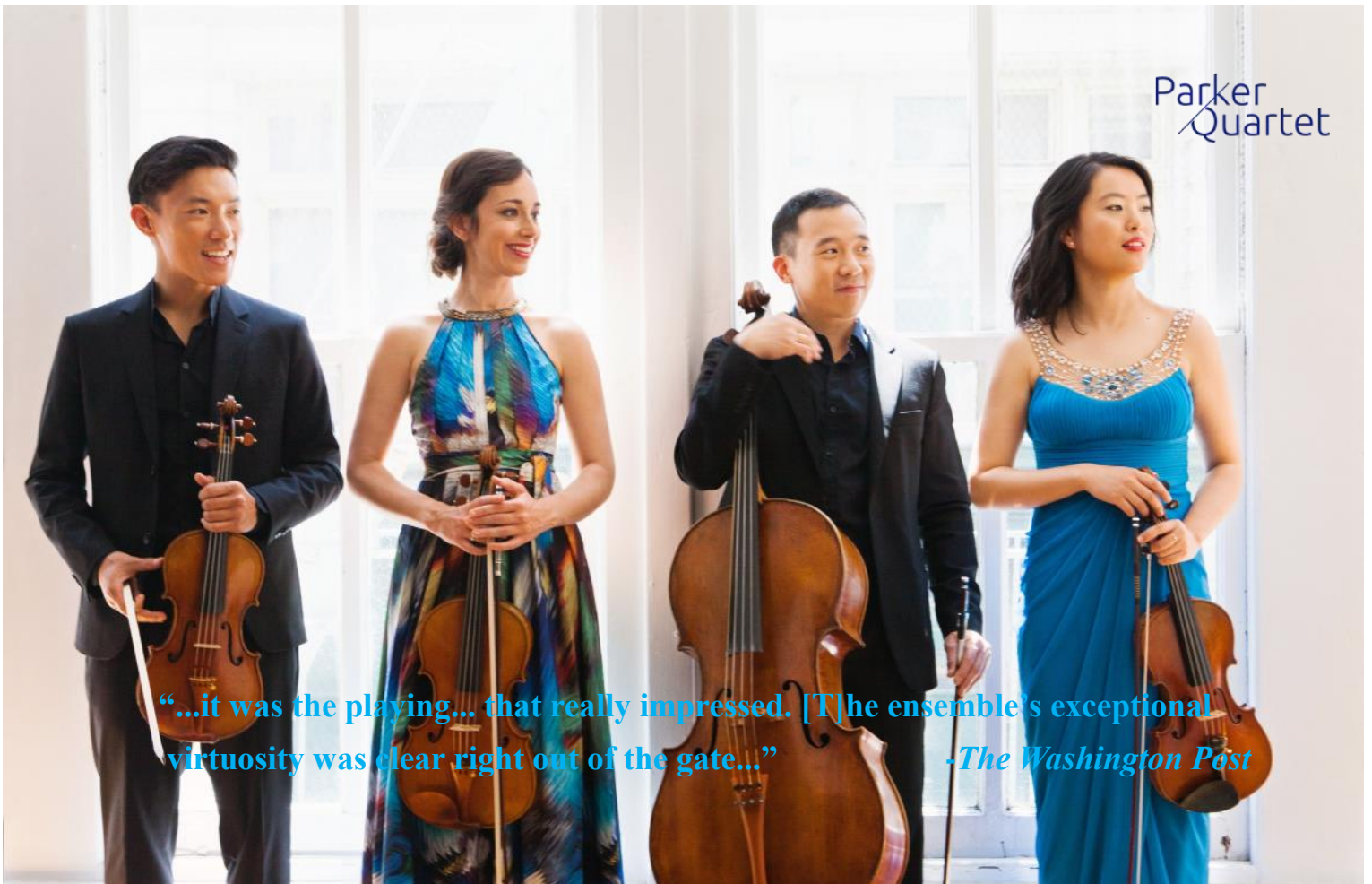


Parker Quartet

Grant Communications
Massachusetts—New York
272 Broadway No. 8
Methuen, Massachusetts 01844
USA



“...it was the playing... that really impressed. [T]he ensemble's exceptional virtuosity was clear right out of the gate...”

-The Washington Post



“something extraordinary” – *The New York Times*
“exceptional virtuosity [and] imaginative interpretation”-*The Washington Post*

Inspiring performances, luminous sound, and exceptional musicianship are the hallmarks of the Grammy Award-winning Parker Quartet. Renowned for its dynamic interpretations and polished, expansive colors, the group has rapidly distinguished itself as one of the preeminent ensembles of its generation. In demand worldwide, the Quartet has appeared at the most important venues worldwide since its founding in 2002.

Following a 2016 summer season that had the ensemble crossing North America for appearances at music festivals, including opening the Rockport Chamber Music Festival (MA) with the pianist Menahem Pressler, the Rite of Music Festival on New York’s Governor’s Island, Vermont’s Yellow Barn Festival, Toronto Summer Music Festival, the Garth Newell Music Center in Virginia, the Skaneateles Festival in upstate New York, and the San Miguel de Allende International Chamber Music Festival in Mexico, the Parker Quartet’s fall 2016 begins with the release of their own recording for Nimbus Records of Mendelssohn’s Quartets Op. 44, Nos. 1 and 3. Highlights of the 2016-17 season include the ensemble’s ongoing concert series at Harvard as the Blodgett Artists-in-Residence; a January 2017 European tour featuring performances with violist Kim Kashkashian; and two concerts in Washington, DC: at the National Gallery of Art and with jazz pianist Billy Childs at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Other performances also include Annapolis Concerts at St. John’s College, Mary Anne Rennolds Chamber Concert Series at VCU, concerts at South Carolina University as the School of Music’s Quartet-in-Residence, the Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival, and the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

Recent highlights include the project “Schubert Effect” in collaboration with pianist Shai Wosner at the 92nd Street Y, the premiere of a new string quartet by American composer Augusta Read Thomas as part of the Quartet’s four-concert series at Harvard University, appearances at Carnegie Hall, the Library of Congress, the Slee Series in Buffalo, New York’s Lincoln Center Great Performers series, and with jazz pianist Billy Childs. The Quartet also continues to be a strong supporter of violist Kim Kashkashian’s project *Music for Food* by participating in concerts throughout the United States for the benefit of various food banks and shelters.

The Parker Quartet has distinguished itself with acclaimed recordings for Zig-Zag Territoires, Innova Records, and Naxos. The Quartet’s debut commercial recording of Bartók’s String Quartets Nos. 2 and 5 for Zig-Zag Territoires (July 2007) won praise from *Gramophone*: “The Parkers’ Bartók spins the illusion of spontaneous improvisation... they have absorbed the language; they have the confidence to play freely with the music and the instinct to bring it off.” Their Naxos recording of György Ligeti’s complete works for string quartet won the 2011 Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Performance (the last string quartet to win this category). In 2015, Innova Records released the world premiere recording of American composer Jeremy Gill’s “Capriccio” written for the Quartet through a Chamber Music America commissioning grant. In April 2016 Augusta Read Thomas’s world premiere recording of *Helix Spirals* for string quartet on “Of Being is a Bird” was released on Nimbus Records.

Recent collaborations include acclaimed artists like violist Kim Kashkashian, violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, pianists Anne-Marie McDermott and Shai Wosner, Kikuei Ikeda of the Tokyo String Quartet, clarinetist and composer Jörg Widmann, and clarinetist Charles Neidich.

Founded and currently based in Boston, the Parker Quartet’s numerous honors include winning the Concert Artists Guild Competition, the Grand Prix and Mozart Prize at France’s Bordeaux International String Quartet Competition, and Chamber Music America’s prestigious Cleveland Quartet Award. Now Blodgett Artists-in-Residence at Harvard University’s Department of Music, and also in residence at USC School of Music, the Quartet’s numerous residencies have included serving as Artists-in-Residence at the University of St. Thomas (2012–2014), Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Minnesota (2011–2012), Quartet-in-Residence with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra (2008-2010), and as the first-ever Artists-in-Residence with Minnesota Public Radio (2009-2010).

The Parker Quartet’s members hold graduate degrees in performance and chamber music from the New England Conservatory of Music and were part of the New England Conservatory’s prestigious Professional String Quartet Training Program from 2006–2008. Some of their most influential mentors include the original members of the Cleveland Quartet, Kim Kashkashian, György Kurtág, and Rainer Schmidt.

Parker Quartet
2016-2017 Season Highlights
(Subject To Change)

"Yes, the Parker Quartet really is that good."
- Pioneer Press

"Hope proceeds every debut but rarely is it so well fulfilled"
- Pittsburgh Tribune Live

"...extraordinarily gifted..." - *Denver Post*

SEPTEMBER 23, 2016

Annapolis Concerts, St. John's College
Annapolis, MD
FSK Auditorium

FEBRUARY 2017

February 17, 2017
Eureka Chamber Music Series
Eureka, CA

OCTOBER 15, 2016

Mary Anne Rennolds Chamber Concert Series
Richmond, VA
Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts

February 23, 2017
Chamber Music Society of Little Rock
Little Rock, AR

February 24, 2017
Dean's Lecture and Concert Series, St. John's
College, Santa Fe, NM
The Great Hall, Peterson Student Center

NOVEMBER

November 2 - 6, 2016

University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC
Fall Residency
Concerts

MARCH 26, 2017
National Gallery Of Art
Washington, DC
with jazz pianist Billy Childs

November 3 at 7:30 PM
USC School of Music Recital Hall

November 6 at 5:00 PM
Parker Quartet Family Concert
Johnson Performance Hall,

APRIL 2017

April 5 - 19, 2017
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC
Spring Residency

Concerts

April 6, at 7:30 PM
USC School of Music Recital Hall

April 9 at 5:00 PM
Parker Quartet Family Concert
Johnson Performance Hall,

November 12, 2016

Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival
Vermont

April 24, 2017
Philadelphia Chamber Music Society
Philadelphia, PA

JANUARY 2017

European Tour
Including appearances at:

Switzerland's Salle del Castillo

Brussels' Belgium Musical Instruments
Museum

Germany's Stuttgart Liederhalle, Kultur and
Kongresszentrum

Germany's Neumarkt Festaal in Historic
Reitstadel

Germany's Konzerthaus Dortmund

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“something extraordinary” - *The New York Times*

Toronto Summer Music Opens With A Thrilling Nod To British Genius



Parker String Quartet with conductor Joseph Swenson
and the TSM Festival Strings. [July 2016]
Photo: James M. Ireland)

“It’s not accurate to say that the Opening Night concert started the Toronto Summer Music Festival with a bang, as there was no percussion to be heard. Even so, it’s hard to imagine a more rousing start to the three-week celebration of chamber music than this evening of English Music for Strings.” -*MusicalToronto.com*

Rockport, Pressler, Parker Superb

“By any measure, opening night at the 35th Rockport Chamber Music Festival [2016] counted as an extraordinary affair. The superb Parker String Quartet, a favorite here, was appearing with the still-fabulous 92-year-old pianist, Menahem Pressler. ... The opener, Haydn’s String Quartet in D Major, Opus 71, No. 2, HOB.III:70, seems to be a specialty of this foursome, and they made it a sparkle. I was immediately struck by the poise and beautiful playing of each of its members, a matching of energy and expressive beauty.Bela Bartók completed his popular Quartet No. 1, Opus 7, Sz. 40 in 190, Bartók opens this quartet with what he himself calls a “funeral dirge,” in this case a slow fugue. Some consider it a four-part dirge with the quartet as pall-bearers for the death of his passion. Full of yearning and despair, this quartet received a splendidly affecting reading from the Parkers. Who wouldn’t love the Dvorak Piano Quintet with this quartet, especially with the wonderful Menahem Pressler, the longtime pianist of the Beaux Arts Trio, and the backdrop of the ocean at sundown? What a lovely and loving performance!” -*The Boston Musical Intelligencer*

“Rather than beginning with Beethoven's String Quartet No. 11, they started with Augusta Read Thomas' *Helix Spirals*, a three-movement new work making its regional premiere. What a contrast this change was, for *Helix* began the evening with soft, walking pizzicato notes rather than a jolting Beethovenian chord. Violinist Daniel Chong had many admirable moments of leadership in the first two movements, guiding the group through this challenging piece to sound like one collective unit, rather than, well, four different instruments backing one another. The final movement, "SPIRALS: life force," displayed the power of the Parker Quartet's unified sound with its aching chords that sounded reminiscent of Pärt. As the chords grew in rhythmic syncopation and dynamics, the group's sound became one of unease leading to a climactic musical exclamation of joy that left the audience breathless. Following the modern work was the equally dynamic Beethoven's String Quartet No. 11 which solidified the Parker Quartet's ability to perform a wide-range of repertoire. The group played the piece with epic, passionate arms, accentuating every motif and counterpoint Beethoven wrote. The quartet's control made the result sound as if it were a new piece. Tutti bravi for that!” - *CVNC.org (North Carolina online arts journal)*

“Dutilleux’s masterpiece, [“Ainsi la Nuit” (“Thus the Night”)]one of the great quartets of the past half-century, is a complex play of memory and reflections, a dark night in a hall of mirrors. The performance was superb, alive to every shift and nuance of color.” - *The Boston Globe*

“The Parker Quartet gave a committed, detailed, and virtuosic reading, [of world premiere Augusta Read Thomas’s *Helix Spirals*] and announced that they would enter the studio the following day to record this vital new piece for Nimbus Records. Thomas’s *Helix Spirals* combines explosive energy, technical virtuosity, and vivid colors and textures with an intellectual rigor of conception that lends it formal continuity and cohesion. This exciting work deserves a place in the repertoire, and hopefully the Parker Quartet will perform it widely and persuade other ensembles to follow their lead. Erwin Schulhoff’s Five Pieces for String Quartet opened the program, giving the Parker Quartet the chance to show off their technical virtuosity, flawless ensemble, and propulsive rhythmic energy. ... The concert ended with another energetic and life-affirming work, this one established: Mendelssohn’s Quartet in E-flat Major, Op. 44 no. 3. From the rustic, good-natured opening to the rousing finale, it leapt from the stage.” -*The Boston Musical Intelligencer*

“Continued...

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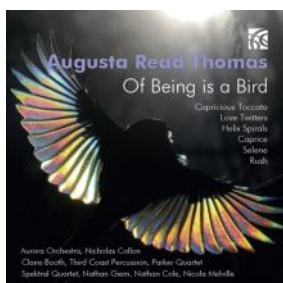
“A shining silver line runs through everything that the Parker String Quartet plays” *The Times Union*

“They propel the music irresistibly, but with extraordinary grace and flexibility and, above all, they make sense of the music”
- *The Washington Post*

“The group thrives on combinations of intricacy and power. Their touchstones are precision and an assiduously cultivated blend of sound — focused and wiry at its core and, whatever the style, so well-matched that it can be difficult to tell where one instrument leaves off and another begins.” - *The Boston Globe*

“Quartet playing is supposed to be hard: these four players made it seem easy. They made the audience smile and nod in response to their obvious delight in the music and in performing. Constantly in touch with each other, they moved and breathed as one beautifully musical organism. Imbued with their strong rhythmic sense, the music of every piece flowed and ebbed with grace. There were four individual players on stage, each one a strong personality, but as in all great chamber groups, they created the effect of being one.”
- *Boston Music Intelligencer*

SELECT RECORDING ACCLAIM



August Read Thomas “Of Being is a Bird” (world premiere recording of *Helix Spirals*)
Helix Spirals; Selene; Capricious Toccata; Of Being is a Bird; Caprice; Rush; Love Twitters
Claire Booth (soprano), Nathan Gien, Nathan Cole {violin}. Nicola Melville (piano); Third Coast Percussion; Parker Quartet; Spektral Quartet; Aurora Orchestra/Nicholas Collon
Nimbus Records NI 6323 72:47 mins *****

“This enjoyable anthology of recent music by the American composer August Read Thomas comes right up to date with ‘Of Being is a Bird’, recorded at its premiere in London last July. It’s a setting for soprano and ensemble of two Emily Dickinson poems about birds: it begins with airy, luminous sonorities, but an instrumental interlude gives it an infusion of energy that lasts to the end. The same sense of purposeful motion runs through the DNA-inspired string quartet *Helix Spirals*, which progresses gradually from scattered pizzicatos to bowed unanimity.... the Parker Quartet are impressively assured in *Helix Spirals*....” - *BBC Music Magazine*



LIGETI, String Quartets Nos. 1 and 2 / Andante and Allegretto
2011 GRAMMY winner: Best Chamber Music Performance

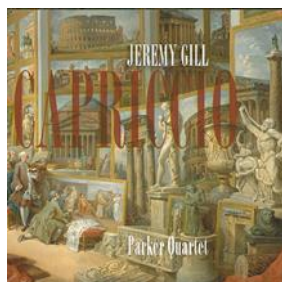
“...the Parker Quartet has more than an ample amount of muscle, self control, and sensitivity to have mastered these highly dynamic and challenging twentieth century quartets. The Second Quartet is particularly difficult; there is a spot in the first movement Allegro nervoso where the quartet is already very busy playing rapid figures at a sub-pianissimo level and has to switch -- at a mere bar line's notice -- to fortissimo without essentially changing what notes are being played. The Parker Quartet performs this audio equivalent to a cinematic jump cut on a hairpin, and throughout the music is completely well elucidated with no fuss, no muss, expert precision, and a considerable flair for drama.” - *allmusic.com*

“This young quartet has nothing to fear from the competition in these works, either in the Bartókian first quartet or the more radical second. The early Andante and Allegro is a balm to the ears after the quartets and a good way to conclude this bargain.” - *musicwebinternational*

“The musicians that comprise the Parker Quartet are simply amazing. They play with a commitment and level of energy rarely encountered. For a young ensemble, they play with a maturity and assured emotional control usually common to only more established groups. They expose the context of the music admirably well, and deliver a sound that grabs your immediate attention and doesn't let go.” - *Classical Music Sentinel*

Continued...

SELECT RECORDING ACCLAIM



Jeremy Gill, Capriccio

"[A] varied and kaleidoscopic collection of vivid miniatures. To listen to the piece straight through is to go off in many unpredictable directions - invocations of Baroque and operatic music, tude-like explorations of the technical issues in string playing, and an ebullient cataloging of the various textural and rhetorical forms that writing for string quartet can take. ... [T]here's a generosity of spirit at work here that is only reaffirmed by the quartet's splendid playing."

- *San Francisco Chronicle*

"[A] compelling musical narrative much greater than the sum of the individual parts. Gill's stylistic references range from retro-Baroque to plinkingly post-modern, and the performance by the Parker Quartet, who commissioned the piece, is stunningly accomplished. A work to return to often, for fresh insight and stimulation."

- *Classical MPR*



Bartok, String Quartets Nos. 2 & 5

"...the Parker Quartet eschews the rhythmic give and take that is the hallmark of legendary and autochthonous ensembles such as the Hungarian or Budapest quartets, but these young American winners of the 2005 Bordeaux competition have plenty to offer themselves." - *The Strad*

"The Parkers' Bartók spins the illusion of spontaneous improvisation, which is not to say that their performances sound unprepared: they have absorbed the language; they have the confidence to play freely with the music and the instinct to bring it off. The Second Quartet is similarly compelling, less tart than the Belceas, especially in the second movement where the "tipsy" trio is played up for all its worth (the cellist's tongue-in-cheek hesitation at 4'31"). The prayerful finale is beautifully sustained, again with rests and pauses tellingly gauged. So, yet another top-rated contender in a field that is already rich in superb recordings, not that Bartók's wonderful music deserves anything less ." - *Gramophone*

UPCOMING RELEASES:

Mendelssohn's Quartets Nos. 1 and 3, Op. 44

Nimbus Records

September 9, 2016

www.parkerquartet.com

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<https://twitter.com/parkerquartet>

http://weibo.com/parkerquartet#_rnd1451924746527

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