum’s Theatre Piece for Solo Bass and Electronic Tape** (New York)

Soloist in performance of *Sonata 1963* by **Frank Proto** (Merkin Hall, NY).

Soloist in premier of *Etudes* by **Larry Polanski** for microtonal bass, on New York’s **WNET**, Channel 13

### ***Education***

**Master of Music Degree in Jazz Composition and Arranging, University of Massachusetts** 2019

**Professional Diploma in performance** on double bass from **Juilliard** (New York) 1986

**Studies at Manhattan School of Music, 1976-79**

**Bass studies with David Walter** 1975-79, 1984-86

**Viola da Gamba studies with Mary Springfels, Lawrence Dreyfus, Margriet Tindemans, Susie Napper**

### ***Awards***

**Claus Adam Award** for outstanding performance and leadership (**New Music Orchestral Project**)

Composer's grant from **Meet the Composer**; **Puffin Grant** for the **Ivory Consort** (my medieval group)

**Helen Stanton Award** (grant) for microtonal music from **National Orchestral Association**

### ***Teaching Experience***

Over forty years' experience teaching private double bass, electric bass, and viola da gamba, as well as composition, theory, jazz style, and arranging

Presented various workshops on Renaissance, Baroque, and modern improvisational styles at the Viola da Gamba Society and **Amherst Early Music Festival**, as well as private workshops.

Lecture-demonstration on history of stringed instruments at the International Society of Bassists 2007 convention

Three years' all-size string instruction and orchestral training for 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades in New York City school

Masterclasses, ensemble coaching and lecture-demonstrations at **Hong Kong Academy of the Performing Arts**

### ***Professional Viola da Gamba Experience***

*Solo Performances on bass viol:*

**Bach Passions** (both) for, among others:

**Choral Society of Washington** at the **Kennedy Center**, under **Norman Scribner**

**New York Collegium** at **Brooklyn Academy of Music**

**Church of the Ascension Choir**, under **Dennis Keene** (NYC)

**Washington Bach Consort**, under **Reilly Lewis** (Washington, DC)

**St John the Divine**, under **Harold Rosenbaum** (NYC)

**Westminster Choir College** (Princeton, NJ)

**Telemann, Sonata for Gamba and Flute in G minor, Amherst Early Music Festival** (MA)

**Rogniono, Music for Viola Bastarda** (virtuoso Italian gamba), performances in NYC and University of Richmond (VA)

**Buxtehude, Sonata in D** (solo) and *Jubilate Domino* (obligato) at **St. Peter's** and **St. Bart's** (NYC)

**Buxtehude, Sonata for Gamba and Violone, Long Island Baroque**

**JS Bach**, gamba sonatas in G and D, recital with harpsichordist **Irina Rees** (Rehoboth, MA)

**Marais, Abel, Hume**, and others at various NYC recitals

*Ensemble Work:*

**The Orchestra of St. Luke's** (NYC)

**The New York Collegium**, under **Andrew Parrot**

**Early Music New York**, under **Fred Renz**

**Philomel** (Philadelphia, PA)

**Fuma Sacra**, under **Andrew McGill** (**Westminster Choir College**, Princeton, NJ)

**The Dryden Ensemble** (Princeton, NJ)

Performances of Bach, Schutz, Monteverdi, Couperin, and others as obligato and/or continuo gambist for **Clarion, Rutgers Summerfest** (NJ), **Columbia University**, and many Tri-State area churches.

### ***Bass Viol projects (in Europe)***

Solo viola da gamba in *Arthur*, a multimedia project of works by Handel, Purcell, etc., with countertenor **Sebastien Fournier** and dancer **Paco Decina**

Duo on viola da gamba with bassist **Jean-Philippe Viret**, *Improvisation Across the Ages*, with works by anonymous medieval composers, Couperin, Marais, Telemann, and Bartok

Tour of Ireland with **Catriona O'Leary** and Ex, playing Spanish and Irish Baroque music

### ***Jazz and modern music viol projects***

Solo electric viol with **Franz Hackl** at **Innsbruck Dance Festival, 2013**

Two years as onstage solo viola da gamba with **Cirque du Soleil's Zaia** in Macao, 2008-2010

Soloist with **Anthony Braxton's Ensemble** at **The Kitchen (NYC)**

Solo electric viol and co-leader of the **Swings Both Ways Jazz Quartet** for 15 years, and sideman on numerous jazz, rock, and theatre projects and recordings

Founder and director of **GambaDream**, a contemporary ensemble highlighting acoustic and electric (Ruby) gambas as soloing instruments, with a well-received CD under the same name; performances at the Pierpont Morgan Library, Cornelia Street Café, and other New York venues

### ***Compositions***

I am a published composer whose work has been commissioned and performed in the U.S., Japan, Canada, Europe, and South America. I write in a wide variety of genres and for many vocal and instrumental combinations, often concentrating on viols but including early and modern instruments. Orchestral and large jazz works have been premiered in New York City.

Various solo and ensemble works feature viola da gamba, including commissions from **Les Voix Humaines**, a prize-winning gamba duo from Montreal; Elliot Z. Levine, baritone of **Western Wind Vocal Ensemble**; and the **Yukime Kambe Consort** (Japan), with several published by **PRB Productions**

### ***Special Projects***

Founder and director of **the Ivory Consort**, an early music group specializing in medieval music, in which I play vielle, rebab, and vihuela d'arco. Our CD, *Music in the Land of Three Faiths*, chosen as one of the top ten world music CDs by **Catapult Magazine**, drew critical raves, as have our performances at the **Bloomington, Indianapolis, Madison, and New York Early Music Festivals; Yale University; Trinity Church (NY); and St. Bartholomew's Church (NY)**

Founder and director of **GambaDream**, a contemporary ensemble highlighting the acoustic and electric gambas as soloing instruments, with a well-received CD. Performances at the **Pierpont Morgan Library, Cornelia Street Café**, and other New York venues

### ***Recordings***

Bass (modern and early) on Sony Classics, CBS, PGM, and Newport Classics, with conductors including **Andrew Parrot** and Bruno Weil and composer **Steve Reich**, among numerous others; bass on film soundtracks such as *Casanova* and for **HBO**; vihuela and vielle on **Paul Simon's CD, You're the One**; and bass and electric bass on **Joe Zawinul's** final recording, *Absolute Zawinul*