

Bennewitz Quartet

Jakub Fišer – violin
Štěpán Ježek - violin
Jiří Pinkas - viola
Štěpán Doležal - violoncello

"... the music was remarkable not just for its clarity of structure, but for the beautiful tonal palette and purity of intonation in its execution. Only very rarely does one experience such skilfully crafted and powerful harmonies... Great art."
(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 2006)

The Bennewitz Quartet is one of the top international chamber ensembles, a status confirmed not only by their victories in two prestigious competitions – Osaka in 2005 and Prémio Paolo Borciani, Italy in 2008, but also by the continuous acclaim of the critics.

The quartet performs on international stages like Wigmore Hall London, Musikverein Wien, Konzerthaus Berlin, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées Paris, The Frick Collection New York, Seoul Arts Center, Rudolfinum and others, and is regularly invited to prominent festivals such as Salzburger Festspiele, Lucerne Festival, Rheingau Musik Festival, Kammermusikfest Lockenhaus, and the Prague Spring.

The Bennewitz Quartet especially enjoys playing on the Czech domestic music scene and performs at major venues. A particular highlight included their cooperation with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and its conductor Jiří Bělohlávek for a performance of Bohuslav Martinů's *Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra*. In 2014 they performed with the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Czech premiere of the composition *Absolute Jest* by John Adams. The members of the quartet also use their choice of repertoire and concert programming to actively promote Czech music, including excellent and unjustly neglected composers such as Ladislav Dusík, Anton Rejcha, Pavel Haas, Viktor Ullmann, Erwin Schulhoff and others.

Highlights of season 2015/16 amongst others were the presentation of the whole Bartok cycle in Uppsala and a concert with members of the Belcea Quartet at Laeishalle in Hamburg. In fall 2016 they are premiering a piece written by Dutch composer Willem Wander van Nieuwkerk and they are performing with Jana Boušková, solo harpist of Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and with Alexander Melnikov in Munich.

The Bennewitz Quartet has the privilege of working with outstanding artists such as Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Vadim Gluzman, Isabel Charisius, Pietro de Maria, Reto Bieri, Danjulo Ishizaka and others.

The fruits of their long-term cooperation with the Coviello Classics label include a recording of Leoš Janáček's two string quartets and Béla Bartók's fourth. The critics' response was very positive. The magazine Fono Forum was impressed by the *"fiery temperament"*. The second recording in the series, released in spring 2010, contains both of Bedřich Smetana's quartets. The website Klassik.com called it *"simply phenomenal"*.

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Their following project was a recording of Dvořák's complete *Cypresses* cycle, on the Hänssler Classic label.

The Dvořák project continued in mid september 2015 when the quartet released their most recent CD with the quartets op. 51 and op. 106 under the SWR Music/ Naxos label. The recording became the Choice of the Harmonie magazine and the Editor's choice of *Gramophone Magazine*.

The Bennewitz Quartet was founded in 1998. Thanks to their participation in various master-classes, the members have had the opportunity to gain experience and inspiration from numerous eminent musical personalities, most notably Rainer Schmidt (Hagen Quartet) and Walter Levin (LaSalle Quartet). In 2003 the ensemble was honored by the Queen of Spain for outstanding student performance at the *Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía* in Madrid. One year later, the quartet was awarded the Czech Chamber Music Society prize.

The quartet is named after violinist Antonín Bennewitz (1833-1926), who was a pioneering figure in the Czech violin school.

The Bennewitz Quartet is kindly supported by the Viennese string manufacturer Thomastik-Infeld.

www.bennewitzquartet.com

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Künstleragentur Henriette Haage