

Diogenes Quartet
Stefan Kirpal, violin
Gundula Kirpal, violin
Alba González i Becerra, viola
Stephen Ristau, cello

“It was definitely a stroke of luck that pieced these four young musicians together into an ensemble” (Süddeutsche Zeitung)

This stroke of luck happened in Munich in 1998, when four idealists decided to dedicate themselves together to chamber music, their shared passion. The quartet owes its name to the longtime friendship with the late Rudolph C. Bettschart, co- owner of the Swiss publishing house Diogenes. Its individual style shows the influence of the collaboration with outstanding pedagogues and ensembles, as the Amadeus Quartet and the La Salle Quartet. On the other hand the Diogenes Quartet worked extensively on the development of a completely own musical expression.

The four musicians started to appear on international stages in France, Greece, the United Kingdom, Italy, Austria and Switzerland from very early on. The quartet played in illustrious halls, such as the Cologne Philharmonics, and at festivals, such as the Mozartfest Würzburg, the European Weeks in Passau, the Samos Young Artists Festival or the Festival de Radio France et Montpellier.

Since its establishment the Diogenes Quartet has acquired a large share of the string quartet repertoire and broadened the range of chamber music through the collaboration with pianist Andreas Kirpal, amongst other things with a series of concerts at the Gasteig in Munich. In addition to the standard repertoire the quartet puts a stress on the performance of unknown and contemporary compositions.

The chamber music partners include Anna Prohaska (soprano), Tyler Duncan (baritone), Lydia Dubrovskaya (violin), Priya Mitchell (violin), Hariolf Schlichtig (viola), Roland Glassl (viola), Monika Henschel (viola), Wen-Sinn Yang (cello), und Nabil Shehata (double bass) and the Buchberger Quartet. The Diogenes Quartet is co-founder of the VDSQ (Verband Deutscher Streichquartette e.V. – Association of German String Quartets), which came to life in March 2012.

Moreover the quartet stays open to crossover programs, as for instance when it entertains the audience in collaboration with the quartet of violinist Max Grosch with “A Dream of Brahms”. Also the Diogenes Quartet puts a strong emphasis on musical education, which is why the four musicians hold concerts especially organized for children for many years and give discussion concerts at schools, which offer children of all ages the opportunity to hear and experience classical music. A very successful project consists of the chamber music workshops for young ensembles. Since 2015 the quartet is ambassador for SOS-Children’s Villages.

Over time many concerts have been recorded or transmitted live, as for instance opuses by Friedrich Gernsheim, Engelbert Humperdinck and Friedrich Fesca. Recently a comprehensive and among experts highly praised recording of all string quartets by Franz Schubert has been released by the Brilliant Classics Label. The four musicians also recorded the recently rediscovered string quartet in C minor (1852) by Max Bruch for the same label after its world premiere in Frankfurt 2014. Most recently they recorded the string sextet by Max Reger for a British film project of Fugue State Film on DVD.