

Borodin Quartet



" [...] their almost preternatural ability to synchronise as though they were one single instrument."

The Independent

Ruben Aharonian - violin
Sergei Lomovsky - violin
Igor Naidin - viola
Vladimir Balshin - cello

For more than seventy years, the **Borodin Quartet** has been celebrated for its insight and authority in the chamber music repertoire. Revered for its searching performances of Beethoven and Shostakovich, the Quartet is equally at home in music ranging from Mozart to Stravinsky.

Described by the *Daily Telegraph Australia* as "the Russian grand masters", the Borodin Quartet's particular affinity with Russian repertoire is based on constant promotion, performances and recording of the pillars of Russian string quartet music - Borodin, Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich, as well as Glinka, Stravinsky, Prokofiev and Schnittke. The

Quartet is universally recognised for its genuine interpretation of Russian music, generating critical acclaim all over the world; the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* writes about them "here we have not four individual players, but a single sixteen-stringed instrument of great virtuosity".

The Quartet's connection with Shostakovich's chamber music is intensely personal, since it was stimulated by a close relationship with the composer, who personally supervised its study of each of his quartets. Widely regarded as definitive interpretations, the Quartet's cycles of the complete Shostakovich's quartets have been performed all over the world, including Vienna, Zurich, Frankfurt, Madrid, Lisbon, Seville, London, Paris and New York. The idea of performing a complete cycle of Shostakovich's quartets originated with the Borodin Quartet. In recent seasons, the ensemble has returned to a broader repertoire, including works by Schubert, Prokofiev, Borodin and Tchaikovsky, while continuing to be welcomed and acclaimed at major venues throughout the world.

The Borodin Quartet was formed in 1945 by four students from the Moscow Conservatory and remains one of the very few existing established chamber ensembles with uninterrupted longevity. The world has changed beyond recognition since 1945; the Borodin Quartet, meanwhile, has retained its commitment to tonal beauty, technical excellence and penetrating musicianship. The ensemble's cohesion and vision have survived successive changes in personnel, thanks not least to the common legacy shared by its members from their training at the Moscow Conservatory. The current members of the Quartet are Ruben Aharonian, Sergei Lomovsky, Igor Naidin and Vladimir Balshin.

In addition to performing quartets, the Borodin Quartet regularly joins forces with other distinguished musicians to further explore the chamber music repertoire. Their partners have included Sviatoslav Richter, Yuri Bashmet, Michael Collins, Alexei Volodin, Barry Douglas, Mario Brunello, Elisabeth Leonskaja, Christoph Eschenbach, Boris Berezovsky, and Nikolai Lugansky.

The Quartet also regularly receives invitations to give masterclasses, and to serve as jury members at major international competitions.

Highlights in 2018/19 include widely anticipated full tours of Australia for Musica Viva and New Zealand for Chamber Music New Zealand; performances at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center New York, Library of Congress in Washington DC, Friends of Chamber Music Miami, Victoria Concert Hall Singapore, Wigmore Hall London, Royal Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Società dei Concerti di Milano, as well as a special residency at the Kanazawa Spring Green Festival in Japan; further performances include Taipei, Hong Kong and Moscow, with tours of South Korea, China, Belgium and Canada; playing the quartets of Shostakovich, Haydn, Tchaikovsky, Wolf, Beethoven, Mozart, Prokofiev, and Stravinsky.

Chamber music partners in 2018/19 include Alexei Volodin, Michael Collins, Sergei Nakariakov and Barry Douglas. The Borodin Quartet will also begin a Shostakovich Cycle at the Royal Concertgebouw Amsterdam and will reprise their relationship with conductor Vladimir Jurowski to perform the Schulhoff and Martinů Concertos for String Quartet with the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall in London, a project they have performed previously in Dresden and Moscow.

The Quartet's first release on the Onyx label, featuring Borodin, Schubert, Webern and Rachmaninov, was nominated for a Grammy in 2005 in the "Best Chamber Performance" category. The Borodin Quartet has produced a rich heritage of recordings over several decades, for labels including EMI, RCA and Teldec, including the Complete Beethoven quartets for CHANDOS. The Quartet's recording of the complete Shostakovich String Quartet Cycle for Decca was released in September 2018, following the first release in the cycle, a dedicated 70th anniversary CD (of string quartets Nos.1, 8, and 14), released in March 2015. 

Valid for use until 31 August 2019
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