

**Friends of Chamber Music present the Aris Quartett in concert  
at the Vancouver Playhouse, Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at 7:30 pm**



**ARIS QUARTETT**

**Stephen Waarts – violin (substituting for Anna Katharina Wildermuth)**  
**Noémi Zipperling – violin**  
**Caspar Vinzens – viola**  
**Lukas Sieber – cello**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, violinist Stephen Waarts is substituting for Anna Katharina Wildermuth with the Aris Quartett for this North American tour.

Stephen studied at the Kronberg Academy under Mihaela Martin, and at the Curtis Institute, Philadelphia, with Aaron Rosand. He was awarded the International Classical Music Awards Orchestra Award by the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra in 2019, and in March 2017 a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. He also won Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern's soloist award that year and has performed at the festival every year since. In 2015, he was awarded a scholarship from Mozart Gesellschaft Dortmund following his appearance at Krzyżowa-Music, the same year as his prize-winning success at the 2015 Queen Elisabeth Competition – including securing the majority vote of the television audience – which boosted international attention.

In the 2024/25 season, Waarts made his debuts with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra performing Brahms Violin Concerto under the baton of Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, the Oregon Symphony and conductor Hannu Lintu playing the Barber, with Orchestre de Picardie and Johanna Malangré playing Prokofiev Violin Concerto No.2, and the Israel Camerata and Marc Minkowski playing Bach and Mozart. He also returned to the Hallé Orchestra, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, Chamber Orchestra of Europe and Szczecin Philharmonic, working with Thomas Adès, Markus Poschner and Sir Andras Schiff.

A passionate recitalist and chamber musician, Waarts' regular chamber partners include Sir Andras Schiff, [Francesco Piemontesi](#), Daniel Müller-Schott, Marie-Elisabeth Hecker, Timothy Ridout, Tabea Zimmermann, and Martin Helmchen. Waarts has appeared at renowned festivals including Aspen, Marlboro, Gstaad, and Rheingau. He has also appeared in recital at Philharmonie Luxembourg,

Philharmonie Haarlem, Fundación Juan March, Lincoln Center, Auditorium du Louvre, Boulez Saal, San Francisco Performances and for the Vancouver Recital Society. His 2024-2025 season included recitals at Bath Mozartfest, Edesche Concertzaal, Wigmore Hall, and the Concertgebouw Amsterdam.

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Expressive, dynamic, spectacular – the Aris Quartet has been at home on international stages for more than a decade. With its unmistakable sound, it has established itself as one of the world's top-rank chamber music ensembles.

"... *brilliantly played...*" - BBC Music Magazine

"... *world-class music-making...*" - Süddeutsche Zeitung

"... *simply sensational music-making ...*" - ORF

The musicians have performed in venues including London's Wigmore Hall, the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, the Herbst Theatre San Francisco, and the Philharmonie de Paris. Their choice of chamber music partners is exceptional: Christiane Karg (soprano), Tabea Zimmermann (violist), Daniel Müller-Schott (cellist), Eckart Runge (cellist, juror and masterclass coach at the 2025 BISQC), Kit Armstrong (pianist and composer) and Nils Mönkemeyer (violist and teacher).

The ensemble also devotes itself to cross-genre projects, including with the jazz pianist Omer Klein. From the very beginning, the musicians have also placed a special focus on contemporary music. Composers such as Lukas Ligeti, Gerald Resch, Misato Mochizuki, and Pierre Dominique Ponnelle have entrusted the Quartet with world premieres of their works.

The Aris Quartet was founded in Frankfurt am Main in 2009, and one of their most important mentors has been Günter Pichler (1<sup>st</sup> violinist, Alban Berg Quartet). Continuing with its founding members, the ensemble's success is no coincidence: having earned numerous first prizes at prestigious competitions, the Aris Quartet quickly achieved its international breakthrough. The musicians have also been honored as ECHO Rising Stars by the European Concert Hall Organisation, were among the BBC's New Generation Artists, and have won five awards at the ARD International Music Competition in Munich.

In addition to regular appearances on radio and television, the Aris Quartet has already released six critically acclaimed recordings. Further releases on Deutsche Grammophon and STAGE+ will follow.

The Aris Quartett is represented by Marianne Schmocker Artists International.

## **Programme**

***String Quartet in B-flat Major, Opus 76 No 4 "Sunrise"***

***Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)***

**Allegro con spirito**

**Adagio**

**Menuetto: Allegro**

**Finale: Allegro ma non troppo**

In 1795, Haydn returned from his highly successful sojourn in England to relatively light duties as prescribed by the new Esterhazy Prince Nikolaus II. Count Joseph Erdody, Hungarian Court Chancellor, generously commissioned Haydn for six quartets. The resulting Erdody set is a triumph, perhaps the pinnacle of Haydn's extensive quartet-writing career.

The fourth quartet of the set, nicknamed "Sunrise", dawns gently in a simple B flat chord from the three lower strings. The first violin's theme cautiously rises, with no suggestions of the movement's **Allegro con spirito** marking. After 20 bars, light floods in, somewhat reminiscent of the opening to the composer's "The Creation" (which was underway concurrently), and the spirit is freed in dancing semiquavers. The opening chord returns, but now with the theme in the cello curving down, rather than rising. The movement develops the contrast between these ideas.

The **Adagio** is one of Haydn's most profound. Its pausing, hesitantly rising opening recalls, in slow-motion, the start of the first movement. The first violin's rapt meditation is intensified by closely overlapping entries of this opening phrase.

The Menuetto is rustic rather than courtly, and its lines again recall the gentle rise of the opening sunrise motif. The trio section is linked through by a held chord on the cello and viola, again recalling the work's opening.

The Finale's structure starts with alternating major-minor episodes, but after the reprise of the major section, Haydn puts his foot on the accelerator in an exhilarating race to the finish.

### ***String Quartet No. 1 in E-flat Major, Opus 12***

***Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)***

**Adagio non troppo – Allegro non tardante**  
**Canzonetta: Allegretto**  
**Andante espressivo**  
**Molto allegro e vivace**

In April 1829, after completing his university studies, Mendelssohn began a three-year tour of Europe. He wrote his Opus 12 string quartet during the trip and completed it in September of that year. The work carries the lowest opus number of his quartets because it was published before Opus 13, which was actually written two years earlier.

The opening **Adagio** is a gentle, intimate melody that contains four significant musical ideas. In the slow introduction, a motto of three up-beats leads to a longer note. This motif recurs throughout this movement and in the third movement. The faster (**Allegro**) principal theme begins loudly but soon fades away and a subsidiary theme with a similar rhythmic pattern follows. Early in the development, the second violin introduces a new melody, which is related to the first theme. The remainder of the movement contains warm, tender thematic material that creates a movement of rare poetic beauty.

The second movement is modeled on the 16<sup>th</sup> Century **Canzonetta**, a short, light vocal piece having the character of a dance. The movement is constructed in tertiary form. The first part features a bouncing melody which has overtones of folk music. The faster middle section has a luminous transparency, and the movement ends with an abridged version of the first part. This charming movement has become extremely popular, resulting in its frequent use as an encore.

The three note motto from the introduction of the Adagio is heard at the outset of the Andante. A cantabile theme follows, which ends with a brief improvisatory recitative for the first violin marked *con fuoco* (with fire). Then, the whole statement is repeated in a more elaborate form, and the movement ends with the reappearance of the three-note motto.

The high-spirited Finale follows the pause. It is written in the form of a Tarantella, a wild southern Italian folk dance once believed capable of curing the bite of a tarantula spider. Following a pause in the middle of the movement, the mood becomes more serious as the second violin recalls the melody that was introduced in the first movement. Then, the animated character returns until the coda. Here, the mood changes and there is a recapitulation of thematic material from the first movement, now converted into a march-like melody that brings the quartet to a close.

## **Intermission**

*String Quartet No. 7 in F Major, Opus 59 No. 1*

*Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)*

### **Allegro**

**Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando**

**Adagio molto e mesto**

**Thème Russe: Allegro**

Beethoven's three Opus 59 quartets were commissioned in 1802 by Count Razumovsky, Russian ambassador to the Viennese Imperial Court, and included some Russian themes heard here in the finale to the magnificent No. 1. Opus 59 was intended for performance in Razumovsky's lavish new palace in Vienna. When Beethoven completed the trio of quartets before the palace was ready, the group of works was premiered by the Schuppanzigh Quartet in an unknown location. Reactions to this Opus were the harshest that Beethoven ever received. When violinist Felix Radicati said to him, "Surely, you do not consider this music?", Beethoven responded with a prophetic reply, "Not for you, but for a later age."

The monumental **Allegro** begins with a beautiful melody, which starts low in the cello, and soars up to the first violin's highest register. Although rich subsidiary material is presented, the two halves of the first theme dominate both the development and coda. The movement ends with a series of brilliant violin runs.

In Beethoven's day, the drumming, rhythmic notes of the **Allegretto** were considered strange and oddly amusing. Although lighter in mood than the opening, it is still somewhat restless and ill at ease. Various themes are employed, some gay and abandoned, others more lyrical and song-like. The structure is considered either a scherzo with two trios, or a sonata variant.

Beethoven wrote the phrase, "A weeping willow or acacia tree on my brother's grave", on the sketches of the profoundly moving **Adagio**, thereby offering insight into his intent. The lament's two cantilena (vocal) themes are characterised by wide intervals between notes. Each of the four voices weaves a separate magic, with the cello part particularly richly endowed. A violin cadenza and trill end the movement and lead to the finish.

The final **Allegro** is based on a Russian folk melody. Despite the original song's dirge-like accents, the movement is filled with high spirits. The theme is heard here in the major key, played at twice the speed of the original song. At the end, Beethoven slows the pace before a final brilliant flourish concludes the quartet.

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**Next concerts - both at the Vancouver Playhouse at 7:30 pm**

**Esmé Quartet**

**Tuesday, October 28, 2025**

Ravel: String Quartet in F Major

Dutilleux: “Ainsi la nuit” – String Quartet

Schubert: String Quartet No. 13 in A Minor, D804, Opus 29 “Rosamunde”

**Quatuor Modigliani**

**Tuesday, November 11, 2025**

Haydn: String Quartet in F Major, Opus 77 No. 2 “Lobkowitz”

Kurtag: String Quartet, Opus 13 “Microludes”

Brahms: String Quartet No. 2 in A Minor, Opus 51 No. 2

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