

Johannes Marmen | violin
Laia Valentin Braun | violin
Bryony Gibson-Cornish | viola
Sinéad O'Halloran | violoncello

Perfection with soul

They come from four different countries and cultures: but what unites Johannes, Laia, Bryony and Sinéad are the musical conversations and stories they present to the audience. This fantastical world of string quartet music emerges from a constant musical dialogue that is able to create a deep and meaningful connection through trust, respect and joy. It is this personal touch, this musical honesty, coupled with freedom and the courage to take risks, that creates this unique moment with the audience in concert.

With a growing reputation for the courage, vitality and intensity of its performances the Marmen Quartet is fast establishing itself as one of the most impressive and engaging talents in the chamber music arena. 2019 marked a year of significant achievement for the Quartet, with First Prizes at both the Bordeaux International String Quartet Competition and Banff International String Quartet Competition, where they were also awarded the Haydn and Canadian Commission prizes. Other accolades include first prize at the Royal Overseas League Competition (2018) and awards at the International Joseph Joachim Chamber Music Competition.

The Marmen Quartet has performed at leading European venues including Wigmore Hall, Berlin Philharmonie, Boulez Saal, Frankfurt Alte Oper, Stockholm Konserthuset, Milton Court (Barbican), Palladium Malmö and Muziekgebouw Eindhoven. Festival engagements have taken the Quartet to the BBC Proms, Lockenhaus, Mecklenburg Vorpommern, Rheingau, Heidelberg and Zeister Musiekdagen Festivals as well as the Amsterdam, Barcelona and Gulbenkian Foundation String Quartet Biennale Festivals.

Further afield, the Quartet made its Australian debut in 2023, taking part in the Australian National Academy of Music's Quartetthaus project. A showcase of both musical and architectural talent, the Quartetthaus programme featured works by both Australian and British artists including a new piece written for the Marmen Quartet by Hannah Kendall. Previous commissions have included Salina Fisher's work Heal, written for the Marmen in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and commissioned by Chamber Music New Zealand. Looking ahead to the 23/24 season, the Quartet gives the premiere of a new work by Garth Knox written for them as a companion piece to Janacek's Intimate Letters Quartet, commissioned for them by the National String Quartet Foundation Ireland. Other European highlights of the 23/24 season include Wigmore Hall, Hamburg Laeiszhalle, Amsterdam String Quartet Biennale, Mozartfest Würzburg and an extensive Swedish tour.

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In the US, 2023 saw the Quartet complete its time as Peak Fellowship Ensemble-in-Residence at the Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University in partnership with the Banff International String Quartet Competition. Other recent North American highlights have included performances in Calgary, Kelowna, Victoria and at the Capital Region Classical series. The Quartet tours the US and Canada again in the 23/24 season.

Formed in 2013 at the Royal College of Music, the Marmen Quartet were holders of the Guildhall School of Music String Quartet Fellowship (2018-2020) and studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Hannover with Oliver Wille as well as in London with Simon Rowland-Jones and John Myerscough (Doric Quartet). They were mentored by the late Peter Cropper and have received support from the Musicians Company/Concordia Foundation, the Hattori Foundation, Help Musicians and the Royal Philharmonic Society (Albert and Eugenie Frost Prize). The Marmen Quartet is an official Pirastro Artist.