

"[...] they put on such a breathtaking performance that at the end the audience trampled with enthusiasm."

SIMPLY QUARTET

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

...words used by the *Hamburger Abendblatt* in February 2023, describing the concert of the Simply Quartet at the Elbphilharmonie, where they were the first string quartet to perform in the series "Fast Lane".

"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 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 (China, Austria, Norway) 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. In addition, the quartet owes valuable experiences and impulses to its years at the European Chamber Music Academy. The quartet captures further influences in Günter Pichler's class at the Reina Sofía School of Music in Madrid, where it was a member in 2020 and 2021.

The Simply Quartet has 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.

At the Vienna Konzerthaus, the Simply Quartet was part of the Great Talent programme (2020-2022), and in the 2021/2022 season, they were one of the selected ensembles of the ECHO Rising Stars series with debuts at concert halls including BOZAR Brussels, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Palau de la Música Catalana, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg or the Luxembourg & Paris Philharmonies.

This season, in addition to concerts at (a.o.) the Wigmore Hall London, the Konzerthaus Berlin, the Alte Oper Frankfurt or the Tonhalle Zurich, several festival concerts are on the agenda, e.g. at

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the Rheingau Music Festival, the Festival International de Quatuors à Cordes du Luberon, the String Quartet Biennale In Amsterdam and the Beethovenfest Bonn.

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 Camillo Camilli from 1736 (Mantua), made available to her by the Austrian National Bank.

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