

„It's a wittily mischievous concept, but in many ways also the most despairing of all the music on this brilliantly conceived, profoundly affecting release.“
(The Strad about „KRISE“)

The Kuss Quartet has been setting new standards for many years with its ambitious concept-based programming. Its mission is to offer unique experiences to traditional audiences and new listeners alike.

Leader Jana Kuss and second violinist Oliver Wille have been playing side by side for over 30 years. With great curiosity, they and their long-standing colleagues, William Coleman and Mikayel Hakhnazaryan, seek confirmation of the eternal "muss es sein?" of string quartet playing.

Thanks to a grant from the state of Lower Saxony and Musik 21, the quartet has been able to commission several new works in the last ten years, expanding the string quartet repertoire with compositions by Enno Poppe, Aribert Reimann, Manfred Trojahn, Bruno Mantovani, Iris ter Schiphorst Johannes Fischer and Mark Andre. This has attracted cooperations with the Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw Amsterdam, Paris Biennale, the Wigmore Hall in London and Tokyo's Suntory Hall. In the 23/24 season, Francisco Coll's "Codices" will be premiered in Basel and receive further performances in Amsterdam, Berlin and Hanover.

The Kuss Quartett enjoys regular collaborations with musical partners including Miklós Perényi, Dénes Várjon, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Sarah Maria-Sun, Maurice Steger and Johannes Fischer.

The cross-genre Beethoven programme "Force and Freedom" was developed together with director Nicola Hümpel and her music and dance theatre, "Nico and The Navigators". Delayed by the pandemic, the world premiere took place in November 2021 at the Konzerthaus Dortmund and was subsequently performed at the Schwetzingen Festspiele and Radialsystem Berlin in 2022. The production was filmed by ARTE TV. A further highly innovative project was "KUSS@KOKON". During the Corona pandemic, an artist collective consisting of dancers Yui Kawaguchi and Ruben Reniers, percussionist Johannes Fischer and slam poet Bas Böttcher developed new modular concerts with the Kuss Quartet, assisted by a "Reload" grant from the German Federal Cultural Foundation. Free from inhibitions, the modules break the boundaries of these artistic fields and expand them into new forms.

The most recent album, "KRISE" (Crisis), was released in January 2023 and explores the subject of its title from different perspectives in both well-known quartet repertoire and specially commissioned works. The "KRISE" concert programme can be heard extensively in performance throughout the 23/24 season.

At the beginning of its career, the quartet was awarded first prizes by the German Music Council and at the Borciani Competition. It also received a Borletti-Buitoni Award and was a "Rising Star" of the European Concert Hall Organisation.

Today, the Kuss Quartet inspires the next generation in frequent master classes. William Coleman and Oliver Wille hold professorships in Salzburg and Hanover/Birmingham

respectively, while Mikayel Hakhnazaryan teaches chamber music at the Hochschule in Karlsruhe and Jana Kuss at the Accademia Perosi in Biella (Italy).