
SIMPLY QUARTET

DANFENG SHEN, ANTONIA RANKERSBERGER (VIOLINS)
XIANG LYU (VIOLA), IVAN VALENTIN HOLLUP ROALD (VIOLONCELLO)

Biography

"From Chinese philosophy comes the idea of a great entirety in which opposites depend on and complement each other. Based on this idea, we combine complexity and simplicity. As four different individuals, together we shape the unity of the string quartet, the royal genre of chamber music."

The Simply Quartet is one of the most promising string quartets of the new generation and is composed of musicians from three different nations. The members of the ensemble come from China, Norway and Austria and, as a young, international ensemble, have already acquired a great reputation within the chamber music scene.

The Simply Quartet is continuously searching for a deep understanding of the inherent language of music: from the early classical works to modern string quartet literature. They place great emphasis on combining the three contrasting cultures upon which they draw their inspiration to develop a musical language of their own; by exploring works from each of their cultures, they deepen their knowledge of different sound worlds.

Originally founded in Shanghai under the auspices of Jensen Horn-Sin Lam, the quartet moved to Vienna to intensively explore the essence and origins of quartet playing - at the Joseph Haydn Institute of the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, the ensemble studies with Johannes Meissl, who has become the ensemble's most important mentor since the move to Austria. The quartet captures further influences in Günter Pichler's class at the Reina Sofia School of Music in Madrid, where it has been a member since 2020.

The quartet has already been awarded four first prizes at renowned chamber music competitions: At the International Carl Nielsen Competition in Copenhagen & the "Quatuor á Bordeaux" in 2019, the "Franz Schubert and the Music of Modernity" in Graz in 2018 and in 2017 at the International Joseph Haydn Chamber Music Competition in Vienna.

In the 2021/2022 season, the Simply Quartet will be one of the selected ensembles of the ECHO Rising Stars series with concerts at BOZAR Brussels, the Festspielhaus Baden Baden and the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, among others. The Austrian composer Julia Lacherstorfer is composing a string quartet for these tours. In addition to the ECHO Rising Stars concerts, the ensemble will make its debut at the Berlin Philharmonie and the Philharmonie de Paris in the same season.

At the Vienna Konzerthaus, the Simply Quartet is part of the Great Talent programme. In addition to concerts, the artists receive intensive artistic support within the framework of this programme.

Primarius Danfeng Shen plays a violin by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini from 1753, which is at his disposal thanks to a generous loan from MERITO String Instruments Trust GmbH. Antonia Rankersberger plays a violin by Ferdinando Gagliano from 1770-1780 (Naples), made available to her by the Austrian National Bank.

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Kurfürstendamm 211
DE-10719 Berlin

+49 (0)30 41 47 81 710
www.impresariat-simmenauer.de