



## PARKER QUARTET 2017-18 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. In demand worldwide, the Quartet has appeared at the world's most important venues since its founding in 2002.

Following a 2017 summer season that had the ensemble crossing North America for appearances at music festivals including the Bowdoin International Music Festival in Maine, the Strings Music Festival in Colorado, and the Garth Newell Music Center in Virginia, the Parker Quartet will begin its fourth year in-residence at Harvard University with the new prestigious title of Preceptor. The Quartet's 2017-18 season continues its signature busy schedule with performances and residencies scheduled around the United States, including for the Schubert Club, Skidmore College, St. John's College, University of South Carolina, Kansas City's Friends of Chamber Music, and an appearance on the *Jukebox* series at the Kennedy Center.

Highlights of the 2016-17 season included a January 2017 European tour featuring performances with violist Kim Kashkashian and two concerts in Washington, DC: at the National Gallery of Art and with jazz pianist Billy Childs at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Other performances also included Annapolis Concerts at St. John's College, the Mary Anne Rennolds Chamber Concert Series at VCU, and the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

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 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, No. 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 2015, Innova Records released the world premiere recording of American composer Jeremy Gill's "Capriccio" written for the Quartet through a Chamber Music America commissioning grant. 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, violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, pianists Anne-Marie McDermott and Shai Wosner, 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 were 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, and Rainer Schmidt.

**June 2017 - Please do not edit without permission.**