**ČIURLIONIS QUARTET**

 **JONAS TANKEVIČIUS** (1st violin)
**DARIUS DIKŠAITIS** (2nd violin)
**GEDIMINAS DAČINSKAS** (viola)
**ELENA DAUNYTĖ** (cello)

Founded in 1968 and celebrating its 55th creative anniversary in 2023, **the Čiurlionis Quartet**has a reputation of an inventive and technically advanced collective. In 1990, the ensemble was among the first to receive the prestigious Lithuanian National Arts and Culture Prize, the highest award in Lithuania. In 2004, the Quartet captured second prize in the International Chamber Music Competition in Schweinfurt, Germany. In 2005, the Čiurlionis Quartet attracted much attention of the international audiences and media by giving concerts in the EXPO Aichi (Japan), and the presentation of its VCD at the world’s music fair MIDEM 2005 (France).

The Čiurlionis Quartet has performed all across Europe: from Iceland to Russia and from Norway to Italy; it has also toured Canada, UAE, the USA, Mexico, Japan and China. The collective has appeared in such venues as Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Beethovenhaus in Bonn, Schauspielhaus in Berlin, Musée d’Orsay in Paris and many others; has performed at numerous prestigious festivals, including the Pražské Jaro, Berliner Festwochen, Festival van Vlaanderen, Janačkuv Mai, Moravian Autumn, Schleswig-Holstein, Meranofest, Europamusikale and Amadeo in Zagreb. Following its debut at the renowned Royal Festival Hall in London, the reviewer of Musical Opinion, the Britain’s classical music magazine, noted the Quartet’s exquisite interpretation “proving to be a timely reminder to chamber music lovers in London of what genuine quartet playing should be.” The Čiurlionis Quartet regularly brings back home rave press reviews from its international tours (Magyar Hírlap (Hungary), Schwarzwälder Bote (Germany), Bergens Tidende (Norway), etc.).

The repertoire of the Čiurlionis Quartet embraces classical, romantic, 20th and 21st century works. It has presented concert series dedicated to Brahms and Bartók, portrait concerts devoted to Mozart, Shostakovich, Schubert, Robert Schumann and Latin American composers as well as staged concerts as part of Family Series. To mark Michał Kleofas Ogiński’s 250th birth anniversary, the Čiurlionis Quartet performed a special programme not only in Lithuania, but also Italy – Florence, L‘Aquila and Rome. In recent years, the Quartet together with Francesco Mammola (mandolin, Italy) and Nijolė Dorotėja Beniušytė (harpsichord, Italy/Lithuania) presented baroque music programmes in Lithuania and Italy, initiated original classical and jazz music projects in Lithuania, participated in different multi-genre concerts, presented intriguing programmes such as e/q, electronics for quartet; Horrific Music; Fast & Furious, and tango with Tania Naranjo and Minna Weurlander international duo. In 2020, the Quartet performed concert-celebrations to mark Beethoven’s 250th birth anniversary, brought diverse programmes to many Lithuanian cities (Naujoji Akmenė, Lazdijai, Pajevonys, Kelmė, Jašiūnai, Šiauliai, Trakai, Paliesius, etc.).

The Čiurlionis Quartet pays special attention to promulgation of Lithuanian music. It has premiered works by Feliksas Bajoras, Vytautas Barkauskas, Jurgis Juozapaitis, Diana Čemerytė and many other composers. In 2014, the Čiurlionis Quartet opened Kristijonas Donelaitis’ year with premieres of Lithuanian works. It is a regular participant of Gaida Contemporary Music Festival. The Quartet sees its mission in promoting the name of Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis. During 2011 concert season, dedicated to Čiurlionis’ death centenary, the Quartet gave 100 concerts (featuring works by Čiurlionis) throughout Lithuania and abroad completing the tour at the UNESCO hall in Paris. The Quartet regularly performs Čiurlionis’ opuses in Lithuania and abroad.

In recent years the collective represented Lithuanian culture in the USA, UAE, Silk Road festival in China, St Magnus International Festival in Scotland, Pražské Jaro in Czech Republic, as well as at the Lithuanian culture season opening events in Krakow. It took active part in the events of the Centennial of the Restored State of Lithuania at home and abroad – Aalborg (Denmark) and Antwerp (Belgium), as well as international festivals Curonian Spit, Druskininkai Summer with M. K. Čiurlionis, ArsSummerfest, Music in Jašiūnai Manor and many others. In May 2022, the Quartet implemented the Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society’s project *Litvak Music Roads* – a series of concerts in synagogues in Lithuanian towns and cities and presentation of a new vinyl record *In Loving Memory*. It also performed in a synagogue in Krakow (Poland), and in the fall, the Quartet performed with Kurt Van Eeghem at the Ghent Festival in Belgium, where they introduced audience with the phenomenon of Čiurlionis, and in October, the Quartet took part in important governmental events in Japan: the concerts, held on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the friendship between Lithuania and Japan, were attended by the Prime Minister of Lithuania, a delegation of representatives of the cultural and creative industries, Japanese politicians, representatives of the business, academic and cultural world. The year 2023 was also marked by intensive concert activity, participation in international festivals (Thomas Mann, Druskininkai Summer with M. K. Čiurlionis), concerts in various Lithuanian cities, a concert tour of Belgium.

In March 2018, the Quartet’s founding cellist Saulius Lipčius handed over his position to Gleb Pyšniak, a younger generation cellist back to Lithuania from Austria. **In November 2021, young and talented cellist Elena Daunytė has joined the Quartet.**

Large part of the Čiurlionis Quartet’s extensive repertoire has been recorded by the national and international radio stations and recording studios and released as vinyl records and CD’s. Noteworthy are the recordings with a well-known pianist Lev Natochenny, the CD of works by Flemish composer Koos de Muinck (recorded in the Netherlands), the VCD release, etc. The Quartet’s latest recording *In Loving Memory* features works by Anatolijus Šenderovas, Faustas Latėnas and George Gershwin.

The list of Quartet’s stage partners includes a number of renowned musicians such as singers Asta Krikščiūnaitė, Edmundas Seilius, Judita Leitaitė and Dovilė Kazonaitė, French harpist Florence Sitruk, Belgian clarinettist Eddy Vanoosthuyse, pianists Jurgis Karnavičius, Gabrielius Alekna, Petras Geniušas, Gytis Cinauskas, Lev Natochenny, Tania Naranjo, Ralf Taal, Anastasia Injushina and Simona Zajančauskaitė, accordionists Minna Weurlander, Martynas Levickis and Aurelija Matulevičiūtė, folksinger Veronika Povilionienė, saxophonist Petras Vyšniauskas, trumpeter Dovas Lietuvninkas, the Baltic Guitar Quartet and Jazz Island vocal ensemble to name but a few. Members of the Čiurlionis Quartet play unique instruments made by the 18th century Italian masters. The musicians also appear as soloists, collaborate in various ensembles and creative projects.

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**Short biography**

Founded in 1968 and celebrating its 55th creative anniversary in 2023, **the Čiurlionis Quartet**has a reputation of an inventive and technically advanced collective. In 1990, the ensemble was among the first to receive the prestigious Lithuanian National Arts and Culture Prize, the highest award in Lithuania. In 2004, the Quartet captured second prize in the International Chamber Music Competition in Schweinfurt, Germany. The Čiurlionis Quartet attracted much attention of the international audiences and media by giving concerts in the EXPO Aichi (Japan), and at the world’s music fair MIDEM 2005 (France), as well as tours in Canada, UAE, the USA, Mexico, Japan and China.

The collective has appeared in such venues as Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Beethovenhaus in Bonn, Musée d’Orsay in Paris and many others; has performed at numerous prestigious festivals, including the Pražské Jaro, Janačkuv Mai, Moravian Autumn, Schleswig-Holstein, Europamusikale and Amadeo in Zagreb; has taken part in Silk Road festival in China, and St Magnus International Festival in Scotland, as well as at the Lithuanian culture season opening events in Cracow. It took active part in the events of the Centennial of the Restored State of Lithuania at home, in Denmark and Belgium.

The Čiurlionis Quartet has presented concert series dedicated to Brahms and Bartók, portrait concerts devoted to Mozart, Shostakovich, Schubert, Schumann and Latin American composers as well as staged concerts as part of Family Series. To mark Michał Kleofas Ogiński’s 250th birth anniversary, the Čiurlionis Quartet performed a special programme in Lithuania and Italy. Later on, the Quartet together with Francesco Mammola (mandolin, Italy) and Nijolė Dorotėja Beniušytė (harpsichord, Italy/Lithuania) presented baroque music programmes in two aforementioned countries. In Lithuania, the Quartet initiates original classical and jazz music projects, participates in different multi-genre concerts (e/q, electronics for quartet; Horrific Music; Fast & Furious and programmes with Tania Naranjo and Minna Weurlander international duo). In 2020, the Quartet performed concert-celebrations to mark Beethoven’s 250th birth anniversary.

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