

Quatuor Diotima presents: **Metamorphosis Ligeti**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 2023, Baarn, The Netherlands
[Allie van Wassenaer-Summers, PR Manager](#)
+31 35 548 07 26

Physical Release
MARCH 2023

(February 2023 on [pentatonemusic.com](#))

Digital Release Date
3 MARCH 2023

Released as 1 CD and in digital formats for
streaming and high-resolution downloads

Audio Resolution for digital files:
48/24 PCM Stereo & 44.1/16 PCM Stereo

Press Link: [Quatuor Diotima: Metamorphosis Ligeti](#)
(please log in to [Pentatone's B2B portal](#) to access)



PTC 5187061

AVANT-GARDE CLASSICS FOR STRING QUARTET

Quatuor Diotima makes its Pentatone debut with a recording of Györgi Ligeti's string quartets. While the second quartet from 1968 is an avant-garde classic, the first from 1953-54, "Metamorphoses nocturnes", is often nicknamed Bartók's seventh quartet, pointing out the continuity between these two Hungarian master composers. Despite moments of nostalgia, it already possesses the ferocious, adventurous nature of the later quartet. In-between these two iconoclast works, the *Andante and Allegretto* from 1950 offers an intimate moment of repose.

The members of Diotima long postponed recording Ligeti's string quartets, intimidated by their significance in music history and the demands they place on the players, but now the time has come to pursue this fascinating project and share it with the world. The quartet is fascinated by the cinematic qualities of Ligeti's music and its use in films, including Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The album cover pays homage to that iconic movie.

Quatuor Diotima is one the most in-demand chamber ensembles in the world today, and has worked in close collaboration with several of the greatest composers of the late twentieth century. Reflected in the mirror of today's music, the quartet projects a new light onto the masterpieces of the 19th and 20th centuries.

PENTATONE PRESS RELEASE

"For many years we had to postpone recording the Ligeti quartets, terrified as we probably were by the weight of the task at hand. It's wasn't just the technical or the instrumental challenges which kept us away, however formidable they may be, but it was mostly a fear of risk, facing music that's on the edge of utopia.

"It was of course the second quartet which accompanied us first, this work being one of the foundational masterpieces of the aesthetics of the 20th century, and of our quartet, having perceived immediately its fierce acquaintance with silence, the terseness of its inflamed expression, and the secret flow of its architecture. Five movements form this quartet - or rather, five essays on movement, each articulated following a logic of contrast and opposition worthy of a vivid dream. And yet, in a way, water permeates through every texture: Ligeti founds, then melts, smelts, his own art, its own rules, takes leave, erases all references to folk music, and last but not least makes iridescent each instrumental entrance by a sort of... law of contagion: anything emitted by an instrument is transmitted, affecting and infecting the other three, reaching inevitably all four voices: from this point on, absolute dizziness, no marks nor borders, a sense of stormy similitude, the intuition of a nearly deaf and unwitting twinning and bond between the instruments.

"How many works have been composed under the spell of this masterpiece? How many of us performers and composers were in shock at this great unfolding of the alphabet of the future?

"Then came the first quartet. Another unavoidable masterpiece, though often referred to, as a "mot d'esprit", as the 7th quartet by Bartók. Of course, Ligeti's great musical fellow countryman is ever present in these pages, through the use of folk music principles - but here the instruments shock and electrify each other, through a kinesis made out of ruptures, reaching from the burlesque to the traumatic. Performing this quartet requires a feverishness that's often impressive even to us, a risk taking, in order to follow and provoke these "nocturnal metamorphoses", not only invoking Bartók but also the vertiginous drawings of a Mauritz Escher, created from an invisibly simple series of patterns. This music feels like metal, with its gleam, its thickness, its secret style. It was this recording project which brought us to being acquainted with the Andante and Allegretto, a work from his student years bearing a sleek melancholy, a dredged up sense of grace. The few "forte" moments stem out of a taste for folk music with which he had affinity then. The academic format one may find here is relieved of its duty in the first quartet, composed three years later in 1953.

"It was time for us to dive, for, as Ligeti said after getting the Polar Music Prize: 'it's like you're entering a river. And the river is very fast flowing. And then you let... you... go with the river. And this was my whole life with music.'" - Quatuor Diotima

From 10 February 2023, the following tracks are available through pre-order on [Apple Music](#), [Amazon](#), [YouTube Music](#) and [Qobuz](#):

- Track 6 - String Quartet No. 1, "Métamorphoses nocturnes": VI. Andante tranquillo
- Track 13 - Andante and Allegretto for String Quartet: I. Andante cantabile
- Track 14 - Andante and Allegretto for String Quartet: II. Allegretto poco capriccioso

About Quatuor Diotima

Yun-Peng Zhao, *Violin*
Léo Marillier, *Violin*
Franck Chevalier, *Viola*
Pierre Morlet, *Violoncello*

The Quatuor Diotima is one of the most in-demand chamber ensembles in the world today; it was formed in 1996 by graduates of the Paris national conservatory (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris).

The quartet's name evokes a double musical significance: Diotima is at once an allegory of German romanticism - Friederich Hölderlin gives the name to the love of his life in his novel Hyperion- and a rallying cry for the music of our time, brandished by Luigi Nono in his composition *Fragmente-Stille*, an Diotima.

The Quatuor Diotima has worked in close collaboration with several of the greatest composers of the late twentieth century, notably Pierre Boulez and Helmut Lachenmann. The quartet regularly commissions new works from the most brilliant composers of our time, including Toshio Hosokawa, Miroslav Srnka, Alberto Posadas, Mauro Lanza, Gérard Pesson, Rebecca Saunders and Tristan Murail. Reflected in the mirror of today's music, the quartet projects a new light onto the masterpieces of the 19th and 20th centuries, especially Beethoven, Schubert, the Second Viennese School (Schoenberg, Berg and Webern), as well as Janáček, Debussy, Ravel and Bartók.

In the quartet's rich discography one finds amongst others, notably, the recording of all six string quartets by Béla Bartók (*Naïve*, 2019), their interpretations of the Second Viennese School (*Naïve*, 2016) and the definitive version of the *Livre pour Quatuor* by Pierre Boulez (on Megadisc). Their recordings are regularly praised and awarded by the international musical press: French magazine *Diapason's* *Diapason d'Or* (five awards including two Best of the Year), *Classica* (Best of the Year), *Télérama*, *Gramophone* (Editor's Choice), *The Strad*, and many others.

In 2016 the quartet launched the "Diotima Collection" devoted to the works of major composers of our time. In 2021, the quartet released three musical portraits of Gérard Pesson, Enno Poppe and Stefano Gervasoni and one of Mauricio Sotelo. On the occasion of the centenary of György Ligeti's birth in 2023 the quartet releases a monograph devoted to the composer.

The Diotima Quartet was the first quartet in residence at Radio France from 2019 to 2021.

After a 14-year territorial residency in the Centre Val-de-Loire region, the Diotima Quartet has found a new home in the Grand Est region, sharing strong cultural links with Germany and Switzerland, which resonate with the quartet's repertoire and partners in Europe. This residency allows the quartet to develop its Academy in partnership with the Cité Musicale-Metz inviting young composers and string quartets, a chamber music series in Strasbourg as well as an educational residency at

PENTATONE

PRESS RELEASE

the Ecole Nationale de Lutherie in Mirecourt, while amplifying the presence of chamber music throughout the region, of which the string quartet is one of the emblematic disciplines.

Very active in teaching and training young artists, the Diotima Quartet has recently been an Associate Artist at the Aix-en-Provence Festival Academy, an Artist in Residence at the University of Chicago and has been invited to give masterclasses at the University of California in Los Angeles, the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris, the Casa del Quartetto in Reggio Emilia and York University.

The Quatuor Diotima appears regularly in the world's finest halls and concert series. They perform this season notably at Philharmonie de Paris, Berlin Philharmonie, Cologne Philharmonie, Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, Konserthuset Stockholm, Madrid Círculo de Cámara, Lugano Musica, Granada Festival and Vienna Konzerthaus amongst others. The quartet will also be on tour in Japan, Taiwan and in South Korea and will perform in the most important festivals for contemporary music such as Wien Modern, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, IRCAM and Musica Strasbourg.

New works to be premiered this season include amongst others a concerto for string quartet and orchestra by Bruno Mantovani with the Orchestre National de France, two works for string quartet and electronics by Mauro Lanza and Sasha Blondeau, as well as new pieces by Lisa Streich, Olga Neuwirth and Misato Mochizuki.

The Quatuor Diotima is subsidized by the French ministry of Culture and the Région Grand Est and receives support from the SACEM, the Institut Français, the Spedidam, the Adami, as well as private donors.

The Quatuor Diotima is a member of the PROFEDIM, Futurs Composés and FEVIS professional organizations.

[Website](#) - [Facebook](#) - [Twitter](#)

About Pentatone

One of the leading classical music labels in the world, Pentatone presents a diverse range of world-class artists, and is dedicated to premium quality productions captured in exceptional sound. The label works together with today and tomorrow's leading artists to provide timeless recordings of core, fringe, and lesser-known repertoire, with Pentatone's uncompromising attention to the best possible quality in artistry, design and recording technology.

The label was founded in the Netherlands in 2001 by three former Philips Classics executives, with the ambition to offer classical music in the highest quality including surround sound. In its first years, Pentatone engaged Mikhail Gorbachev, Bill Clinton and Sophia Loren, in a Grammy-winning recording of Prokofiev's *Peter & the Wolf* (released in Spanish with Antonio Banderas), with Kent

PENTATONE PRESS RELEASE

Nagano conducting the Russian National Orchestra. Another early success was a recording of the official music performed during the wedding ceremony of the then Dutch crown prince (now king) Willem-Alexander to Máxima Zorreguieta. *The Music from the Royal Wedding* sold more than 75,000 copies, thereby attaining the unique “triple platinum” status in the Netherlands.

During its first decade, the label released several award-winning recordings with violinist Julia Fischer and several complete cycles: Beethoven’s symphonies conducted by Philippe Herreweghe, Beethoven’s piano sonatas performed by Mari Kodama, and Bruckner’s symphonies under the baton of Marek Janowski. Violinist Arabella Steinbacher left her mark on these years and continues with several acclaimed recordings. Later, Pentatone recorded Wagner’s ten mature operas, the only such label to take on this task in the 21st century.

From 2013, with a new management team, the label focused on embracing the digital era and expanding its repertoire. New artists and ensembles defined the label’s second decade, including conductors Vladimir Jurowski, René Jacobs and Esa-Pekka Salonen, singers Piotr Beczala, Lisette Oropesa, Javier Camarena, Ian Bostridge and Magdalena Kožená, pianists Pierre-Laurent Aimard and Francesco Piemontesi, cellist Alisa Weilerstein, as well as the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig and the Czech Philharmonic.

In recent years, Pentatone has won multiple awards. In 2017, John Corigliano’s *The Ghosts of Versailles* won Best Opera Recording and Best Engineered Album at the 59th GRAMMY Awards. Two years later, the premiere recording of the Mason Bates opera, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, won a GRAMMY for Best Opera Recording. Pentatone was awarded “Label of the Year” in 2019 by Gramophone Magazine and in 2020 by the International Classical Music Awards. Pentatone’s third decade promises to be even more exciting and innovative as we expand our growing and diverse roster of artists, producing the most thrilling recordings in the world.

[Website](#) - [Facebook](#) - [Twitter](#) - [Instagram](#)