

# The Kuss Quartet

**Jana Kuss**, Violin

**Oliver Wille**, Violin

**William Coleman**, Viola

**Mikayel Hakhnazaryan**, Cello

Dr. Rudolf

**Goette**

Konzertdirektion  
Hamburg

*"One of the most interesting complete recordings of the infinitely incredible (Beethoven) string quartets, which in the hands of an outstanding ensemble always seem startlingly new and freshly invented."*

Harald Eggebrecht, Süddeutsche Zeitung, July 2020

The Kuss Quartet has been setting new standards for many years with its ambitious concept-based programming. Its mission is to offer unique experiences to traditional audiences and new listeners alike.

Leader Jana Kuss and second violinist Oliver Wille have been playing side by side for over 30 years. With curiosity, they and their long-standing colleagues, William Coleman and Mikayel Hakhnazaryan, seek confirmation of the eternal "muss es sein" of string quartet playing.

Thanks to a grant from the state of Lower Saxony and Musik 21, the quartet has been able to commission several new works for string quartet over the past years by Enno Poppe, Aribert Reimann, Manfred Trojahn, Bruno Mantovani, Iris ter Schiphorst Johannes Fischer and Mark Andre. This has attracted cooperations with the Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw Amsterdam, Paris Biennale, Wigmore Hall London and Suntory Hall Tokyo. In the coming years, Sara Glojnarić and Francisco Coll will compose new works for the Kuss Quartet.

The CD "FREIzeit", released in November 2021, is dedicated to the works of Poppe, Reimann, Trojahn. It is a creative collaboration with percussionist and composer Johannes Fischer, whose work "Duft" also appears on the album, together with soprano Sarah Maria Sun and slam poet Bas Böttcher. *"The result is an upbeat and humorous CD (...) The whole thing sounds fresh and quirky."* (SZ)

These musical partners join the long list of artists with whom the Kuss Quartett enjoys regular collaboration, including Miklós Perényi, Dénes Várjon, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, and Maurice Steger.

The next album, entitled "KRISE" (Crisis), will be released in November 2022 and explores this subject from different perspectives through both well-known quartet repertoire and specially commissioned works.

In the coming season, the ensemble will present a programme of Carter and Mozart with Pierre-Laurent Aimard and will also perform with pianist Alexander Lonquich.

**Wir bitten Sie, diese Biographie unverändert abzdrukken. Auslassungen und Veränderungen sind nur nach Rücksprache mit der Konzertdirektion Goette gestattet.**

They are already experimenting with a project planned for 2024 called "LISTENING SESSIONS". In collaboration with Sara Glojnaric and Sarah Maria Sun, this high-tech exploration of sound exists somewhere between Lieder recital, pop culture and string quartet, freed from its historical context.

A further highly innovative project was "KUSS@KOKON". During the Corona pandemic, an artist collective consisting of dancers Yui Kawaguchi and Ruben Reniers, percussionist Johannes Fischer and slam poet Bas Böttcher developed new modular concerts with the Kuss Quartet, assisted by a "Reload" grant from the German Federal Cultural Foundation. Free from inhibitions, these modules break the boundaries of their respective fields and expand them into new forms.

In 2019, the Kuss Quartet was the first German string quartet to be lent the legendary Stradivari "Paganini Quartet" by the Nippon Music Foundation. On these instruments, the quartet played the complete string quartets of Beethoven in June 2019 at the invitation of Suntory Hall Tokyo. The resulting live recording was released in spring 2020 on the British label Rubicon Classics with the support of G. Henle Verlag.

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". Delayed by the pandemic, the world premiere took place in November 2021 at the Konzerthaus Dortmund and was subsequently performed at the Schwetzingen Festspiele and Radialsystem Berlin in 2022. The production was filmed by ARTE TV.

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

Today, the Kuss Quartet inspires the next generation in frequent master classes. William Coleman (Salzburg) and Oliver Wille (Hanover, Birmingham, Biella) are professors at European universities, while Mikayel Hakhnazaryan teaches chamber music at the Hochschule in Karlsruhe and Jana Kuss at the Accademia Perosi in Biella (Italy).

The Kuss Quartet plays on Evah Pirazzi/Perpetual strings and would like to thank Pirastro warmly for their many years of support!

[www.kussquartet.com](http://www.kussquartet.com)

Saison 2022-2023