

Elias String Quartet

Sara Bitlloch,
Donald Grant,
Martin Saving,
Marie Bitlloch

The members of the Elias String Quartet all live in England but are originally from France, Scotland and Sweden.

The Quartet was formed in 1998 at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester where they worked regularly with the late Dr. Christopher Rowland. They also spent a year studying at the Hochschule in Cologne with the Alban Berg quartet. Other mentors in the Quartet's studies include members of the Amadeus, Endellion and Vermeer Quartets, Hugh Maguire, György Kurtág, Gábor Takács-Nagy, Henri Dutilleux, Paul Katz, Rainer Schmidt, Kim Kashkashian and Milan Skampa. The Quartet received second prize and the Sidney Griller prize at the 9th London International String Quartet Competition in 2003 (as the Johnston String Quartet) and were finalists in the Paolo Borciani Competition in 2005.

They have performed extensively in the UK, and in France, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Italy, Australia and the USA, in venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, Snape Maltings Concert Hall, Kettle's Yard, Bridgewater Hall, Fairfield Halls, Stockholm Concert Hall, the Auditorium du Louvre-Paris, and Jordan Hall, Boston, and have broadcast live on National Radio in the UK, France, Australia and Sweden. They look forward to a residency at the Wigmore Hall, London, beginning in October 2009.

They have performed alongside artists such as Andrew Marriner, Ralph Kirshbaum, Joan Rogers, Mark Padmore, Roger Vignoles, Michel Dalberto, Peter Cropper, Bernard Gregor-Smith, Robin Ireland, Adrian Brendel, Anthony Marwood and with the Endellion, Navarra and Vertavo Quartets.

The Quartet has released a disc of Mendelssohn Quartets with Sanctuary Classics, a disc of French harp music with harpist Sandrine Chatron for the French label Ambroisie, Goehr's Piano Quintet for Meridian Records, and recently came out with a CD on the Wigmore Live label.

In 2005 the Elias were appointed resident String Quartet at Sheffield's Music in the Round as part of the Ensemble 360, taking over from the Lindsay Quartet. The Ensemble has a series at the Wigmore Hall, London. Ensemble 360 has released discs of Mozart's, Beethoven's and Spohr's chamber music with Sanctuary Classics and Nimbus. They left Sheffield in 2009 to concentrate on the Quartet.

The Elias Quartet were recently selected to join BBC Radio 3's New Generation Artists scheme. They will shortly release a CD with quartets by Benjamin Britten. Future engagements include concerts at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam and Carnegie Hall, New York.