

VINTA

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Vinta is Nathan Smith, Emilyn Stam, John David Williams, and Robert Alan Mackie, four brilliant performers and close friends at the cutting edge of European traditional music in Canada. Nearly a decade of these four musicians hanging out at fiddle jams around Toronto has culminated in this quartet, bringing new intensity to old tunes, and growing new tunes from old sources. A band of multi-instrumentalists and genuine scholars, Vinta is making music that is powerful, profound, and fiercely danceable.

In the great void of 2020, the four bubbled together and passed what seemed like a lifetime of otherwise empty days in a breezy backyard in Guelph, ON. They played every fiddle tune they could remember, and got to learning new ones when they ran out. A somewhat improvised concert in that very backyard showed them how dynamic and emotional an experience they could bring to audiences who had not heard a band for months, and they quickly reinvented what touring could look like in those new peculiar circumstances.

Their unshakeable resolve to bring live performances to live people saw them parading through farming communities on oxen-towed hay wagons, popping up around corners on downtown bar patios, and rigging up elaborate decorations in parks from Stratford to Mont-Laurier to attract anyone and everyone to their energetic performances.

Since forming in 2020, Vinta has performed at Mariposa Folk Festival, Gatineau Hills Fiddle Festival, Campbell Bay Music Fest, and Algoma Trad. They have released 9 EPs of traditional music and a beautiful 30-minute concert video with Sound Still Productions. Their first full-length album of original music "Beacons" is out as of November 26, 2022.

*"Vinta provides a huge breath of fresh air with their wonderful, creative reimagining of Balfolk dance forms. Their original compositions blend perfectly with their traditional material and their playing is uniformly top notch. What really strikes me are their completely sympathetic arrangements and tuned in, dynamic ensemble playing; always on the same page and always finding the right unanimous groove. Brilliant!"*

- James Stephens, Artistic Director, Gatineau Hills Fiddle Festival