

A black and white portrait of four musicians, the Animato Quartet, against a dark background. On the left, a woman with long, wavy hair is shown in profile, her hands resting on her head. In the center, a man with dark, wavy hair looks directly at the camera. In the foreground, a woman with long dark hair and bangs rests her chin on her hand, looking towards the camera. On the right, a man with curly hair is shown in profile, looking towards the center. The text 'WEBERN | BARTÓK | BRITTEN' is centered in the lower half, followed by 'Longing' and 'Animato Quartet' in a larger font.

**WEBERN | BARTÓK | BRITTEN**  
**Longing**  
**Animato Quartet**



**WEBERN | BARTÓK | BRITTEN**

Longing

**Animato Quartet**

**Inga Våga Gaustad** violin

**Tim Brackman** violin

**Elisa Karen Tavenier** viola

**Pieter de Koe** cello

**ANTON WEBERN** (1883 – 1945)

[1] **Langsamer Satz** (1905)

10:05

**BÉLA BARTÓK** (1881 – 1945)

**String Quartet No. 1 in A Minor, Op. 7, Sz. 40** (1908–1909)

[2] I. Lento

9:26

[3] II. Allegretto

8:46

[4] III. Introduzione (Allegro) – Allegro vivace

12:17

**BENJAMIN BRITTEN** (1913 – 1976)

**String Quartet No. 1 in D Major, Op. 25** (1941)

[5] I. Andante sostenuto - Allegro vivo

9:14

[6] II. Allegretto con slancio

3:01

[7] III. Andante calmo

11:23

[8] IV. Molto vivace

3:52

Total time 68:08



## Animato Quartet – Longing

After falling in love with the quartets of Britten and Bartók, we developed a long-standing desire to record these masterpieces. For our debut CD *Longing* we chose their first quartets, as well as Webern's first string quartet work *Langsamer Satz*. All three remarkable works resonate with a profound and unmistakable sense of longing. We felt a sense of kinship with these composers as they, like us, were still discovering their distinct style and identity when creating these works.

In *Langsamer Satz* Webern beautifully showcases the height of longing for love in the romantic 19th century. Bartók continues this romantic idiom, and goes on to develop the new sounds of the early 20th century, a period from which we draw so much of our own passions. Finally, Britten continues to explore the sound and identity of the 20th century in his own distinctive colour palette. These works not only keep us on the edge of our seats, but also express a beautiful longing, one which we recognize in ourselves, and one we want to share with our listeners.

## WEBERN

A romantic hike through the pastoral Viennese hillside with his future wife is the inspiration behind Webern's *Langsamer Satz*. The movement is a perfect example of the late romantic musical era which Webern, like his mentor Schönberg, would turn upside down just four years after this composition.

Little of this piece foretells Webern's future as one of the most influential voices of the second Viennese school with its new twelve-tone technique, making it an interesting step in his evolution as a composer. Indeed, *Langsamer Satz* stands in stark contrast with Webern's later works; heartfelt and intuitive, it bears a strong resemblance to Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht*. With this piece, we are invited into an intimate story, one of a young Webern longing for his life to start with his new love, knowing his greatest years were still to come.

## BARTÓK

Bartók wrote his first string quartet fueled by his unrequited love for the violinist Stefi Geyer. This quartet came on the heels of his first violin concerto, written as a gift to Geyer, and one she refused, much to his dismay.

From this reserve of tender yearning, Bartók recounts the full journey from pain, through cautious hope and finally into a reconciliation with the value of life beyond longing. The opening of the quartet is a heartbreaking duet between the two violins sharing a counterpoint of long romantic lines, a movement filled with pain and desire for an impossible love. Throughout the second movement, Bartók tries to break free of his sorrow, tentatively exploring a more lively, dancing tonality.

In the third movement he breaks free of his sorrow to find joy in the folk rhythms of his Hungarian roots. This marks the turning point of his music, changing from late romanticism to his unique musical style and the beginning of what would become his life's work — putting Hungarian folk music on the map.



## **BRITTEN**

The uniqueness with which this piece begins is well-matched by its singular colour palette. Such originality makes it hard to believe Britten struggled all his life to find his musical and personal identity.

On his shoulders rested the weight of his imposing predecessors Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. Could he be the fourth B? Unfortunately, his adoration for Beethoven and disdain of Brahms made it difficult to step out of their immense shadows and find his own voice.

Growing up in tumultuous times, and being a pacifist during World War II, he did not fit in with English society, prompting his move to America with his partner Peter Pears in 1939. This quartet is his last important work of this American period.

In this piece we hear the deep influence the structure of the late Beethoven quartets had on him. Nevertheless, Britten finds freedom within this framework to develop his unique sound and demonstrate his own identity.

## Animato Quartet

**The most promising young string quartet in the Netherlands, the Animato Quartet is known for its passionate, spontaneous playing and powerful on-stage presence.**

**Founded in 2013, their programs combine both classical pieces drawn from the string quartet repertoire and contemporary compositions.**

*"Four top players with a vibrant energy, they captivate you from the first note! [...] This quartet is the great promise of the Dutch string quartets".*

– Dutch Classical Talent Award

Their compelling performances have earned Animato recognition on international platforms and in major competitions. They have been awarded the prestigious Dutch Kersjes Prize, both first prize and audience prize at Germany's Kammermusikpreis Gut Hasselburg, first prize at the Irene Steels-Wilsing Foundation Competition, a special award at the Joseph Joachim International Chamber Music Competition in Weimar, and third prize at the Trondheim International Chamber Music Competition.

The Animato Quartet has performed on all major Dutch stages as well as renowned international venues including the Philharmonie de Paris, Luxembourg Philharmonie, and Leipzig's Gewandhaus. They have also performed at festivals in Portugal, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, France, Brazil, and Canada. A two-week tour of Indonesia, presenting concerts and workshops in Jakarta, Ambon, and Makassar, is a recent highlight of their career so far.

The mentorship of Marc Danel has been central to their artistic development during their time as Artists in Residence at the Dutch String Quartet Academy (NSKA). They have also benefited from the musical guidance of Eberhard Feltz, Hatto Beyerle, various members of the Quatuor Ebène, Anner Bylsma, Jan-Willem de Vriend, Alfred Brendel, Gerhard Schulz, and Vera Beths.

The Animato Quartet performs on exceptional instruments: a 1776 Tommaso Eberle violin (Naples) generously on loan from Dextra Musica, a 1797 Johannes Theodorus Cuypers violin (The Hague), a 2017 Daniel Royé viola (Amsterdam), and a 1710 Pieter Rombouts cello (Amsterdam).





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