

BERLIN PHILHARMONIC PIANO QUARTET

Violin, viola, cello, piano

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2020 | 7:30 P.M.
CASPARY AUDITORIUM

PROGRAM

Frank Bridge (1879-1941)
Phantasy Quartet

Danny Elfman (1953-)
Piano Quartet

INTERMISSION
(15 minutes)

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Piano Quartet No. 1, in G Minor

For more information about the concert series, please contact:

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Program and personnel subject to change.

As a courtesy to the artists, please remain seated until they have left the hall.

Berlin Philharmonic Piano Quartet appear by arrangement with Columbia Artists Management, LLC.

FEATURING

Luis Esnaola, violin
Markus Groh, piano

Matthew Hunter, viola
Knut Weber, cello

Berlin Philharmonic Piano Quartet

The **Berlin Philharmonic Piano Quartet** was established in 1985 as a chamber music ensemble of the Berliner Philharmoniker. After 30 successful years, a new generation took over. The ensemble introduced itself with its new members for the first time in the Chamber Music Hall in September 2015. Together with founding member Rainer Mehne they performed Frank Martin's Piano Quartet, thus demonstrating that they wanted to carry on the artistic spirit of the original ensemble. Today, the Quartet consists of three members of the Berliner Philharmoniker – violinist Luis Esnaola, violist Matthew Hunter, and cellist Knut Weber – as well as the renowned pianist Markus Groh.

The four musicians devote themselves to the genre of the piano quartet, which is less prominent than the string quartet. This fascinating combination has inspired nearly every great composer since the time of Viennese Classicism. An impressive body of literature comprising a vast number of works has been composed for this genre. In addition to the more familiar quartets of Classicism, Romanticism, and Modernism, the repertoire of the Berlin Philharmonic Piano Quartet also includes unknown compositions and rediscovered works.

During their last tour of the United States, the musicians presented a new composition by the American film composer Danny Elfman, who wrote a five-movement work for the Quartet which was commissioned by the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln, Nebraska, and the Berliner Philharmoniker Foundation. A recording of this quartet was released by Sony Classics in spring 2019.

Luis Esnaola, violin

A native of Madrid, **Luis Esnaola** grew up in a family where music always played an important role. He first studied the violin at the New England Conservatory under Donald Weilerstein before continuing his training at the Academy of Music Hanns Eisler Berlin under Antje Weithaas, where he graduated with a masters in music in 2012. While still studying, he was offered a place at the Berliner Philharmoniker's Orchestra Academy where he became a student of Christophe Horak. He received further instruction in master classes with, among others, Dorothy DeLay, Itzhak Perlman, Rainer Kussmaul, and Christian Tetzlaff. A winner of a range of competitions, he gained orchestral experience as section leader of the second violins in the Tonhalle-Orchestra Zurich. In September 2016, he joined the first violin section of the Berliner Philharmoniker.

Markus Groh, piano

German-born **Markus Groh** has quickly established himself as one of the most versatile pianists of his generation, after having won the 1st prize in the prestigious Queen Elisabeth Competition Brussels in Belgium, 1995. He has performed in recitals and concerts around the world, including with the London Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony Washington D.C., San Francisco Symphony, New Japan Philharmonic, and St. Petersburg Philharmonic under such distinguished conductors as Ivan Fischer, Neeme Jaervi, Fabio Luisi, Kent Nagano, Jonathan Nott, and David Robertson. His first solo recording, featuring the B Minor Sonata, the Fantasy and Fugue on B-A-C-H, and the Totentanz of Franz Liszt, received outstanding reviews in major newspapers and magazines. From this album, he garnered awards such as "Editor's Choice" (*Gramophone Magazine*, U.K.) and "Recording of the month" (*Musicweb International*, USA).

Matthew Hunter, viola

Winner of the Gee International Viola Competition, **Matthew Hunter** was 26 when he discovered the viola. He came to the Berliner Philharmoniker from Ottawa, where from 1991 to 1995 he was associate principal viola of Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra. He is a versatile musician who also plays the guitar (for example in performances of Mahler's Seventh Symphony), makes arrangements, and plays in several Philharmonic chamber ensembles, including the Philharmonic Stradivari Soloists Berlin. Since 2003, he has also been on the teaching staff of Academy of Music Hanns Eisler Berlin.

Knut Weber, cello

Knut Weber was five years old when he discovered the cello, and later received his first musical training from the Slovenian cellist, Milos Mlejnik. He studied in Cologne with the Alban Berg Quartet and Claus Kanngiesser as well as with Wolfgang Boettcher in Berlin, where in 2002 he passed his concert exam with distinction. Mr. Weber went on to become a scholar and principal cellist of the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra before being engaged by the Berliner Philharmoniker. He is a member of the "12 Cellists of the Berlin Philharmonic" and he also appears regularly as a soloist and in various chamber ensembles in Europe, Asia, and North and South America.