

ARMIDA QUARTETT

MARTIN FUNDA, VIOLIN
JOHANNA STAEMMLER, VIOLIN
TERESA SCHWAMM, VIOLA
PETER-PHILIPP STAEMMLER, CELLO

The Armida Quartet has taken its name from one of the most successful operas by Joseph Haydn. This reference to the "Father of the String Quartet" is no coincidence; the great master himself once said, "My language is understood by the whole world." Making the language of the string quartet understandable is the Armida quartet's great concern. Haydn's wit and creative spirit accompanies the young musicians on their journey and is a constant incentive and inspiration to them.

The Quartet was founded in the summer of 2006 in Berlin and has worked closely with the members of the Artemis Quartet. The Armida members are currently attending the Artemis Quartet's class at the Universität der Künste. The ensemble has received musical inspirations from Natalia Prischepenko as well as from Alfred Brendel, Ferenc Rados, Tabea Zimmermann, Eberhard Feltz, Walter Levin, Martin Spangenberg and Heime Müller. In addition, the musicians have taken part in master classes taught by the Alban Berg, Guarneri and Arditti Quartets.

In September 2012 the Armida Quartet achieved first prize and Audience Award at the 61st International Music Competition of ARD, where it has been also awarded with the Special Prize for the best interpretation of the commissioned composition "Lost Prayers" by Erkki-Sven Tüür and additional five special prizes. Already in 2011 the Armida Quartet received first prize and Audience Award at the 66th Concours de Genève, as well as the "Dr. Glatt" Special Prize for the interpretation of the String Quartet No. 1 Metamorphoses nocturnes by György Ligeti.

Earlier the young ensemble received various scholarships, including Yehudi Menuhin Live Music Now Berlin, Schierse Foundation Berlin and the scholarship of the German Federal President, with which the Armida Quartet was awarded at the venerable Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Competition. In October 2012 the ensemble received a further scholarship of the Irene Steels-Wilsing Foundation.

The Armida Quartet has performed in numerous European countries and at some of Europe's most important venues, including the Hamburg Laeiszhalle, the Berlin Philharmonie, the Munich Herkulessaal and the Opera Bastille in Paris. In addition, the four young musicians were invited to renowned festivals such as the Schleswig-Holstein and the Rheingau Music Festivals, the Davos Festival and the Heidelberger Frühling, where the quartet had the opportunity to work together with Thomas Hampson and Ewa Kupiec already early in its career. Moreover the ensemble has enjoyed artistic collaboration with Tabea Zimmermann and Anna Prohaska.

From October 2012, the Quartet has taken over a teaching assignment for the first time at the Universität der Künste in Berlin. The Quartet's debut CD with works by Béla Bartók, György Ligeti and György Kurtág has been released by the CAVI-music label in autumn 2013: *Once immersed one stays until the last note of the recording. The rapid switching from one tone into another, the fast change between often extreme playing techniques - all this is happening in these strings with youthful power and cool analytics at the same time.* (nmz – neue musikzeitung).

Highlights of the current season will include concerts at the Musikverein Vienna, Hercules Hall in Munich, the Berlin Konzerthaus, at the Philharmonie Essen, Geneva, Basel, Bern, Ghent and Madrid.

www.armidaquartett.com

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