

Gringolts Quartet, String Quartet

Biography

Ilya Gringolts, violin

Anahit Kurtikyan, violin

Silvia Simionescu, viola

Claudius Herrmann, violoncello

Gringolts leads his quartet with impressive selflessness, deploying his ardent but tightly focused violin tone to set the outer boundaries of the ensemble sound ... The viola player Silvia Simionescu, in particular, sounded like a kindred spirit to Gringolts, with a burnt umber tone that resembled Jonas Kaufmann's lower register. But the Gringolts Quartet's rhythmic drive, its translucency and its cinematic shifts from one dynamic level to another were a collective achievement; and they felt instinctive ... a performance that lays bare the full, sublime vastness of Dvorak's imagination. The Spectator, 2021

The Zurich-based Gringolts Quartet was born from mutual friendships and chamber music partnerships that cross four countries: over the years, the Russian violinist Ilya Gringolts, the Romanian violist Silvia Simionescu, and the Armenian violinist Anahit Kurtikyan frequently performed together in various chamber formations at distinguished festivals; the German cellist Claudius Herrmann played with Anahit Kurtikyan in the renowned Amati Quartet. In the Gringolts Quartet, the four musicians inspire with their radiant, fused, and at the same time finely differentiated ensemble sound.

Highlights from past seasons include performances at the Salzburg Festival, Lucerne Festival, Edinburgh Festival, Verbier Festival, and Gstaad Menuhin Festival. They also regularly perform in international concert halls, including the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Wigmore Hall London, Philharmonie Luxembourg, Stockholm Konserthus, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, St. Petersburg Philharmonia, L'Auditori Barcelona, Sociedad Filarmónica de Bilbao, Lugano Musica, and Società di Concerti in Milan. In the 2023/24 season, the quartet will tour Italy with American violist Lily Francis, performing Mozart's string quintets on period instruments and gut strings. It will also appear in a concert with Heinz Holliger at the Zurich Opera House, in several concerts at the Mizmorim Festival in Basel, at the Turku Music Festival, and at the Schwetzingen SWR Festival, among others.

The musical partners of the group include artists such as Leon Fleischer, Jörg Widmann, David Geringas, Malin Hartelius, Christian Poltéra, and Eduard Brunner. Aside from classical repertoire for string quartet, they are also dedicated performers of contemporary music, including string quartets by Marc-André Dalbavie, Jörg Widmann, Jens Joneleit, and Lotta Wennäkoski.

The Gringolts Quartet has attracted attention among critics and audiences with their exquisite CD recordings of works by Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms. Together with David Geringas, the Gringolts Quartet participated in the world premiere recording of Walter Braunfels' quintet in 2012, which was awarded a "Supersonic Award" as well as an ECHO Klassik award. Their CD of quintets by Glazunov and Taneyev with Christian Poltéra was released in the spring of 2016 and was awarded the Diapason d'Or. Jointly with Meta4, a recording with the octets by Mendelssohn and Enescu was published by BIS in 2020 and awarded the Quarterly Prize of the German Record Critics. Also on BIS records, a CD with Schönberg's string quartets Nos. 2 and 4, praised by Klassik Heute as a "reference recording", was released in 2017, "triumphally confirmed" (Rondo, Eleonore Büning) from the release of the second volume with the quartets Nos. 1 and 3 in spring 2022, for which the quartet again received a Diapason d'Or.

The members of the Gringolts Quartet all play on rare Italian instruments: Ilya Gringolts plays a Giuseppe Guarneri "del Gesù" violin, Cremona 1742-43, on loan from a private collection. Anahit Kurtikyan plays a Camillo Camilli violin, Mantua 1733. Silvia Simionescu plays a Jacobus Januarius viola, Cremona 1660. Claudius Herrmann plays a Maggini cello, Brescia 1600. Prince Golizyn, who was a great admirer of Beethoven, gave the first performances of the composer's last string quartets, which he commissioned, on this instrument.

2023/24 season

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