



# DUDOK QUARTET AMSTERDAM

## REFLECTIONS

**SHOSTAKOVICH** *String Quartet No 5, Op 92* and  
*Préludes Op 34* (arr. Dudok String Quartet)  
**BACEWICZ** *String Quartet No 4*

Rubicon Classics RCD1099  
Release date 25 November 2022

---

*"We are continuously searching for the best ways to reflect the music from the past with a new meaning, and for a contemporary audience."*

Dudok Quartet Amsterdam

Having focused on single composers for its last two sets of albums (Haydn and Brahms), Dudok Quartet Amsterdam returns to the format of thought-provoking pairings and collections of repertoire that established its early reputation. For this, its second recording for Rubicon Classics, string quartets by **Dmitri Shostakovich** and **Grażyna Bacewicz** are linked by the Quartet's own arrangement of a selection of Shostakovich's **Preludes Op 34**, originally written for piano.

Both composers lived and worked in a time and social environment of repression and control and it is therefore easy to view their music in a predominantly historical context. The Dudok approach is always to reach deep into the scores and excavate every harmonic, melodic and rhythmic aspect of the music in their quest to find personal meaning and express their feelings about the music in the most authentic way; *"The music we play is never old or new, but always relevant and present."*

The lifelong complexity of Shostakovich's relationship with the Soviet authorities inevitably influenced his musical language, the truth of which poses challenges to players and listeners alike. The fifth quartet demands intense physical, emotional and intellectual stamina from the players; its quality is symphonic and its musical language signals growing references to personal (not least the composer's relationship with his student Galina Ustvolskaya) rather than public matters. Like several of his works written in the post-war years, it was not published or performed until after the death of Stalin in 1953 when a cultural thaw began.

Polish violinist and composer Grażyna Bacewicz wrote her fourth, prize-winning string quartet in the same year as Shostakovich's fifth (1951) and is considered a powerfully original, imaginative and independent spirit who paid little attention to post-war Soviet artistic dogma beyond further development of her interest in folk music. Stylistically her seven masterly works in the string quartet oeuvre vary widely and show her as a composer constantly renewing herself and affirming the autonomy of music to speak in its own language. Here, the fourth offers an abundance of virtuosic fun and rhythmic exuberance.

It was this playfulness that inspired the Dudoks to arrange for string quartet a selection of Shostakovich's vibrant and polished Preludes for piano Opus 34 to link the two main works on the album. In addition to immersing themselves in the works through research, reflection, rehearsal and recording, the act of arranging music for different instruments provides a key to even deeper understanding of the musical language and inner workings of these two major mid-20<sup>th</sup> century quartets.

This recording has been part-funded by the Quartet's 2018 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award, which also supported its recent two-volume recordings of Brahms complete string quartets (Rubicon) and Haydn's Opus 20 quartets (Resonus).

On 23 October Dudok Quartet Amsterdam performs live at London's Wigmore Hall with a programme that includes the Shostakovich String Quartet No 5. <https://wigmore-hall.org.uk/whats-on/dudok-quartet-amsterdam-202210231130>

**Press information: Debra Boraston at BBT**

**T. 01424 883307 M. 07989 434388 E. [debra@henrymoorestudio.co.uk](mailto:debra@henrymoorestudio.co.uk)**

**W. [www.bbtrust.com](http://www.bbtrust.com)**



## DUDOK QUARTET AMSTERDAM <https://dudokquartet.com>

Judith van Dreel violin · Marleen Wester violin · Marie-Louise de Jong viola · David Faber cello

**Reinvention** is at the heart of the Dudok Quartet's quest to make all music relevant in contemporary society. It is committed to crafting unique and eclectic programmes in order to engage with its audiences in adventurous and imaginative ways and reveal new connections in music. These include its own arrangements of music way off the beaten track and not originally intended for string quartet, as presented in [Signature Sessions](#) online. Here music of many different styles and eras, from Mingus to Messiaen, are transformed and complemented by the core string quartet repertoire. In the same vein the Quartet's critically acclaimed recordings have been notable for their eclectic groupings of composers within themes such as innovation, use of counterpoint, loss and loneliness.

- **Repertoire:** ranges from Ligeti, Shostakovich and Weinberg to Mendelssohn, Mozart, Haydn, Brahms and Beethoven. The Quartet constantly explores new pathways and connections in music. They regularly perform their own arrangements of pieces including Gesualdo, des Prez and Brahms.
- **Collaboration:** recent partners have included Olga Paschenko, Pieter Wispelwey, Vladimir Mendelssohn, Erik Bosgraaf, Mames Oesi and Annelien Van Wauwe.
- **Performances:** major European venues and festivals including Vienna Konzerthaus, Beethoven Haus Bonn, Wigmore Hall, De Doelen, BBC Proms, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Heidelberg String Quartet Festival and the Amsterdam String Quartet Biennale, as well as appearing regularly at Amsterdam Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw. US debut January 2018 at Northwestern University Winter Chamber Music Festival, New York debut at the Park Avenue Armory and digital concerts for the Washington Library of Congress and Fontana Chamber Arts Kalamazoo. Other recent highlights include debuts in Sweden and Malaysia.
- **Recordings:** first recording on Resonus Classics in 2015, *Métamorphoses*, explored theme of musical innovation through works by Ligeti, Haydn and Brahms and was awarded Editor's Choice in Gramophone, with the Quartet praised by The Guardian for its '*lithe, lively sound and alert sense of structure and detail*'. Second highly acclaimed release, *Labyrinth*, explored the use of counterpoint in works by Mozart, Ligeti and Bach. The third, *Solitude*, (2018) features works by Mendelssohn, Weinberg and Shostakovich curated around the theme of loss and loneliness – '*an intense listening experience that will have you on the edge of your seat*' (The Strad). For the two-volume recording of Haydn's Opus 20 Quartets, the Dudoks researched instrumental set-up and commissioned classical bows (part-funded by the Borletti-Buitoni Trust award). For their debut recording on Rubicon Classics, the Quartet chose the complete Brahms quartets and quintet No. 2.
- **Projects:** include world premiere of Kaija Saariaho's opera *Only the Sound Remains* with Philippe Jaroussky and Dutch National Opera and a collaboration with director Rosabel Huguet re-imagining Beethoven's Op 132 String Quartet for children. Entitled "*Quartet! A card game with Beethoven*" the Quartet takes the project to venues including the Vienna Konzerthaus, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, Flagey and De Doelen as part of its ongoing commitment to education and outreach work.
- **Commissions:** include works by Joey Roukens, Peter Vigh, Theo Loevendie and a new piece in progress by Bushra El-Turk.
- **Authors:** the Dudoks initiate creative collaboration with a range of artists outside of the classical music genre and are currently on a mission to engage acclaimed authors to write essays with connections to music. The first two published essays are from renowned Dutch writers Jan Brokken and Anna Enquist.
- **Inception:** First met as members of the Ricciotti Ensemble, a Dutch street symphony orchestra. Studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne with the Alban Berg Quartet and later at the Dutch String Quartet Academy with Marc Danel of the Danel Quartet. Other important mentors include Eberhard Feltz, Peter Cropper (Lindsay Quartet), Luc-Marie Aguera (Quatuor Ysaÿe) and Stefan Metz.
- **Name:** the Quartet is named after celebrated Dutch architect Willem Marinus Dudok (1884-1974) who was from a musical family and also composed in his spare time; "*I feel deeply the common core of music and architecture: after all, they both derive their value from the right proportions.*"
- **Awards:** 2018 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award, Bordeaux International String Quartet Competition, Joseph Joachim International Chamber Music Competition Weimar and the prestigious Dutch Kersjes Prize (2014).
- **Instruments:** generously on loan from the Dutch Musical Instrument Foundation (NMF); violins by Francesco Goffriller and Vincenzo Panormo, viola by Jean Baptiste Lefèbvre (1760) and cello by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume. Classical bows, made by Luis Emilio Rodríguez Carrington, were commissioned with the help of a private sponsor, Stichting Eigen Muziekinstrument, Kersjes Foundation and the Borletti-Buitoni Trust.