Ligeti Quartet

ikon|arts management

www.ligetiquartet.com

LIGETI QUARTET

Freya Goldmark, violin
Patrick Dawkins, violin
Dominic Stokes, viola
Valerie Welbanks, cello

The Ligeti Quartet has been at the forefront of modern and contemporary music since its formation in 2010, breaking new ground through innovative programming and championing of today's most exciting composers and artists.

The ensemble has been making waves between classical, contemporary, and electronic music worldwide in countries such as the UK, Canada, United States, China, Germany, Denmark, and France.

Highlights for the 2025-6 season include a feature concert at the Rainy Days Festival at the Philharmonie in Luxembourg and a world premiere of a new work by London-based composer Blasio Kavuma at the Barbican. They will tour to The Hague performing Ligeti, and Nuc, with music from their critically acclaimed album with Anna Meredith. In October 2026 they will be part of the Steve Reich 90th birthday celebrations at the newly opened Schwarzman Centre in Oxford.

Having played at landmark venues around the world including Carnegie Hall, Curtis Institute, Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, Barbican Hall, and Kings Place, the quartet also enjoy performing in more unusual places, previous venues including museums, galleries, theatres, pubs, planetariums, a fishing boat, and a cave. They have commissioned many new works and have collaborated with artists from all types of musical backgrounds including Anna Meredith, Xenia Pestova, Elliot Galvin, Kerry Andrew, Laura Jurd, Meilyr Jones, Neil Hannon, Seb Rochford, Shabaka Hutchings, Sean Noonan, Shed 7 and Submotion Orchestra.

The quartet's most recent album 'Nuc' (2023, Mercury KX) is a celebration of Anna Meredith's music for string quartet, including arrangements by the quartet's viola player Richard Jones. "An album that continually surprises and enlightens" (BBC Music).

Their tour of the album in 2023 was supported by Music In The Round and Arts Council England. Their previous album Songbooks Vol. 1 (2020, Nonclassical), part of a long-standing collaboration with award-winning composer Christian Mason, explores the way in which the acoustic properties of the string quartet emulate the human voice through Mason's use of extended techniques and unique sound-worlds. "Magnificently vivid performances… sheer unadulterated exuberance" (Gramophone).

The quartet named themselves after the Hungarian composer György Ligeti (1923-2006), inspired by his kaleidoscopic musical outlook and tireless invention. 2023 included many concerts celebrating the 100th anniversary of his birth. They curated the "Ligeti Day" at Aldeburgh Festival (23 June 2023) during which they performed two concerts of György Ligeti's music and the world premieres of 15 new commissions including Entasis by Lukas Ligeti (supported by Britten Pears Arts, BBC Radio 3, the Vaughan Williams Foundation, and Bourgie Hall).

Dracula

Cinema screening with live soundtrack

Dracula (1931) with Philip Glass's 1998 String Quartet Score

To mark Philip Glass's 90th birthday in 2027, the Ligeti Quartet perform his 1998 score for Tod Browning's Dracula (1931) live with the film.

Written for string quartet, Glass's music recasts the classic Bela Lugosi film through a contemporary lens, its steady rhythms and subtle harmonic shifts drawing out the film's atmosphere of unease and fascination.

This rare screening with live performance offers a compelling meeting of early cinema and one of the most distinctive musical voices of the late twentieth century.

Duration: 70 mins

Nuc

amplified

The critically acclaimed Ligeti Quartet perform tracks from their 2023 album *Nuc* fusing **acoustic and electronic music for string quartet** by the Mercury-prize nominated composer **Anna Meredith**.

The result is a joyful, occasionally furious, never too serious, energetic yet restful collection of tracks which dazzle with Anna's signature compulsive harmonies, rhythmic shifts of gear and sparkling textures.

Bespoke projections are by animator Ewan Morris Jones, along with a **video** for 'Tuggemo' featuring a melee of plant, animal and mineral creations which swarm together as the song swells.
Created using a combination of 2D animation and AI techniques, the visual is a compelling, colourful and hypnotic evolution story.

Nuc is performed **amplified** with a full **electronic backing track**. The disc was one of The Guardian's Top 10 Contemporary Albums of 2023.

Programme length: one hour, or two x 45 mins with added repertoire such as Ligeti String Quartets, Reich 'Different Trains', George Crumb 'Black Angels'.

HOLOGLASS

Step inside Philip Glass's music

Experience Philip Glass's music in a new way with live string quartet music and large scale holographics.

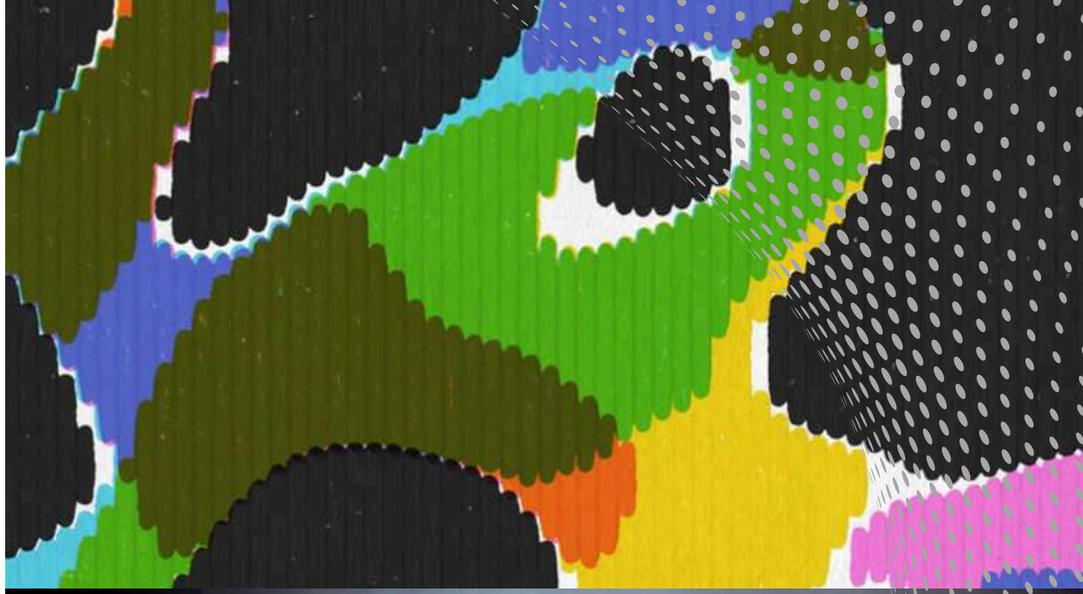
Hologauze is a near-transparent projection surface that allows digital imagery and live performers to appear within the same visual space. Suspended across a stage, the fine mesh becomes almost invisible under controlled lighting. Images projected onto it appear to float in mid-air, while the musicians remain visible behind and through them. The result creates an illusion of depth: animated forms can surround, obscure, reveal and seemingly move through the performers, blurring the boundary between the physical and digital worlds.

Philip Glass's music is made up of fragments that repeat, multiply, mutate and gradually evolve, and the Ligeti Quartet are working with artist **Daniel Savage** to create bespoke immersive visual projections for the show.

Alongside this they showcase a new work by **Ben Nobuto** for string quartet and tape.

Programme (amplified)
Philip Glass: String Quartet No. 4 (22')
Ben Nobuto: New commission (20')
Total: 45 mins
A longer programme is available

This show can be performed in the round (fully immersive) or with the holographics displayed in front of the quartet.
Tech spec available on request



Bells & Whistles

A programme for string quartet, piano and noises galore amplified

The piano: an orchestra for composers; a piece of furniture for the rich; a fabulous plaything for countless hands that tickle, pound, caress and ask endless questions of this gentle beast with its black-and-white teeth.

The Ligeti Quartet and **Zubin Kanga** explore the idea of 'play' through their instruments: playing, as a boundless exploration of sound, for the sheer pleasure of creating and sharing. Every piece here uses the instruments and the musicians' voices in unorthodox ways, making for a deliciously fun concert where all the rules can be broken. The programme spotlights a new work by Danish composer **Jeppe Just Christensen** who specialises in making new instruments.

Diana Soh: Sssh (2018), for string quartet 12’
Nicole Lizée: Another Living Soul (2016) for string quartet & zoom tubes 9’
Jeppe Just Christensen*: Cinema Organ #2 (2027) NEW COMMISSION 25’
interval
Héloïse Werner: Hidden Mechanisms (2024) 10'
Tim Parkinson: Encore: for string quartet for the right hand only (2007) 6’
György Kurtág: Játékók, for solo piano (1973) selections 8’
Angharad Davies*: Four Preparations for String Quartet (2025) 7’
Beat Furrer: Spur (1998) 14'

Alternative works:
Hilda Paredes: Cotidales (2001) for piano quintet 18’
Bent Sørensen: Rosenbad - Papillons (2013) for piano quintet 24’
Niels Rosing-Schow*: String Quartet No. 1 - Movements to Hear: in Your Body, in Your Ears, in Your Mind (2025) 20’
Hans Abrahamsen: Light and Airy - High in the Sky Singing (2012) from String Quartet no. 4 6’

* works written for Ligeti Quartet or Zubin Kanga

Pianist, composer and technologist Zubin Kanga

Different Trains

amplified

The Ligeti Quartet celebrate legend **Steve Reich's 90th Birthday** with a special celebratory programme, featuring his best-loved *Different Trains* (presented with optional d&b Soundscape surround sound). They also perform a brand new arrangement of Riley's *Poppy Nogood and the Phantom Band* - a cornerstone recording of the late 60s psychedelic era - for amplified string quartet and d&b Soundscape, alongside accompanying works. In Justė Janulytė's original 2018 work for four string quartets, the groups are placed around the audience, forming a square, whilst the music moves in circular patterns. In this new version, the Ligeti Quartet perform amplified with three pre-recorded layers played back in quadraphonic speaker formation.

Terry Riley: Poppy Nogood and the Phantom Band, for amplified string quartet for optional dnb Soundscape arr. Richard Jones (1969/2024) 22'
Ben Nobuto: New commission **commissioner needed* (approx 20')
interval
Steve Reich: Different Trains 30'

Alternative repertoire

Steve Reich: Triple Quartet (performed with pre-recorded tracks)
Ana Sokolović: Commedia dell'arte
György Kurtág: String Quartets (100th Birthday year in 2026)
John Adams: Book of Alleged Dances (selection)
Justė Janulytė: Circle for a Square (1982) 27'
Pauline Oliveros: 70 Chords for Terry (2005) 5'

Ben Nobuto

Nature's Protest

amplified

The quartet present three new pieces from British composer Blasio Kavuma to sit alongside Cassandra Miller's 'Warbleworks', following four thrushes whose songs follow the harmonic series.

Kaija Saariaho: Nymphéa 'Jardin secret III' (1987) 18'
Neal Farwell: String Quartet No. 2, working title 'Earth Songs' WP? (2024) 20'
interval
Cassandra Miller: Warblework 1. Swainson's Thrush 3'
Blasio: commission tbc 4'
Cassandra Miller: - 2. Hermit Thrush 4'
Blasio: commission tbc 4'
Cassandra Miller: - 3. Wood Thrush
Blasio: commission tbc 4'
Cassandra Miller: - 4. Veery
John Luther Adams: The Wind in High Places (2007) 16'
OR
Wadada Leo Smith: String Quartet No. 5 'In the Diaspora: Earthquakes and Sunrise Missions' (2005) 17'
György Kurtág: Rappel des oiseaux
Cassandra Miller: Leaving

John Adams @ 80

non-amplified

To mark the 80th birthday of John Adams, the Ligeti Quartet presents a programme exploring the breadth of his writing for string quartet.

The programme opens with four movements from *John's Book of Alleged Dances: Judah to Ocean, Pavane: She's So Fine, Habanera and Ständchen: The Little Serenade*. Written for the Kronos Quartet, these miniature character pieces reveal Adams at his most lyrical, playful and unexpectedly tender. Adams described them as "alleged" dances because "the steps for them had yet to be invented", and the music often seems to hover between the familiar and the fantastical.

The first half concludes with Caroline Shaw's *Ritornello 2.sq.2.j.a.*, a 17-minute work inspired by the Baroque ritornello form, in which musical material repeatedly returns in altered guise. Drawing on the instrumental ritornellos of Claudio Monteverdi's L'Orfeo, Shaw allows fragments of music to reappear, dissolve and mutate using the full scope of the instruments to create constantly evolving textures.

The programme culminates in Adams's first String Quartet, written in 2008. Restless, dramatic and fiercely virtuosic, it draws together many strands of his musical language: propulsive rhythmic energy, lyricism and a constant sense of motion and transformation. Intense and exhilarating, it is one of Adams's most compelling chamber works and a fitting centrepiece to this celebration of his music at 80.

John Adams: selected movements from John's Book of Alleged Dances
(Alligator Escalator, Pavane: She's So Fine, Toot Nipple, Stubble Crotchets)
Caroline Shaw: Ritornello 2.sq.2.j.a.
--interval--
John Adams: Strings Quartet No.1

Alternative Repertoire
John Adams*:* John's Book of Alleged Dances (full set of dances)
John Adams: Shaker Loops (original septet version)

Poppy Nogood

amplified

2025 was the 90th Birthday year of Terry Riley, a composer whose catalogue of work continues to influence widely diverse musicians and musical approaches. To celebrate and acknowledge this great composer, the Ligeti Quartet present a brand new arrangement of *Poppy Nogood* - a cornerstone recording of the late 60s psychedelic era - for amplified string quartet and dnb Soundscape, alongside accompanying works.

The quartet have been given exclusive permission from Riley to re-arrange this iconic piece.

The Ligeti Quartet celebrate Riley's contribution to the string quartet canon with a performance of a seminal work, *Cadenza on the Night Plain*, which emerged from his early collaborations with the Kronos Quartet in the 1980s. This partnership became essential to their respective developments and in this piece you can hear the free-wheeling Terry Riley, of extended keyboard improvisations, getting to grips with a form loaded with musical backstory.

Alongside these, they will perform *70 chords for Terry* by Pauline Oliveros, a close contemporary of Riley's, whose approach to listening and improvisation reveals radical new ways of communal music-making.

Terry Riley: Poppy Nogood and the Phantom Band, for amplified string quartet for dnb Soundscape arr. by Richard Jones and sound designer Tim Harrison (1969/2024) 22'
Pauline Oliveros: 70 Chords for Terry (2005) 10'
Justė Janulytė: Circle for a Square (1982) 27'

This concert will be presented in D&B Soundscape.

Nouvelles Études

non-amplified

Nouvelles Études (New Studies) is a collection of 14 works by 14 composers for string quartet, each inspired by one of György Ligeti's Études for piano. They were all performed for the first time at the Aldeburgh Festival 2023 to celebrate the centenary of Ligeti's birth. **Now, the Ligeti Quartet are looking to commission and premiere four remaining composers to complete the set of 18 études.**

Cassie Kinoshi: (b. 1993) Désordre: Sampled 2'-3'
Benoît Delbecq: (b. 1966) Ushant 2'
Xiaoyong Chen: (b. 1955) The blocked and in between: memories of György Ligeti for string quartet 2'38
Franghiz Ali-Zadeh: (b. 1947) Fanfares for Ligeti 3'35"
Manfred Stahnke: (b. 1951) 9th String Quartet: Fragment 3'
Ana Sokolović: (b. 1968) Ungherese (Ghost 3) Part of the Commedia dell'arte 2'
Mandhira de Saram: (b. 1984) Chers Amis 2'30
Elliot Galvin: (b. 1991) Hungarian Metal 2'35
Silvia Fômina: (b. 1962) Vertigo: the unsupportable pleasure 3'
Emily Hazrati: (b. 1998) György's Apprentice 2'30
Sidney Corbett: (b. 1960) Suspended Disbelief 2'20
Nicole Lizée: (b. 1973) Entreflaques 2'
Rolf Hind: (b. 1964) L'Esprit de l'Escalier (d'après no. 13) 3'
Justė Janulytė: (b. 1982) Infinite Column 3'

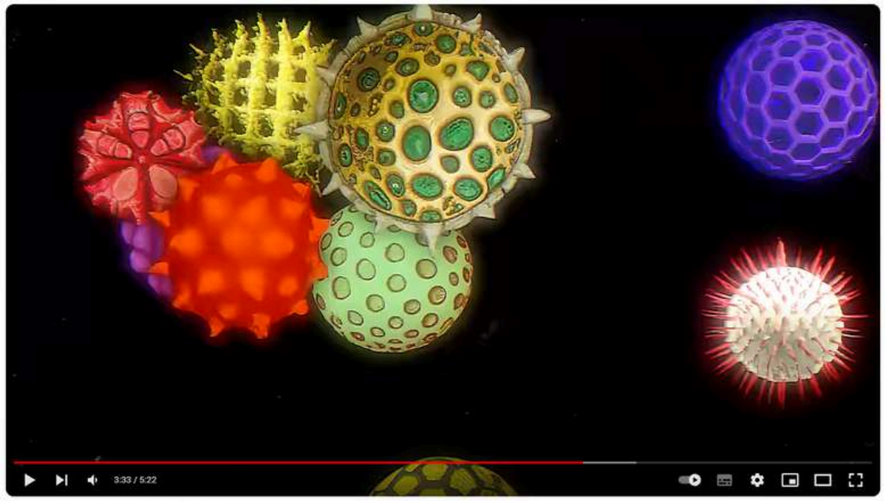
Commissioned by the Ligeti Quartet, with the generous support of Britten Pears Arts, BBC Radio 3, the Vaughan Williams Foundation and Bourgie Hall.

György Ligeti: (b. 1923) String Quartets No. 1 & 2

BBC
NEW MUSIC SHOW
3

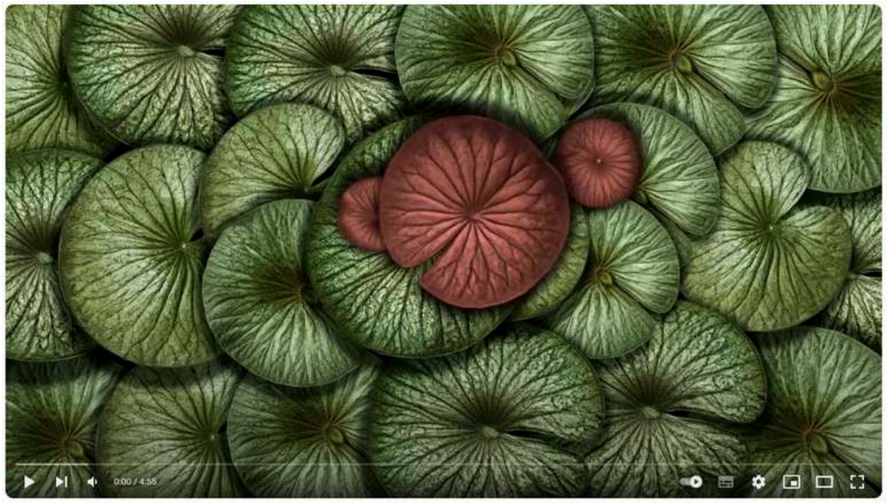
Videos

Ligeti Quartet x Anna Meredith: Tuggemo



Ligeti Quartet x Anna Meredith - Tuggemo

Ligeti Quartet x Anna Meredith: Nautilus



Ligeti Quartet x Anna Meredith - Nautilus

Contact

Ellie Lister, Artist Manager
Ikon Arts Management

eloise@ikonarts.com | +44 (0)20 7354 9199

ikon|arts
www.ikonarts.com