



HAGEN QUARTET

LUKAS HAGEN, violin

RAINER SCHMIDT, violin

VERONIKA HAGEN, viola

CLEMENS HAGEN, violoncello

After recitals given by the “four world-class string players from Salzburg”, rapt audiences remain “entranced several minutes with quasi-absolute stillness in their thoughts, well aware that they have experienced something truly exceptional”, as the press has noted. On these occasions, concertgoers share “the wish that the music would never stop.”

And so the 19/20 season promises new listening pleasures and “memorable [...] musical heights” (Drehpunkt Kultur), with a repertoire centred around Béla Bartók and Dmitri Shostakovich entertaining audiences in Vienna throughout the Hagen Quartet’s series of appearances at the Konzerthaus, of which the ensemble has been an honorary member since 2012. The Hagen Quartet is also dedicating itself to the work of Ludwig van Beethoven, illuminating all the nuances of timbre of his late quartets and fathoming their almost impenetrable depths. They will be performing in London, Lucerne, Brussels, Munich, Leipzig, Oslo, Rome, Budapest, Paris and Berlin, to name just a few of their destinations this season, as well as embarking on another Asian tour with concerts in Japan. The Hagen Quartet will also be travelling to the United States for performances in Los Angeles, Seattle and San Diego, before heading to South America for concerts in Buenos Aires and São Paulo.

The Hagen Quartet’s recording featuring the Mozart String Quintets K387 and K458 was awarded the Diapason d’or and the Choc of Classica Magazine (France), as well as the coveted German ECHO Klassik Prize (2016) for the Best Chamber Music Recording of the 17th/18th Centuries. In 2011, the Hagen Quartet celebrated their 30th anniversary with two recordings for Myrios Classics featuring works by Mozart, Webern, Beethoven, Grieg and the Brahms Clarinet Quintet (with Jörg Widmann). That same year, the Hagen Quartet won the ECHO Klassik Prize as Ensemble of the Year; in 2012, the quartet was named Honorary Member of the Vienna Konzerthaus. In January 2019, the Hagen Quartet was awarded the Concertgebouw Prijs for the artistic appeal it has radiated over many years and the contribution it has made to the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam.

The Hagen Quartet’s unprecedented 3 1/2-decade career began in 1981. Its early years, marked by a series of prizes in chamber music competitions and an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon that was to produce around forty-five CDs over the following twenty years, enabled the group to work its way through the immensely vast repertoire for string quartet in which this ensemble’s distinctive profile has emerged. Collaborations with artistic personalities such as György Kurtág and the late Nikolaus Harnoncourt are as important to the Hagen Quartet as its concert appearances with performers including Maurizio Pollini, Mitsuko Uchida, Sabine Meyer, Krystian Zimerman, Heinrich Schiff, and Jörg Widmann.

The group’s concert repertoire and discography feature attractive and intelligently arranged programmes embracing the entire history of the string quartet genre, from its pre-Haydn beginnings right through to Kurtág. The Hagen Quartet also works closely with composers of its own generation: not only reviving existing works, but also commissioning and premiering new pieces.

Many young string quartets regard the Hagen Quartet as a model in terms of sound quality, stylistic variety, ensemble playing and serious commitment to the works and composers of the genre. As teachers and mentors at the Salzburg Mozarteum and the Hochschule in Basel, as well as in international masterclasses, the quartet’s members pass on their great wealth of experience to younger colleagues.

The Hagen Quartet plays on old Italian master instruments.