

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia's critically acclaimed string quartet



ORAVA QUARTET
Returns with its second album
appearing on the famed Deutsche
Grammophon imprint

ORAWA

*** No.1 on both the ARIA Classical
and Crossover/Classical charts ***

“Performances are as tight and committed as you’d expect from these guys... dazzling... It has, as they say, been worth the wait.” [4 STARS]
- *Limelight* 2023 (album review)

Listen/stream/buy/download the album on all platforms: <https://uma.lnk.to/OravaOrawaPC>

Title track *ORAWA* available here: <https://uma.lnk.to/OrawaKilar>

Following the release of its critically acclaimed debut album on Deutsche Grammophon (Australia) in 2018, the Brisbane-based **Orava Quartet** is set to release its second album on the famed label. Consisting of members Daniel Kowalik, David Dalseno (violins), Thomas Chawner (viola), and Karol Kowalik (cello), the second album is titled *Orawa*, and is a personal tribute to the group's late mentor Uzi Wiesel.

The title of the new album is named after a work by Polish composer Wojciech Kilar (1932-2013), which appears on this album, and was introduced to brothers Daniel and Karol Kowalik by their father during their childhood, becoming such an intrinsic part of their formative years that it inspired the quartet's name.

Also on this album is Dmitri Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 6 in G major, Op. 101, which was one of the first works the Oravas performed as an ensemble back in 2006, under the careful guidance of their late teacher Wiesel. This quartet complements their performance of Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 8 in C minor, Op. 110, which appeared on their first album and was reviewed as 'hair-raising' by *The Daily Telegraph*.

Two works by Czech composer Erwin Schulhoff (1894-1942) continues the Eastern European flavour, featuring his String Quartet No 1 and *Five Pieces for String Quartet* - both written in the tumultuous

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post-War haze of Europe in the 1920s. Fast-forwarding to a century later, the album is rounded out with four works by Melbourne-based composer Luke Howard (b. 1978), whose search for serenity and solace in his works are evident throughout.

Accompanying the set are beautifully-written notes by Phillip Sametz, tracing the journey of the music, from the greatly gifted Schulhoff who met his end in a Nazi concentration camp, to the reflective works of Howard, whose work 'Schlusshymne' presents a luminous, concluding musical prayer for our own tumultuous times.

The album will be released on 6 October 2023 by Universal Music Australia.

ERWIN SCHULHOFF (1894-1942)

String Quartet No.1

Five Pieces for String Quartet

WOJCIECH KILAR (1932-2013)

Orawa

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

String Quartet No. 6 in G major, Op. 101

LUKE HOWARD (b. 1978)

Hymn

Schlusshymne

You Are Not Lost, You Are Here

Andamooka Station

Suggested tracks for airplay:

Track 1: Schulhoff String Quartet no.1, i. Presto con fuoco (2'19)

Track 3: Schulhoff String Quartet no.1, iii. Allegro giocoso alla Slovacca (2'56)

Track 9: Schulhoff Five Pieces for String Quartet, iv. Alla Tango Milonga. Andante (3'49')

Track 15: Howard *Hymn* (4'39)

Track 11: Shostakovich String Quartet no.6, i. Allegretto (7'15)

TOUR DATES

Friday 6 October, 7pm: Orava Quartet in *Nocturne*, Empire Theatre, Toowoomba (QLD) - [tickets here](#)

Saturday 7 October, 7pm: Orava Quartet in *Nocturne*, The Edge, State Library of Queensland, Brisbane (QLD) - [tickets](#)

Friday 20 October, 6pm: Tasmanian Chamber Music Festival, Government House, Hobart (TAS) - **sold out**

Saturday 21 October, 11am: Tasmanian Chamber Music Festival, Hobart Town Hall (TAS) - [tickets here](#)

Saturday 4 - Sunday 12 November: Friends of Chopin Australia - inaugural Paderewski tour - [tickets here](#)

Saturday 4th at 7pm: Old Museum, Brisbane Thursday 9th at 7pm: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Saturday 11th at 12pm: Sydney Town Hall

Sunday 12th at 2pm: **Melbourne Polish Festival at The Edge, Federation Square, Melbourne (free event)**

Friday 24 November, 8pm: *Renaissance to Romance*, Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, Nowra (NSW) - [tickets here](#)

Sunday 3 December, 2:30pm: *Romance and Rapture*, Bond University, Gold Coast (QLD) - [tickets here](#)



Credit: Dylan Evans Photography

The Orava Quartet, founded in 2007 by brothers Daniel Kowalik (violin) and Karol Kowalik (cello), Thomas Chawner (viola), and David Dalseno (violin), is one of the most exciting string quartets of its generation. Known for their passionate and engaging performances, they have been hailed by *The Australian* as "the future of Australian Chamber Music, the real deal."

In 2018 Orava Quartet was the first ever Australian string quartet to release an album under the prestigious label Deutsche Grammophon - produced and distributed worldwide by Universal Music Australia. Their first album, featuring music by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov and Shostakovch and a collaboration with Australian Soprano Greta Bradman.

The Orava Quartet has toured in Canada, the United States, United Arab Emirates, China, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Philippines, as well as playing for Queen Sofia of Spain and Pope Benedict XVI. As graduate Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Colorado (USA), they worked closely with the world-renowned Takács Quartet from 2012-14, and performed extensively in the US including at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. The Quartet also made its debut at the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall for the 'Vivid' Festival and won two major awards at the 2013 Asia Pacific Chamber Music Competition in Melbourne, including the Musica Viva Australia Tony Berg Award for 'Most Outstanding Australian Ensemble'.

Since returning to Australia, the Orava Quartet has continued its impressive and rapid rise to national attention. It performs at major festivals such as the New Zealand Festival, Melbourne Festival, Australian Festival of Chamber Music and Huntington Estate Music Festival; the BBC Proms Melbourne; Queensland Music Festival, Canberra International Music Festival, for Sydney Opera House's Utzon Music Series, Melbourne Recital Centre, Musica Viva Australia and more.

In 2023, Orava Quartet proudly continues in its ninth year as 'Quartet-in-Residence' with Camerata, and in a similar 'in-residence' role at Bangalow Music Festival and, from 2024, at Blackheath Chamber Music Festival (NSW). Highlights include an invited return tour to Canada to summer festivals in Québec (Festival Stradivaria) and Ottawa (Music and Beyond), and the highly anticipated release of their second album for Universal Music Australia, 'Orawa'. They return to Brisbane Festival, Tasmanian Chamber Music Festival, Orange Chamber Music Festival (NSW), and Sydney Mozart Society, collaborate with guitarist Slava Grigoryan, and pianist Stefan Cassomenos, and tour with Polish pianist, Aleksandra Swigut, for the Friends of Chopin Australia, celebrating Polish pianist and statesman Ignacy Jan Paderewski's tour of Australia, nearly 120 years ago.

In addition to the University of Colorado, the quartet has held residencies at the Banff Arts Centre in Canada, with Camerata - Queensland's Chamber Orchestra (where they continue in their ninth year) - and the Bundanon Trust in Australia. Mentored during their undergraduate studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music by Uzi Wiesel, Janet Davies and Ole Böhn, the Quartet collaborates with musicians such as harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani, pianists Piers Lane, Pavel Kolesnikov and Simon Tedeschi, sopranos Greta Bradman and Katie Noonan, and multi-instrumentalist William Barton.

oravaquartet.com facebook.com/oravaquartetofficial instagram.com/oravaquartet

For more information and performance enquiries, contact: Jackie Thomas-Piccardi jtp@cinqueartistmanagement.com

PRAISE FOR THE ORAVA QUARTET'S DEBUT ALBUM (2018)



“beauty of tone, uniformity of style, phrasing, dynamics and vibrato, and a broad-sweep approach to musical architecture ... Within the next decade, the Orava Quartet will surely take its place as one of the most accomplished string quartets on the planet, continuing in the great tradition of the genre, as well as becoming one of Australia’s proudest cultural exports.”

- Vincent Plush, The Australian

“The debut album by Australia’s Orava Quartet for the prestigious Deutsche Grammophon label is a beauty. ... Wonderfully nuanced, Orava Quartet captures the starkness, anguish and even despair, achieving both discipline and a rare intimacy. The group’s reputation for intensity is thoroughly deserved”

- Barney Zwartz, Sydney Morning Herald

“The four of them play like a group of seasoned professionals but with a youthful eye to taking risks...

Witness the hair-raising short second movement of the Shostakovich..

[a] mighty debut on the renowned Yellow Label.”

- Steve Moffatt, The Daily Telegraph

“Did we need yet another string quartet album in the world? I didn’t think so, until I listened to the latest release from Deutsche Grammophon of an Australian group, the Orava Quartet ...

Their sounds blend effortlessly, their ensemble playing is tight ... sometimes it’s difficult to pick out exactly which instrument is playing. Listening to this album shows you the truth of chamber music”

- Kate Rockstrom, Readings Magazine

Recent live concert reviews

“Orava Quartet held its audience for over an hour with a winning blend of precision and passion. Their sound was often downright gorgeous - rich as a vintage port - and their style at once disciplined and supple. ... Though Schulhoff’s moods are often wry, the quartet also managed to find an underlying tenderness through their subtle sensitivity to each other.

*Possibly this earnestness made the deepest connection to the audience. It was wonderful to see these contemporary-looking young men mastering the **classical** tradition and uncovering, both for them and us, its expression of primal longing and wonder. Sometimes their raw energy could remind you of a garage band: they seemed to relish the scrape of bow on string as a lead guitarist relishes distortion. ... [In Borodin’s String Quartet no.2] Karol Kowalik soared through the high-flying cello part with exquisite feeling. ... all of Orava’s members gave of their formidable best. The famous Nocturne movement felt spine-tinglingly fresh even to this reviewer who knows it almost by heart.*

- Brisbane Live Reviews, October 2023 (live review, The Edge, Brisbane)

*“superb... Despite their youthful appearance, Orava is the Grand Cru of quartets: bold, complex and powerful - and like the wine, worth paying top dollar for.”- **Limelight, October 2023** (live review, The Edge, Brisbane)*

“On this occasion, CIMF featured the young Orava String Quartet who have gradually ascended the ladder of chamber music stardom. ... In 2018 the Brisbane-based quartet issued their first recording release on Deutsche Grammophon with a prize-winning program of Russian music, including a breath-taking reading of Shostakovich’s String Quartet No 8. A week before their CIMF appearance this week they recorded Shostakovich’s String Quartet No 6. They hardly needed reference to their parts; they had internalized this quirky and unsettled music deeply. Their Shostakovich performances are more energized, more contrasted in moods and colours, more compelling and edge-of-seat than any I have heard in recent years...”

- Vincent Plush, Limelight Magazine, 2022

“exceptional musicality, supported by abundant energy in a demanding program, and delivered with intensity, precision and incredible teamwork. These four young men have taken the string quartet configuration, given it

better than a good shake, and thrown the boundaries away. Their performance was nothing short of brilliant, delivering an edge-of-the-seat experience for the audience. It was, without doubt, a highlight of the festival.”

- Paul Bellam-Cross, *Limelight Magazine*, 2022 (Sunshine Coast Chamber Music Festival, QLD)

“The final work on their program was a work called Orawa, by Wojciech Kilar... They played this piece with great tenderness and passion, just as we all imagine that famous Polish exile, Chopin, playing the mazurkas of his homeland. After this piece the audience demanded an encore”

- Australian Stage, 2022 (Blackheath Chamber Music Festival, NSW)

“the jewel in the evening came from the two Schulhoff works, his Five Pieces for String Quartet and String Quartet No 1.... The wonderful array of colours produced by the performers gave full credit to the emotional depth of the music.” [4.5 stars]

- Jo St Leon, *Limelight Magazine*, 2021 (Musica Viva Tasmania, Hobart Town Hall, TAS)

“Sharply-dressed and full of interpretive insight, the Orava Quartet has earned its emerging reputation as one of Australia’s most exciting ensembles... It is difficult to see these still relatively young performers slowing down any time soon, and Australian classical music is all the better for it. [...]

The quartet displayed precise melodic balance and precision, and a smattering of tasteful dynamic flair... Where the quartet fully excelled, however, was in the Schulhoff... an ideal vehicle for the Orava Quartet to showcase its technical and artistic mastery...” [4.5 stars]

- Ben Wilkie, *Limelight Magazine*, 2018 (Melbourne Recital Centre, VIC)