



## Sacconi Quartet Biography

### String Quartet

*"An exceptional ensemble...a unanimous sense of musical breath and a meticulous attention to detail."* Musical Opinion

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Ben Hancox *violin*  
Hannah Dawson *violin*  
Robin Ashwell *viola*  
Cara Berridge *cello*

The award-winning Sacconi Quartet is recognised for its unanimous and compelling ensemble, consistently communicating with a fresh and imaginative approach. Formed in 2001, its four founder members continue to demonstrate a shared passion for string quartet repertoire, infectiousy reaching out to audiences with their energy and enthusiasm. The Sacconi is Quartet in Association at the Royal College of Music.

2017 saw the release of three highly praised new CDs by the Sacconi Quartet: *In Damascus*, their CD of music by Jonathan Dove including *In Damascus*, commissioned by the Quartet, and featuring Mark Padmore and Charles Owen; Graham Fitkin's complete string quartets; and three of John McCabe's quintets, featuring the composer on piano, horn player David Pyatt, and baritone Roderick Williams. *In Damascus* hit the Classical Top Ten, and was chosen as one of Gramophone Magazine's 2018 Recordings of the Year.

2018-19 plans include a cruise to the Arctic circle, performing fifteen concerts with artists including with Simon Rowland-Jones and Tim Horton; two Wigmore Hall concerts (the first with Daniel Hope and Freddy Kempf); the Irish premiere of *In Damascus* with tenor Robin Tritschler; a tour of the rarely heard John Ireland Sextet with Robert Plane and Alec Frank-Gemmill; and a new commission by Judith Bingham. 2018 saw the eleventh year of the Sacconi Chamber Music Festival in Folkestone, with Graham Fitkin as composer in residence and collaborations with the London Bridge Trio, Moray Welsh and African trio Chesaba.

In Summer 2015 the quartet launched HEARTFELT, their most innovative project to date. A radical re-interpretation of Beethoven's iconic String Quartet in A minor opus 132, HEARTFELT pushed the boundaries of chamber music through combining sound, light and touch, for a truly unique performance in which audience members connected with each performer's heartbeat through holding robotic 'hearts'. [www.heartfelt.org.uk](http://www.heartfelt.org.uk)

The name Sacconi Quartet comes from the outstanding twentieth-century Italian luthier and restorer Simone Sacconi, whose book *The Secrets of Stradivari* is considered an indispensable reference for violin makers. Robin is indebted to Ellen Solomon for the use of his viola. Ben, Hannah & Cara have all been generously loaned their instruments by the Royal Society of Musicians, a charity which helps musicians in need, for which they are extremely grateful.

The Sacconi Quartet celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2021.

#### November 2018

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