



PARKER QUARTET 2018-19 BIOGRAPHY

“...exceptional virtuosity [and] imaginative interpretation.” -*The Washington Post*

Inspiring performances, luminous sound, and exceptional musicianship are the hallmarks of the Grammy Award-winning Parker Quartet. Renowned for its dynamic interpretations and polished, expansive colors, the group has rapidly distinguished itself as one of the preeminent ensembles of its generation. The Quartet has appeared at the world’s most important venues since its founding in 2002.

Following a busy 2017-18 season that had the ensemble crossing North America for performances and residencies around the United States, including for the Schubert Club, Skidmore College, St. John’s College, University of South Carolina, and Kansas City’s Friends of Chamber Music, the Parker Quartet finished its fourth year in-residence at Harvard University. The Quartet’s 2018-19 season continues its trademark busy schedule with performances and residencies scheduled around the United States and Europe, including at the University of Iowa, the University of Chicago, the Wigmore Hall, and the University of South Carolina.

Other recent highlights include the project “Schubert Effect” in collaboration with pianist Shai Wosner at the 92nd Street Y, the premiere of a new string quartet by American composer Augusta Read Thomas as part of the Quartet’s annual four-concert series at Harvard University, and appearances at Carnegie Hall, the Library of Congress, the Slee Series in Buffalo, and New York’s Lincoln Center Great Performers series. The Quartet also continues to be a strong supporter of violist Kim Kashkashian’s project *Music for Food* by participating in concerts throughout the United States for the benefit of various food banks and shelters.

The Parker Quartet has distinguished itself with acclaimed recordings for Nimbus, Zig-Zag Territoires, Innova Records, and Naxos. The Quartet’s most recent recording featuring Mendelssohn’s Quartets Op. 44, Nos. 1 and 3, was widely lauded by the international press. The Quartet’s debut commercial recording of Bartók’s String Quartets Nos. 2 and 5 for Zig-Zag Territoires (July 2007) won praise from *Gramophone*: “The Parkers’ Bartók spins the illusion of spontaneous improvisation... they have absorbed the language; they have the confidence to play freely with the music and the instinct to bring it off.” Their Naxos recording of György Ligeti’s complete works for string quartet won the 2011 Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Performance (the last string quartet to win this category). In April 2016 Augusta Read Thomas’s world premiere recording of *Helix Spirals* for string quartet on “Of Being is a Bird” was released on Nimbus Records.



Recent collaborations include those with acclaimed artists like violist Kim Kashkashian, with whom the Parker will record this season; violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg; pianists Anne-Marie McDermott, Orion Weiss, Vijay Iyer, and Shai Wosner; members of the Silk Road Ensemble; Kikuei Ikeda of the Tokyo String Quartet; clarinetist and composer Jörg Widmann; and clarinetist Charles Neidich.

Founded and currently based in Boston, the Parker Quartet's numerous honors include winning the Concert Artists Guild Competition, the Grand Prix and Mozart Prize at France's Bordeaux International String Quartet Competition, and Chamber Music America's prestigious Cleveland Quartet Award. Now Blodgett Artists-in-Residence at Harvard University's Department of Music, and also in-residence at USC School of Music, the Quartet's numerous residencies have included serving as Artists-in-Residence at the University of St. Thomas (2012–2014), Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Minnesota (2011–2012), Quartet-in-Residence with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra (2008-2010), and as the first-ever Artists-in-Residence with Minnesota Public Radio (2009-2010).

The Parker Quartet's members hold graduate degrees in performance and chamber music from the New England Conservatory of Music and the Juilliard School, and the Quartet was part of the New England Conservatory's prestigious Professional String Quartet Training Program from 2006–2008. Some of their most influential mentors include the original members of the Cleveland Quartet, Kim Kashkashian, György Kurtág, Zakhar Bron, Robert Lipsett, Mark Steinberg, and Rainer Schmidt.

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