

Armida Quartet, String Quartet

Biography

Martin Funda, violin

Johanna Staemmler, violin

Teresa Schwamm-Biskamp, viola

Peter-Philipp Staemmler, violoncello

All four works vibrate with concentration, intensity, emotion and beauty, with the beginnings of the compositions in particular being events in themselves, which the quartet knows how to develop and process in a contrasting and breathtaking way. Mannheimer Morgen, Susanne Kaulich, April 2024

Touching, virtuoso, captivating - the Armida Quartet is one of the leading German string quartets of the younger generation. Founded in Berlin in 2006, the award-winning quartet has been playing in the same formation ever since and has developed a distinctive ensemble sound, a synergetic interaction on a common breath: clear and transparent, at the same time intense and powerfully flowing with extremely precise timing. The Armida Quartet's musical expertise, expressiveness and energy on stage are unique - they know how to ignite a spark in the audience.

The Armida Quartet is Prizewinner in Residence at the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival 2026. Other highlights of the 2025/26 season include joint concerts with clarinetist Sabine Meyer in Neumarkt and at the Berlin Philharmonic, the first part of a three-year tour of Italy with a Schubert cycle and the re-invitation to the Schwetzingen SWR Festival.

Their spectacular success at the 2012 ARD International Music Competition, where the quartet was awarded first prize, the audience prize and six other special prizes, marked the beginning of an exceptional career. After concerts and radio recordings as BBC New Generation Artists (2014-16) and subsequently as ECHO Rising Stars (2016/17), the musicians have made a name for themselves in the most famous chamber music halls in Europe, Asia and the USA. In addition to appearances at major European festivals such as the Rheingau Music Festival, the Schwetzingen SWR Festival, the Beethovenfest Bonn and the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival, the quartet has enjoyed great success at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the Berlin Philharmonie, and at London's Wigmore Hall, where they are regular guests,

Artistic partners of the quartet include musicians such as Alexander Melnikov, Kit Armstrong, Martin Helmchen, Julian Steckel, Benjamin Appl, Lotte Betts-Dean, Nils Mönkemeyer, Maximilian Hornung, and Kilian Herold. There is a special connection to the Serbian composer Marko Nikodijević, whose first and second string quartets were premiered by the Armida Quartet. They studied with former members of the Artemis Quartet and Rainer Schmidt (Hagen Quartet) and owe important impulses to Reinhard Goebel, Alfred Brendel, Marek Janowski and Tabea Zimmermann.

The quartet is known for its exceptional Mozart expertise: Together with G. Henle Verlag, they have collaborated on a new edition of his string quartets. The complete recording for CAvi, which was released at the same time, received rave reviews, with the quartet setting new standards for Mozart's chamber music (NDR Kultur) and leading the way for Mozart interpretation in the 21st century (Klassik Heute). The fourth album of the complete recording of Mozart's string quartets, which has been available in five volumes since 2023, was awarded the Opus Klassik.

The ensemble members teach at renowned German universities and hold masterclasses both domestically and internationally. They are also actively involved in social and educational projects. The quartet places particular importance on sustainability and climate protection: as the first chamber music ensemble, the Armida Quartet was appointed ambassador of the organization "Orchester des Wandels" (Orchestra of Change), a climate and nature conservation initiative founded by members of various professional orchestras.

In addition to the complete recording of Mozart's string quartets, the quartet's discography includes their debut CD with works by Bartók, Ligeti and Kurtág, released by CAvi in 2013, which immediately made it onto the best list of the German

Record Prize. A recording with works by Beethoven and Shostakovich was also released by CAVi in 2016, followed by *Fuga Magna* with works by Scarlatti, Bach, Goldberg, Mozart and Beethoven in 2017. The quartet has also contributed to various compilations of contemporary works by Samy Moussa, Ursula Mamlok, Birke J. Bertelsmeier and Milica Djordjević, among others. With two recordings in 2023, both also released by CAVi, the quartet shows its late Romantic side: clarinet quintets by Max Reger and his pupil Johanna Senfter with Kilian Herold, frequent guest solo clarinetist with the Berliner Philharmoniker, as well as piano quintets by César Franck and Frank Martin with pianist Martin Klett. Both recordings have been acclaimed by the press, and the Reger-Senfter recording was longlisted by the German Record Critics.

The choice of the ensemble's name emphasises its passion for quartet playing: Armida refers to an opera by Joseph Haydn, the "father of the string quartet".

2025/26 season

This biography is to be reproduced without any changes, omissions, or additions, unless expressly authorised by the artist management.

Link to the artist page: <https://en.karstenwitt.com/artist/armida-quartet>