



The **Kukuruz Quartet** is a cutting-edge ensemble that has been pushing the boundaries of contemporary music since its inception.

The four musicians are equally at home on theatre stages, concert halls, in clubs, bars and studios. It was founded in 2014 in a corn field – «Kukuruz» means corn in several languages, and the Swiss-German expression «Mais machen» (literally «to make corn») means to stir up mischief. The four pianists were first seen and heard making their contribution to a production by musician and theatre director Ruedi Häusermann at the Zurich Schauspielhaus. The quartet was performing on four so-called «well-prepared one-hand pianos», having spent long sessions exploring different preparations and constructions. From the outset, the group has been engaged with classical music, jazz and improvisation. In the same year it was founded, Kukuruz also started its involvement with Julius Eastman and his musical works. The pianists went on an extensive tour through Switzerland, Germany and Holland, where they performed in concert halls, clubs, bars and breweries and made Eastman's pieces accessible to a wide audience.

The Kukuruz Piano Quartet is a close-knit group of divergent artistic personalities, emergent from training in disparate musical fields: Simone Keller is a versatile pianist in contemporary and classical music, Philip Bartels is an experimental theatre stage director, Duri Collenberg studied composition in Amsterdam and Lukas Rickli has broad experience in improvisation. In 2017, the Kukuruz Quartet had a memorable performance at documenta 14, where they presented pieces from Eastman in the prestigious Athenian concert hall, Megaro Mousikis, receiving a heartfelt standing ovation from the audience.

Their recording «Piano Interpretations» received recognition in The New York City Jazz Record's «Best of 2018 / Albums of the Year.» It was also included in the list of «Best Albums of the Year» by the Boston Globe and mentioned by music critic Peter Margasak of the Chicago Reader in his «Favorite Albums of 2018» list.

The Kukuruz Quartet had the honor of performing in multiple presentations of the theater and dance production «24 Bilder», directed by Boris Nikitin, at the renowned Wiener Festwochen and in 2023, the Kukuruz Quartet released their latest CD, «Breathing-Remembering-Dissolving» through Innova Records, with the album being part of a Bay area pilot project supported by Innova Records and Stanford University:

<https://simonekeller.bandcamp.com/album/breathing-remembering-dissolving>