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## JULIA FISCHER

### QUARTET



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During this season Julia Fischer will appear with her own quartet for the first time – an idea she was longing for a long time now. The "Julia Fischer Quartet" gets her together with three renowned musicians she appreciates very much: violinist Alexander Sitkovetsky, violinist Nils Mönkemeyer and cellist Benjamin Nyffenegger. These four artists have performed chamber music jointly in different

configurations for a few years now. The idea to establish a string quartet was born in 2010, when all four musicians acquired a broad repertoire during Julia Fischer's own festival at Lake Starnberg. Personalities met then, whose contributions were on an equal footing as much as of utmost responsiveness.

**Alexander Sitkovetsky** was born in Moscow into a prominent family of musicians. The young boy performed his concert debut when he was just about eight years old. He became a student at the Menuhin School the same year and henceforth experienced Lord Menuhin as his inspiring patron and musical partner. Sitkovetsky gave concerts with him during all his school years, including Bach's Double Concerto, Bartók's Duos and Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto under Menuhin's baton. Incidentally he met with Julia Fischer at the Yehudi Menuhin Competition 1995, where they both participated at the age of eleven. Today Alexander Sitkovetsky performs as soloist with major European orchestras. He recorded CDs under the Angel/EMI, Decca and Orfeo labels, including the 2008 recording of Bach's Double concerto with Julia Fischer. "He is moved by a passion of music-making one finds very rarely only." (Julia Fischer)

Artistic brilliance and cutting-edge programming are **Nils Mönkemeyer's** signature features helping him to bring to his instrument, the viola, tremendous attention as well as giving him international renown in a short period of time. Born in Bremen he is much in demand as soloist by significant orchestras world-wide. He won many prizes, for instance at the 2006 Yuri Bashmet Competition in Moscow, the German Music Competition and the British Parkhouse Award in 2009. Exclusively recording for Sony Classical he has produced four CDs already, first two of which received the coveted ECHO Klassik Award right away. Beginning with the 2011/2012 season Nils Mönkemeyer was appointed as professor at the Munich University of Music and Performing Arts becoming Julia Fischer's next-door fellow there. Both were former students at this university and understood each other superbly from the very beginning of their first chamber music projects on. "It was spiritual kinship, personally as well as humanly."

**Benjamin Nyffenegger** studied with Walter Grimmer and Thomas Grossenbach at the Zurich Academy of Arts. He graduated with honors there in 2005. Two years earlier David Zinman, the Music director of the Tonhalle Orchestra, granted him a scholarship for the Aspen Festival and School. He is laureate of several national and international competitions and was appointed as Argovia Artist for the 2007/2008 season. Benjamin Nyffenegger contributes regularly to prestigious festivals throughout the globe and performed as soloist with major European chamber and full-size orchestras. He joined the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich as co-principal cellist in 2008. He met Julia Fischer during joint chamber music projects for the first time in the 2009/2010 season. Benjamin Nyffenegger is playing an instrument of Matteo Goffriller of 1710 which the Karolina Blaberg Stiftung bought for him. "His spontaneity on stage was scary in the most positive sense."