

Programmes | 2025/2026

Aitor Hevia | Violin
Cibrán Sierra Vázquez | Violin
Josep Puchades | Viola
Helena Poggio | Violoncello

Program I | Haydn in Spain – a Heritage

Manuel Canales (1747-1786)

String Quartet G minor No. 5 Op. 3

Josef Haydn (1732-1809)

String Quartet D minor Op. 42 Hob. III:43

Gaetano Brunetti (1747-1786)

String Quartet No.2 L 185

Josef Haydn (1732-1809)

String Quartet C major Op.74 Nr. 1 Hob. III: 72

In the last 30 years of the 18th century, Madrid was an important cultural centre where art flourished. While Goya created his masterpieces for the royal court, the chamber music scene flourished. Josef Haydn was a much sought-after composer for Madrid's patrons and thus influenced many composers in the region. He composed numerous works for string quartet and Madrid became the string quartet capital of enlightened Europe.

Program II | Musical paintings – darkness, drama and chiaroscuro

Josef Haydn (1732-1809)

String Quartet D minor Op. 42 Hob. III:43

Juan Crisóstomo de Arriaga (1732-1809)

String Quartet No. 1 D minor

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

String Quartet F minor No.11 Op. 95 "serioso"

Spain was a vibrant place for the string quartet genre in the late 18th century. Haydn wrote his String Quartet Op. 42 for the Spanish house of Alba. The sombre and concise nature of this work and its chiaroscuro character - a legacy of the "Sturm und Drang movement" - certainly influenced the Bilbao-born composer and violinist Juan Arriaga, whose three string quartets combine the styles of Haydn and Mozart. And isn't there an undeniable link between the dark, visionary genius of Beethoven and the revolutionary artistic approach of Goya? His paintings and caprichos correspond with Beethoven's late compositions such as the String Quartet Op. 95. It is a revolutionary depiction of musical condensation, an outburst of violence, drama and darkness, and if it had been painted on a canvas, it could indeed have been by the great Goya.

Program III | Dance! – a Latin American dialogue with Bartók

Rodolfo Halffter (1900-1987)	<i>Ocho Tientos</i> Op. 35
Béla Bartók (1881-1945)	String Quartet No. 3 in C sharp minor Sz 85
Or	
Béla Bartók (1881-1945)	String Quartet No. 2 in A minor Op.17 Sz 67

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)	<i>Four for Tango</i> for String Quartet
Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983)	String Quartet Nr. 1 Op. 20

Bartók's six string quartets are undeniably one of the greatest monuments of the genre of the 20th century. Using the diverse musical folk tunes of the pan-Hungarian regions, he constructed a sophisticated language that opened up a new world of sounds, techniques and narratives with a vast impact on the string quartet genre. In Latin America, his influence was enormous and his search for identity, roots and the desire to create an avant-garde from popular traditions all resounded with local composers. Thus, we establish a dialogue between Bartók and three great examples of his influence on Latin American music: the urban culture of Buenos Aires in the hands of Piazzolla, the dance and rhythmic traditions of the great Pampas plains in southern Argentina with Ginastera, and finally the melting pot of Mexico, where the Spanish exile Rodolfo Halffter created a world of theatrical expressivity of great power and transatlantic value.

Program IV | άτομος / Atomos – the art of musical concentration

Josef Haydn (1732-1809)	String Quartet D minor Op. 42 Hob. III:43
Béla Bartók (1881-1945)	String Quartet No. 3 in C sharp minor Sz 85

György Kurtág (*1926)	<i>Secreta</i> for String Quartet
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)	String Quartet F minor No.11 Op. 95 "serioso"

Marking the ensemble's twentieth anniversary, the Cuarteto Quiroga has recorded a CD that pays homage to the string quartet from its origins to the present day. With works by the three most important and historically influential composers in the history of the genre - Haydn, Beethoven and Bartók - as well as a work by György Kurtág, the Atomos programme sheds light on the search for the core of musical expression, for the ability to express a lot in a short space of time and thus reinforce the conciseness of the message. In this fascinating journey through musical concentration, the four composers reveal a humbleness in limiting themselves to the essentials and letting the music speak for itself.

Program V | A Plea for Peace

Steve Reich (*1936)

WTC 9/11

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Adagio from String Quartet No. 2 Op. 11

Philipp Glass (*1936)

String Quartet No. 3 "Mishima"

George Crumb (1929-2022)

Black Angels - 13 Images from the Dark Land

Or

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

String Quartett C minor NO. 8 Op. 110

*A Plea for Peace: Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing
In a world where the drums of war and violence seem to be getting louder every day, music could still be the language of civility, of enlightenment, of a desperate call for humanity to listen to each other and learn to coexist in peace and harmony. Featuring compositions that face and depict the horrors of violence, war, exile and terrorism, this program aims to make us contemplate how art can provide the answer and is indeed the best vaccine against barbarism and totalitarianism.*

Program VI | Exile & War – a musical drama in four acts

Joaquín Turina (1882-1949)

La oración del torero Op. 34

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

String Quartet C minor No. 8 Op. 110

Rodolfo Halffter (1900-1987)

Ocho Tientos Op. 35

Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983)

String Quartet Nr. 1 Op. 20

The history of Spain in the 20th century is characterised by the traumatic experience of the civil war (1936-1939) and the subsequent dictatorship (1939-1975). This programme traces the various moments and facets of wartime conditions: Spain before the war (Turina), fascism and war (Shostakovich), flight and exile (Halffter) and the displacement of the new generation of artists back to Europe by the emerging dictatorships in South America (Ginastera).

Program VII | Brahms, the progressive: an essay by Schönberg

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

String Quartet No. 17 K 458 "The Hunt"

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

String Quartet B flat major No. 3 Op. 67

Arnold Schönberg (1874-1951)

String Quartet No. 0 in D major

In his 1947 essay on Brahms, Arnold Schönberg argues that Brahms was the innovator who paved the way for many of the greatest musical works of the early 20th century. In this programme, the first and second Viennese classical periods join hands and have one common denominator: Johannes Brahms.

Program VIII | Und es ward Licht! – with Veronika Hagen, viola

Josef Haydn (1732-1809)	String Quartet C major No. 1 Op.74 Hob. III:72
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)	String Quartet C major No. 19 K 465 “The Dissonance”

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)	String Quintet C major K 515

This programme is dedicated to the birth of the string quartet, the beginning of the era of pure instrumental music, which is based on reason and thought and also appeals to the emotions: music to illuminate a new world, music to instruct and seduce. A universal, democratising music, entirely modern and enlightened.

Programm IX | Extreme: Von der Kompression zur Expansion - with Clemens Hagen, Cello

Josef Haydn (1732-1809)	String Quartet D minor Op. 42 Hob. III:43
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)	String Quartet F minor No. 11 Op. 95 <i>Serioso</i>

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)	String Quartet C major D956

This programme illustrates two extreme approaches to musical narration. Haydn and Beethoven compress the musical form and plot into a minimum of time with intense expression - Schubert, on the other hand, expands it to an orchestral dimension.