

The Danish String Quartet

2018-2019 Biography

*Frederik Øland (Violin); Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen (Violin);
Asbjørn Nørgaard (Viola); Fredrik Schøyen Sjölin (Cello)*

Among today's many exceptional chamber music groups, the Danish String Quartet continuously asserts its preeminence. The Quartet's playing reflects impeccable musicianship, sophisticated artistry, exquisite clarity of ensemble, and, above all, an expressivity inextricably bound to the music, from Haydn to Shostakovich to contemporary scores. Their performances bring a rare musical spontaneity, giving audiences the sense of hearing even treasured canon repertoire as if for the first time, and exuding a palpable joy in music-making that have made them enormously in-demand on main concert stages throughout the world.

Since its debut in 2002, the Danish String Quartet has demonstrated a special affinity for Scandinavian composers, from Nielsen, Hans Abrahamsen, Bent Sørensen and traditional Nordic folk music, alongside music of Mozart and Beethoven. The recipient of many awards and prestigious appointments, including the Borletti Buitoni Trust, the Danish String Quartet was named in 2013 as BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists and appointed to the The Bowers Program (formerly CMS Two) at the Lincoln Center in NYC.

The group takes an active role in reaching new audiences through special projects. In 2007, they established the DSQ Festival, now in its 11th year, which takes place in an intimate and informal setting in Copenhagen. This October, the Danish String Quartet performed, over the course of six concerts, the complete Beethoven cycle of 16 string quartets. In 2016, they inaugurated a new concert series, Series of Four, which they both perform and invite colleagues —the Ebène Quartet, mandolin player Chris Thile, among others—to appear at the venerable Danish Radio Concert Hall. Concerts this season have ranged from a chamber version of the Fauré Requiem, a recital with violinist Augustin Hadelich and a world premiere of Bent Sørensen's *Dancers and Disappearance* for string quartet and accordion.

The Danish String Quartet has received numerous citations and prizes, including First Prize in the Danish Radio Chamber Music Competition, the Vagn Homboe String Quartet Competition and the Charles Hennen International Chamber Music Competition in the Netherlands, as well as the Audience Prize at the Trondheim International String Quartet Competition in 2005. In 2009, the Danish String Quartet won First Prize in the 11th London International String Quartet Competition, now known as the Wigmore Hall International String Quartet competition, and return to the celebrated London concert hall frequently. The Quartet was awarded the 2010 NORDMETALL-Ensemble Prize at the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival in Germany, and in 2011, they received the Carl Nielsen Prize, the highest cultural honor in Denmark. Most recently, the Quartet received its first GRAMMY nomination in 2019, for the first release of its five-disc recording project, PRISM, on the ECM New Series label.

In addition to the subsequent recording releases for the PRISM recording project, future performance ventures include the full PRISM cycle at La Jolla Music Society over the span of five concerts in November 2019, and the complete Beethoven cycle at Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in February 2020 and at the Schubert Club in St. Paul, MN in May 2020.

For four seasons, beginning in 2020/2021, the Danish String Quartet will begin a collaboration with four acclaimed composers - Bent Sørensen, Lotta Wennäkoski, Anna Thorvaldsdóttir, and Thomas Adès. The four composers will compose works to complement and juxtapose four of Schubert's greatest chamber works, the String Quartet in G Major, D. 887, String Quartet in D minor, D. 810 - "Death and the Maiden," String Quartet in A Minor, D. 804 "Rosamunde," and String Quintet in D

Major, D. 956. All the works will be premiered at Carnegie Hall, NYC and tour world wide. Future projects also include a musical investigation of William Heinesen's 'De fortabte spillemænd', a 'time based media'-project dealing with Ligetis music and how it has been used in Stanley Kubrick's movies as well as several outreach initiatives in local musical centers in Denmark. *

Violinists Frederik Øland and Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen and violist Asbjorn Norgaard met as children at a music summer camp where they played soccer and made music together. As teenagers, they began the study of classical chamber music and were mentored by Tim Frederiksen of Copenhagen's Royal Danish Academy of Music. In 2008, the three Danes were joined by Norwegian cellist Fredrik Schøyen Sjölin. www.danishquartet.com.

*Denotes information which has not yet been announced to the public and must remain confidential.