

Biography | June 2026

Areta Zhulla | violin
Leonard Fu | violin
Molly Carr | viola
Astrid Schween | violoncello

With unparalleled artistry and enduring vigor, the Juilliard String Quartet (JSQ) continues to inspire audiences around the world. Founded in 1946 and hailed by *The Boston Globe* as “the most important American quartet in history,” the ensemble draws on a deep and vital engagement to the classics while embracing the mission of championing new works, a vibrant combination of the familiar and the daring. Each performance of the Juilliard String Quartet is a unique experience, bringing together the four members’ profound understanding, total commitment, and unceasing curiosity in sharing the wonders of the string quartet literature.

The Juilliard String Quartet continues to honor its rich legacy of innovative commissions with *Letters to Ludwig*, a deeply personal, multi-year commissioning project that invites living composers to engage with Beethoven’s late quartets. The first chapter featured two evocative new works by German composer Jörg Widmann, inspired by Op. 130, including its original ending, the Grosse Fuge. In the 2025–26 season, the journey continued with a new quartet by Iraqi-American composer Michelle Barzel Ross, reflecting on the profound spirit of Op. 132. These commissions were made possible with the generous support of The Juilliard School, Chamber Music in Napa Valley, and Arizona Friends of Chamber Music.

The Juilliard Quartet’s new project, *Letters to Ludwig*, pairs each of Ludwig van Beethoven’s late string quartets with a newly commissioned composition. For this occasion, György Kurtág is writing a new work for the ensemble. Following the recording of Op. 132 alongside Ross’s new piece—combined with Beethoven’s Op. 127—it will be released on the quartet’s newly founded CD label.

Performance highlights of the Juilliard String Quartet’s last seasons included ongoing collaborations with violinist Itzhak Perlman and pianists Emanuel Ax and Jean-Yves Thibaudet, with appearances at major venues including Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, and Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco. The season also featured distinguished collaborations with soprano Tony Arnold and clarinetist Daniel Ottensamer. The Quartet’s extensive touring included performances at London’s Wigmore Hall and BBC Radio 3, Berlin’s Pierre Boulez Saal, Salzburg’s Mozarteum Grosse Saal, the Musikverein in Vienna, the Megaron Athen, the Gewandhaus Leipzig, Chicago’s Ravinia Festival, as well as New York’s Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

A facet of the JSQ’s decades-old legacy is a prolific and celebrated discography, with landmark recordings that continue to be rereleased by Sony Masterworks. The quartet’s latest album on Sony (2021), featuring works by Beethoven, Bartók, and Dvořák, was released to international acclaim, with *Strings Magazine* calling it a “miracle of contrasting color”. Other notable releases include an album featuring the world premiere recording of Davidovsky’s *Fragments* (2018) alongside Beethoven’s Op. 95 quartet and Bartók’s Quartet No. 1. The Juilliard Quartet’s recordings of the Bartók and Schoenberg quartets as well as those of Debussy, Ravel,

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Duttilieux, and Beethoven have won Grammy Awards, and in 2011 the JSQ became the first classical music ensemble to receive a lifetime achievement award from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

The JSQ is string quartet in residence at The Juilliard School in New York City and its members - Areta Zhulla, Leonard Fu, Molly Carr, and Astrid Schween - are all sought-after teachers on the string and chamber music faculties. The quartet regularly offers classes and open rehearsals while on tour and hosts the internationally recognized Juilliard String Quartet Seminar each May at The Juilliard School.

Short version

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