

Biography



Hagen Quartett

Lukas Hagen (*Violin*)
Rainer Schmidt (*Violin*)
Veronika Hagen (*Viola*)
Clemens Hagen (*Violoncello*)

"Music that sounds as if it came from another planet..."
"The pinnacle of musicality!"
(*Drehpunkt Kultur* and *Die Presse.com*)

After recitals given by the "four world-class string players from Salzburg", rapt audiences remain "entranced several minutes with quasi-absolute stillness in their thoughts, well aware that they have experienced something truly exceptional", as the press has noted. On these occasions, concertgoers share "the wish that the music would never stop."

For chamber music lovers, the 2017/18 season thus offers a number of welcome opportunities for utter listening enjoyment – "unforgettable moments of sheer musical magic" (*Drehpunkt Kultur*). The Hagen Quartet will be focusing on Beethoven's Op. 18 and Anton Webern's output for string quartet. They will also be directing their attention to Debussy and Ravel, each of whom left only one string quartet to posterity: the Quartet will highlight the nuances of timbre and the concentrated musical details contained in each one of these two masterpieces.

Once again, in the course of this concert season, the Hagen Quartet's performance schedule will take them to the Amsterdam Concertgebouw – this time for the opening of the renowned concert hall's First Biennial String Quartet Festival to be held in January 2018. They are also invited to give a guest performance at Schleswig Holstein Music Festival, and will travel to major music capitals such as Berlin, London, Frankfurt, Florence, Vienna, Munich, Hamburg, and Paris. Asia is once more on their tour calendar, including three recitals in Tokyo.

The Hagen Quartet's most recent recording featuring the Mozart String Quintets K387 and K458 was awarded the *Diapason d'or* and the *Choc* of *Classica Magazine* (France), as well as the coveted German ECHO Klassik Prize (2016) for the Best Chamber Music Recording of the 17th/18th Centuries.

The current season will see the long-awaited release of the Hagen Quartet's new album with works by Brahms and featuring pianist Kirill Gerstein, on the Myrios Classics music label.

In 2011, the Hagen Quartet celebrated their 30th anniversary with two recordings for Myrios Classics featuring works by Mozart, Webern, Beethoven, Grieg and the Brahms Clarinet Quintet (with Jörg Widmann). That same year, the Hagen Quartet won the ECHO Klassik Prize as Ensemble of the Year; in 2012, the quartet was named Honorary Member of the Vienna Konzerthaus.

The Hagen Quartet's unprecedented 3 1/2-decade career began in 1981. Its early years, marked by a series of prizes in chamber music competitions and an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon that was to produce around forty-five CDs over the following twenty years, enabled the group to work its way through the immensely vast repertoire for string quartet in which this ensemble's distinctive profile has emerged. Collaborations with artistic personalities such as György Kurtág and the late Nikolaus Harnoncourt are as important to the Hagen Quartet as its concert appearances with performers including Maurizio Pollini, Mitsuko Uchida, Sabine Meyer, Krystian Zimerman, Heinrich Schiff, and Jörg Widmann.

The group's concert repertoire and discography feature attractive and intelligently arranged programmes embracing the entire history of the string quartet genre, from its pre-Haydn beginnings right through to Kurtág. The Hagen Quartet also works closely with composers of its own generation: not only reviving existing works, but also commissioning and premiering new pieces.

Many young string quartets regard the Hagen Quartet as a model in terms of sound quality, stylistic variety, ensemble playing and serious commitment to the works and composers of the genre. As teachers and mentors at the Salzburg Mozarteum and the Hochschule in Basel, as well as in international masterclasses, the quartet's members pass on their great wealth of experience to younger colleagues.

Lukas Hagen plays a violin by Antonio Stradivari from 1734 thanks to the support of Balthazar Soulier, Atelier Cels Paris.

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