



**Heidelberger
Frühling
Streichquartettfest
18–21
January 2024**

Press Kit

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Johannes Brahms ©Hadi Karimi
Iranian artist Hadi Karimi has created a 3D rendering of Johannes Brahms based on historical photographs. It shows him around the year 1860.



Arete Quartet ©Jinho Park



Cuarteto Quiroga ©IGOR STUDIO



NOVO Quartet ©HEIN Photography



Ševčík Quartet ©Michaela Pondělíčková



Quatuor Agate ©Kaupo Kikkas



Dr. Natasha Loges ©Hochschule für Musik Freiburg



Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Sandberger ©Oliver Reuther



Oliver Wille ©Giorgia Bertazzi

Heidelberger Frühling Streichquartettfest 2024 – Brahms in the centre

18 to 21 January 2024 at Alte Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg

With the 20th edition of the Streichquartettfest from 18 to 21 January 2024, the Heidelberger Frühling launches its Brahms focus for the 2024 season, which also runs through the Musikfestival in spring and the Liedfestival in summer. In the Streichquartettfest, under the motto “Brahms in the centre”, five excellent international quartets will dive into the world of the string quartet by and around Johannes Brahms together with the audience.

In the dense four-day programme with eleven events, the three string quartets by Johannes Brahms opp. 51/1, 51/2 and 67 will be juxtaposed with works by Robert Schumann, Brahms' discoverer, patron and fatherly friend, by Joseph Haydn, the “father” of the string quartet, as well as by Anton Webern, Béla Bartók, Bedřich Smetana and Bohuslav Martinů and other composers of the 19th and 20th centuries. Numerous contemporary works by composers such as Mette Nielsen, Toshio Hosokawa and Dinuk Wijeratne will also be performed. In each of three workshops, a string quartet by Brahms will be examined in greater detail. In addition to the professional quartets, amateur musicians will also perform.

Guests will be the **Quatuor Agate** from Paris, which is currently recording the complete Brahms quartets, the South Korean **Arete Quartet**, winner of the International Mozart Competition at the Mozarteum Salzburg 2023, the **NOVO Quartet** from Copenhagen, which won last year's competition of the Irene Steels-Wilsing Stiftung as part of the Streichquartettfest, the Spanish **Cuarteto Quiroga** from the top league of quartet formations and the **Ševčík Quartet** from Prague, which was only founded in 2020. The workshops will be led by **Natasha Loges**, professor of musicology at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg since 2022, and **Oliver Wille**, violinist of the Kuss Quartet and professor of string chamber music at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover. **Wolfgang Sandberger**, director of the Brahms-Institut in Lübeck, will give a keynote lecture to kick off the “Brahms Year” of Heidelberger Frühling with free admission. Already on 14 January, in a “Musical Sunday” in cooperation with the Deutsch-Amerikanisches Institut Heidelberg, there will be an introduction to Brahms' string quartets with the musicologists Timo Jouko Herrmann and Marcus Imbsweiler.

The Streichquartettfest is the first festival of its kind to concentrate purely on the string quartet genre. The intensive encounter and direct exchange between artists and with the audience before, during and after the concerts is the unmistakable spirit of this festival. The venue is the Alte Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg.

Tickets and passes for the 2024 Heidelberger Frühling Streichquartettfest are available online at www.heidelberger-fruehling.de, by phone on +49 (0)6221 584 00 44 and at all known booking offices in Germany.

Programme

Sun 14 January 2024

DAI Heidelberg

11:00 **Musical Sunday *Brahms: String quartets***

Timo Jouko Herrmann, Marcus Imbsweiler, presentation

Introduction to Johannes Brahms' op. 51 and 67

Thu 18 January 2024

Alte Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg

18:00: **Lecture by Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Sandberger** Admission free

Beard off! – Sketches for a new Brahms picture

19:30: ***Opening concert*** Quatuor Agate. Arete Quartet. Cuarteto Quiroga

Fri 19 January 2024

Alte Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg

10:00 **Workshop with Natasha Loges *Brahms: At home and on the concert stage***

12:00 **Morning Concert** Ševčík Quartet

14:00 **Afternoon Concert** Cuarteto Quiroga. Quatuor Agate

16:00 **Workshop with Oliver Wille *Brahms, the progressive?***

19:30 **Evening concert** Ševčík Quartet. Arete Quartet. NOVO Quartet

Sat 20 January 2024

Alte Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg

11:00 **Morning concert** Ševčík Quartet. NOVO Quartet. Cuarteto Quiroga. Quatuor Agate

14:30 **Workshop with Oliver Wille *Typical Brahms?***

19:30 **Long quartet evening** Ševčík Quartet. Arete Quartet. Quatuor Agate. Cuarteto Quiroga. NOVO Quartet

Sun 21 January 2024

Alte Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg

11:00 **Final concert** Cuarteto Quiroga. Ševčík Quartet. Quatuor Agate. NOVO Quartet. Arete Quartet

Contributors

Quatuor Agate

Adrien Jurkovic, Violin
Thomas Descamps, Violin
Raphaël Pagnon, Viola
Simon Iachemet, Violoncello

Founded in 2016 and based in Paris, Quatuor Agate studied with Eberhard Feltz at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler Berlin, with Mathieu Herzog in Paris and with Quatuor Ébène at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Munich. In 2021 they were prize winners at the YCAT International Auditions. In 2020 they won the Audience Prize of the Irene Steels-Wilsing Foundation Competition at the Heidelberger Frühling Streichquartettfest 2020. In 2022 they were prize winners at the Banff International String Quartet Competition. Highlights of the season include debut concerts at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Alte Oper Frankfurt and Britten-Pears Arts in Aldeburgh. They return to the Wigmore Hall for the Lammermuir Festival and perform with Quatuor Modigliani at the TauberPhilharmonie Weikersheim and with Quatuor Diotima at the Lange Nacht der Streichquartette in Munich. They also record the complete Brahms quartets for Appassionato Records. The quartet is Artist in Residence at the Fondation Singer Polignac and at Pro-Quartet in Paris as well as Associate Artist at La Brèche festival in Savoie. Since 2021, they have been supported by the Günther-Caspar Foundation. In 2016, they founded the CorsiClassic Festival with the aim of bringing chamber music to remote places on the island.

Arete Quartet

Chae-Ann Jeon, Violin
Dong-Hwi Kim, Violin
Yoon-sun Jang, Viola
Seong-hyeon Park, Violoncello

Formed in September 2019, the Arete Quartet unanimously passed the Kumho Art Hall Young Chamber Concert audition and subsequently debuted at Kumho Art Hall Yonsei in South Korea. In 2021, it won 1st place at the Prager Frühling International Music Competition and other special prizes, including the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation Prize. In addition, the Arete Quartet received two special prizes at the 2022 PREMIO PAOLO BORCIANI International String Quartet Competition for the “best performance for string quartet commissioned by Toshio Hosokawa” and a scholarship from Jeunesses Musicales Germany. At the International Mozart Competition of the Mozarteum University Salzburg 2023 they won the 1st prize of the string quartet division as well as the traditional special prize of the Mozarteum Foundation for the best Mozart interpretation. The string quartet has already performed throughout Europe and was again invited to the Prager Frühling International Music Festival. The quartet members are currently studying at the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich and are scholarship holders of Yehudi Menuhin Live Music Now e.V. The Arete Quartet studies with Prof. Christoph Poppen, Jaeyoung Kim of the Novus String Quartet, Quatuor Ébène and with Prof. Eberhard Feltz.

NOVO Quartet

Kaya Kato Møller, Violin
Nikolai Vasili Nedergaard, Violin
Daniel Sledzinski, Viola
Signe Ebstrup Bitsch, Violoncello

Founded in Copenhagen in 2018 and currently based in Vienna and Copenhagen, the NOVO Quartet is one of Denmark's most promising young ensembles, performing in its home country, the rest of Europe, Asia and the USA. It was recently awarded 2nd prize in the Carl Nielsen Chamber Music Competition 2023, shortly after winning 1st prize in the Irene Steels-Wilsing Foundation Competition at the Heidelberger Frühling Streichquartettfest 2023. Other achievements include winning the Danish Radio P2 Chamber Music Competition 2020, the Léonie Sonning Talent Award 2021 and the 2nd Prize and Special Jury Prize at the Trondheim International String Quartet Competition 2021. The NOVO Quartet is currently studying at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna as part of the ECMAster programme (European Chamber Music Master) with Professor Johannes Meissl. Previously, they studied and worked for four years with Prof. Tim Frederiksen – former teacher and mentor of the Danish String Quartet – at the Royal Danish Academy of Music. The quartet received further musical inspiration from Hatto Beyerle and Valentin Erben (Alban Berg Quartet), Heime Müller (Artemis Quartet) or Asbjørn Nørgård and Fredrik Sjölin (Danish String Quartet).

Cuarteto Quiroga

Aitor Hevia, Violin

Cibrán Sierra, Violin

Josep Puchades, Viola

Helena Poggio, Violoncello

Since its foundation in 2004, the Cuarteto Quiroga has established itself as one of the most dynamic and unique quartets of its generation. Its name comes from the Galician-born violinist Manuel Quiroga, perhaps the most important Spanish violinist after Pablo de Sarasate. Winner of the 2018 Premio Nacional de Música, the Premio Ojo Crítico de RNE and laureate of major international quartet competitions (Bordeaux, Paolo Borciani, Geneva, Beijing, Fnapec-Paris, Palau Barcelona), Cuarteto Quiroga became the first ensemble in residence at the Royal Palace of Madrid in 2013, responsible for the Royal Collection of the most precious Stradivari instruments at the Spanish Court. Regular stage partners include musicians such as Martha Argerich, Jörg Widmann, Javier Perianes, Clemens Hagen, Valentin Erben, Richard Lester, David Kadouch, Jonathan Brown and the Cappella Amsterdam. In autumn 2021 they presented their album “Und Es Ward Licht” (Haydn & Mozart: The Birth of a New Era), recorded together with the renowned violist Veronika Hagen. The ensemble studied with Rainer Schmidt at the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía in Madrid, with Walter Levin at the Musikakademie in Basel and with Hatto Beyerle at the European Chamber Music Academy (ECMA).

Ševčík Quartet

Pavla Tesařová, Violin

Michael Foršt, Violin

Matouš Hasoň, Viola

Adam Klánský, Violoncello

The Ševčík Quartet was founded in Prague in 2020 and began its studies at the Prague Conservatory with Radek Křižanovský (Apollon Quartet). In 2021 it continued its previous studies at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague with Štěpán Ježek (Bennewitz Quartet). In addition, it studied with Günther Pichler at the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sophia in Madrid in 2022. Meanwhile, the members of the quartet have distinguished themselves as talented and gifted interpreters of the young music scene. In June 2021 they won 1st prize at the “Talents for Europe” competition, reached the semi-finals of the Prager Frühling International Music Competition and advanced to the finals of the Italian “Società Umanitaria” competition. The Ševčík Quartet participated in various master classes, including Musique à Flaine with Maria Chilleme (Quatuor Ébène) in France, Jeunesses Musicales Germany (Cuarteto Casals) and in Prague with Rainer Schmidt (Hagen Quartet). The ensemble also accompanied a project initiated by Musethica in Barcelona, where it repeatedly performed a Brahms sextet together with Jonathan Brown and Erica Wise. It performs regularly in the Czech Republic as well as in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Spain.

Natasha Loges

Workshop leader

Natasha Loges has been Professor of Musicology with a focus on 19th and 20th century music history at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg since 2022. After teaching at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Royal Academy of Music at the University of London, Natasha Loges taught at the Royal College of Music from 2005 to 2022. She was Head of Postgraduate Programmes there from 2016 to 2022, and then Professor of Musicology from 2021. Natasha Loges studied piano at the Guildhall School and musicology and music analysis at Kings College London. She wrote her dissertation on Johannes Brahms' Lieder. Her research has been funded by the British Academy, the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the American Musicological Society and the Royal Philharmonic Society, among others. She is a music educator for festivals and venues including the Southbank Centre, Wigmore Hall, Oxford Lieder Festival and Leeds Lieder. She has made radio broadcasts for BBC Radio 3 and has been a reviewer for BBC Music Magazine. She is a member of the Women's Song Forum, the Equality Network, Diversity and Inclusion in Music Studies and the Advisory Board of the Institute of Austrian and German Music Research. In addition to her workshop leadership at the Heidelberger Frühling Streichquartettfest, Natasha Loges is a guest lecturer and advisor to the Brahms.LAB at the Heidelberger Frühling Musikfestival 2024.

Wolfgang Sandberger

Lecture

Wolfgang Sandberger has been Professor of Musicology and Head of the Brahms-Institut at the Musikhochschule Lübeck since 1999. He studied music (violoncello with Eckhard Stahl) at the Osnabrück Conservatory and at the Hanover Conservatory as well as musicology (with Hans Joachim Marx), philosophy (with Klaus Oehler) and history (with Bernd Jürgen Wendt) in Münster and Hamburg. His doctorate on „Das Bach-Bild Philipp Spittas“ was awarded the Joachim Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften prize. Subsequently, various publications on the history of music from the 17th to the 21st century appeared. His main areas of research, apart from the focus on Brahms, are biographical-historical, reception-historical and scientific-historical questions. In July 2022, Wolfgang Sandberger was elected a member of the Academia Europaea. He is also involved in music education. Between 1993 and 2003 he was “on air” as a permanent freelancer with about 150 broadcasts a year at the NDR. He continues to work as an author and presenter for various ARD broadcasters, such as SWR2 Musikstunde or WDR 3 Klassikforum, and advises various festivals (e.g. Göttingen International Handel Festival). Since 2013, he has been project manager of the Brahms-Festival at the Musikhochschule Lübeck.

Oliver Wille

Workshop lead

Violinist Oliver Wille is professor of string chamber music at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover, where he supervises an internationally successful quartet class and pioneers the field of chamber music education through creative and innovative projects. In the meantime, numerous ensembles trained by him have won international prizes and can be experienced on important stages worldwide. With Jana Kuss, he was one of the founding members of the Kuss Quartet at the age of 14. Since 2002, the ensemble has performed on all important concert stages and festivals worldwide and has several award-winning CD recordings to its credit. Most recently, the quartet recorded the Beethoven Quartet cycle on Paganini's Stradivaris live in Tokyo's Suntory Hall. In addition to a visiting professorship in violin and string quartet at the Royal Birmingham Conservatory, the Berlin native is artistic director of the Sommerliche Musiktage Hitzacker and chairman of the project advisory board and the overall jury of the German Music Competition. Since 2019, he has been co-directing the International Violin Competition “Joseph Joachim” Hanover with Antje Weithaas. Oliver Wille is a sought-after music mediator, regularly moderates discussion concerts and leads workshops. In this capacity, he has been a regular guest at the Heidelberger Frühling Streichquartettfest since 2008.

Press contacts

Current information and the entire programme can be found at www.heidelberger-fruehling.de.

The press kit and press photos are also available on our website at <https://www.heidelberger-fruehling.de/en/press/>.

If you have any questions, interview or press ticket requests, please feel free to contact us at any time.

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