

## Kuss Quartet, string quartet

**Jana Kuss**, Violin

**Oliver Wille**, Violin

**William Coleman**, Viola

**Mikayel Hakhnazaryan**, Cello

The trademark of the Kuss Quartet is their concept-based programming. With common themes running throughout their programmes, they offer unique experiences to accustomed audiences and new listeners alike. Leader Jana Kuss and Oliver Wille have been playing side by side for over 25 years. Together with their long-standing colleagues William Coleman and Mikayel Hakhnazaryan, they seek to validate the eternal "muss es sein?" of string quartet playing with their own brand of curiosity.

The cross-genre Beethoven programme "Force and Freedom" was developed together with director Nicola Hümpel and her music and dance theatre "Nico and The Navigators". The premiere will take place at the Schwetzingen Festspiele in May 2020 and can also be seen at the Palais des Beaux Arts Brussels, the Konzerthaus Dortmund, the Kissinger Sommer and the Radialsystem Berlin.

In early 2019, the Kuss Quartet was the first German string quartet to receive Stradivari's legendary "Paganini Quartet" on loan from the Nippon Music Foundation. The quartet played Beethoven's complete string quartet cycle on these instruments in June 2019, by invitation of the Suntory Hall, Tokyo. The live, recorded cycle will be released in early 2020 by the British label Rubicon Classics with the support of G. Henle Verlag. At the end of 2019, to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the composer Mieczyslaw Weinberg, Sony Classical will release the Piano Quintet, together with Olga Scheps. In 2018 the quartet received the Opus Klassik Prize, for their recording of works by Rudi Stephans, also on the Sony label.

In the past few years, the quartet has been able to commission four new works for string quartets by Enno Poppe, Aribert Reimann, Manfred Trojahn and Bruno Mantovani, thanks to support from the state of Lower Saxony/Musik 21. The cooperation partners included Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw Amsterdam, Paris Biennale, Wigmore Hall London and Suntory Hall Tokyo.

In the coming years Iris ter Schiphorst, Mark André and Francisco Coll will compose new string quartets for the Kuss Quartet.

At the beginning of their career, the quartet was awarded first prizes by the German Music Council and the Borciani Competition, received a Borletti-Buitoni Award and was a "Rising Star" of the European Concert Hall Organization.

Today, the Kuss Quartet inspires the next generation at numerous master classes. William Coleman (Mozarteum, Salzburg) and Oliver Wille (in Hanover and Birmingham) are also professors at European universities.

The Kuss Quartet plays exclusively Pirastro strings.

[www.kussquartet.com](http://www.kussquartet.com) / Season 2019 – 2020