

BORRAMEO

String Quartet



Quartet-in-Residence at the New England Conservatory of Music,
the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and the Taos School of Music.

Winner of the 2007 Avery Fisher Career Grant,
the Borromeo Quartet continues to build upon its adventurous 23 year career of
pushing musical, intellectual, and technical boundaries.

“ A remarkably accomplished string quartet, not simply for its high technical polish and refined tone, but more importantly for the searching musical insights it brings. ”

The Chicago Tribune

UNIQUE FEATURES

- Complete quartet cycles of Lera Auerbach, Gunther Schuller, Béla Bartók, Shostakovich, Schoenberg, Schubert, Brahms, Beethoven and Dvořák.
- Performs using Macbook Pro laptops instead of traditional sheet music in order to read from full 4-part scores.
- Video projection of composer's handwritten manuscripts during performances, including Beethoven, Schubert, Dvořák and Bartók.
- Multimedia discussions on the advantages and hurdles of using computers and iPads to rehearse and perform from 4-part scores. This can be for a general audience or for students.
- Performs its own string quartet transcriptions of music by Bach.
- “Early Evenings with the Borromeo” exploratory discussions.
- Young people's Multimedia concert presentations.

AWARDS

- Ensemble-in-Residence at the New England Conservatory of Music, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and the Taos School of Music.
- Winner of the 2007 Avery Fisher Career Grant.
- Winner of Lincoln Center's Martin E. Segal Award (2001).
- Winner of the Cleveland Quartet Award (1998).
- Ensemble-in-Residence for National Public Radio's *Performance Today* (1998-99).
- Top Prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France (1990).

SELECT QUOTES

"Each of the greatest string quartets has redefined what the possibilities of the medium are: through the perfection of its ensemble and intonation, through its poise and its passion, the Borromeos are recreating the medium anew and we are lucky to be here to hear it."

– The Boston Globe

"A musical experience of luminous beauty"

– The San Diego Reader

"The digital tide washing over society is lapping at the shores of classical music. The Borromeo players have embraced it in their daily musical lives like no other major chamber music group."

– New York Times

"To hear and see them perform has always felt to me like taking a private tour through a composer's mind. They probe and analyze from every angle until they discover how to best unveil the psychological, physical, and spiritual states that a great piece of music evokes. They're champions of new music ... but they also thrive on making the old classics sound vital and fresh."

– Cathy Fuller, Host of WGBH Classical New England, NPR

"It is an extraordinary experience, from their command of enharmonic complexities to the ravishing fury with which they play."

– Gramophone Magazine

"Some ensembles bring a tea-table politeness to Haydn; the Borromeo made the composer sound like a life-loving creature of hearty appetites and generous wit."

– Washington Post

The Borromeo and their laptops, why?

The Borromeo Quartet now only performs from 4-part scores using Macbook Pro's and iPads. They mainly use the composer's handwritten manuscript, which can be projected on a screen for the audience to follow.



In 2008, the Borromeo Quartet became the first string quartet in the world to perform on stage using Macbook Pro laptops instead of traditional paper sheet music. Not a gimmick, this was done so that they could read from full 4-part scores, instead of their individual parts, which would be nearly impossible to do otherwise.

In addition, the laptops allow the ensemble to rehearse and perform from the composer's original handwritten manuscripts. Often, these manuscripts are projected onto a large screen for the audience to follow along, and they are indeed a revelation.

For example, the score to Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" shows a page where Schubert has dramatically scratched out an entire section of music and written a new musical idea over it. The audience gets to see, first hand, the musical process hard at work.

The Borromeo's use of digital scores has been covered by BusinessWeek, the New York Times, Washington Post, Boston Globe and many other publications.

They have performed special presentations for Apple Computers, Cisco Systems, and Public Radio International.

Following is an interview conducted by João Marcos Coelho of the Brazilian paper ESTADAO. He talks with Borromeo violinist Nicholas Kitchen about the Quartet's use of technology, and how "Computers are the greatest vehicle to go back into the past."



JMC: How did you get the idea to perform from full four-part musical scores using the computer?

NK: The idea to use the computer for music reading was born from the desire to play off of the complete score. All musicians learn a tremendous amount from studying full scores. When you have an orchestra or a chamber ensemble the tradition is that a "score" is printed where all the parts are on one staff. You see everything that is happening at every moment in the music. Each simultaneous element is lined up on the page. You see exactly the way that the music fits together. The conductor of an orchestra always works from complete score so that they will understand the intricate interweaving of all the instrumental parts. With these multiple parts the score usually has many pages. The "part" that each musician reads from in performance, on the other hand, has printed on it only what that particular instrument plays. It is usually only a few pages long.

It was always my wish to play the pieces that I perform from the full score. Whether it is a piece with piano and violin, a piano trio, a quartet, a concerto or a symphony, so many insights come from viewing all the elements that interweave with each other to make a phrase work musically. One notices layer upon layer of detail each time one looks at it. But while actually playing there is little practical possibility of turning the many pages of a full score. Also, imagine if every member, particularly of an orchestra, played from a full score of paper: you would end up with a book sized piece of music on every stand - thousands of pages. It is not practical on many levels.

So, prior to the computer, I always took advantage of any chance that I had to play off of the score but was usually left to study the score separately from playing.

In 2007 I saw two pianists use electronic scores and I realized instantly that the computer offered a path to doing what I and other musicians had so often dreamed of - to play off of the complete score. I looked on the internet for USB page-turners and ended up purchasing something called "FooTime". Since then the quartet and I have made a transition to pedals that I make at home and program myself (which also means I can maintain and repair the pedals). Within a couple of months I had brought the computer on stage and was starting to enjoy the wonderful

benefits of seeing everything that was happening in the music while playing.

As I got used to it other members of the Borromeo Quartet were interested in doing it as well, and within a short time we were all reading off of the complete score, reading pdf files on a computer and turning the pages with our feet.

JMC: Playing from a computer, you've said in interviews, means that "everyone who is participating can be looking at the score, and score study becomes a communal exchange of information. This is really a complete transformation of the working process". Can you give some specific examples of changes in interpretation or insights from this new way of reading the scores?

When everyone is playing from parts a huge percentage of rehearsal is spent asking and answering "What do you have there?" Players write cues in their part. We are very used to this, but it occupies a lot of rehearsal time. When everyone is reading from the score, this question simply does not exist. Everyone sees instantly what the other player has and how it fits with what they are playing. This is already beneficial in familiar music but becomes a totally new experience when dealing with contemporary music. With new music, we have no prior knowledge and often with parts the experience of just trying to stay together in unfamiliar music is extremely stressful. I do not exaggerate to say that by playing off of the score, the process goes perhaps 10 times faster. And of course staying oriented in this unfamiliar environment one is not just focusing on small details as markers but is in a relaxed way seeing the way the unfamiliar music fits together in all of its details. This also means that composers can revise easily their scores once the rehearsals begin. With a quick export from their music-writing program and the use of a thumb drive that we pass around, we are playing the revision that they made minutes ago. Another important perspective is to see with confidence when a composer wishes a group not to be homogenous. For example, in Beethoven, a group often unifies its bowings and phrasings, but with everyone looking at the score we often realize that Beethoven gave independent markings to all of the instruments, purposefully asking them to play differently. Usually trying this varied version with confidence works beautifully as composers like Beethoven made these kind of suggestions with fantastic knowledge of performance. One can realize

these things using parts, but again, it takes a huge amount of time to discover and become confident of the heterogeneous intention. With the time it takes to be sure of one spot many similar spots are never gotten to.

There is another aspect of playing off of the full score that has added something wonderful on a human level. String Quartets are notorious for being a volatile environment. Everyone is passionate about the way they feel the music and yet they have to achieve total ensemble, with every detail coordinated. This often causes arguments and tensions as players try to both retain their conviction and simultaneously learn how to synchronize their actions. Playing from the complete score we have found that we have much more understanding of why each part and each person feels the way they do. We are much more able to come up with suggestions that naturally incorporate everyone's point of view. This is very meaningful and has the effect that when we really arrive at a conclusion the quality of judgement behind it is much higher and much more shared by every participant.

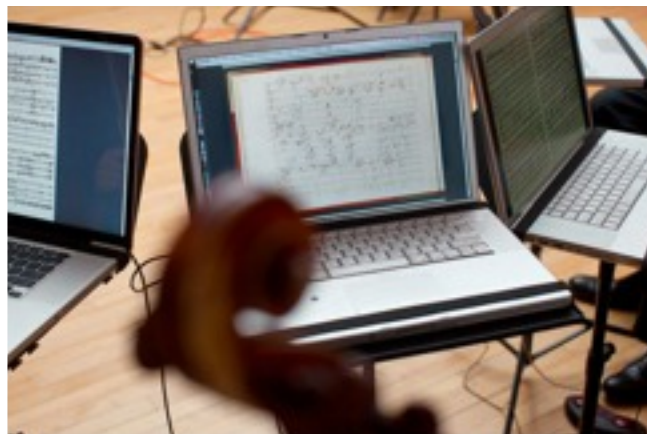
The other unexpected resource that becomes available with the computer is that it is very easy to rehearse using the composer's original manuscript. Many libraries have digitized these precious treasures and through various methods a performer can gain access to pdf files of these works. Sometimes they are on the internet. Sometimes one has to order them specially from the library, but many of the greatest works of chamber music can be seen in their manuscript form.

Often these hand-written scores communicate vividly something about how the composer felt about the music he or she was writing. There are telling details, like when Haydn leaves articulations quite unspecified, leaving choices much more in the hands of the performer. Often, it is something not so easily analyzed, but one gets a strong feeling of connection with the energies active in the creation of the work. Also, so often the manuscript shows options which were considered and discarded or altered as

the composer worked. These are deeply stimulating to see. When seeing a modern score of a masterwork, we are seeing a work we have heard hundreds of times. We can have the illusion the work always existed and that its details arrived in the world complete. Seeing the changes that the composer struggled with, we feel how hard they worked to find just the right expression. This adds something very inspiring into rehearsals as we try to feel out the options for how to present a work most effectively. Also sharing this with students and audience members lets all of us share the sense of insight and feel some relation to the moment of creation of some of the greatest pieces of music ever written.

JMC: By placing the score on a screen behind the quartet on stage, you create an attractive scene for the public. But can too much technology possibly distract the audience from hearing the music?

NK: The core of music is only what we hear. Fortunately, people have such a love of music, and what they hear can often connect to their heart in a way that is deeply



satisfying. Musically, we need nothing but the sound, but when we see performers play, that is also enjoyable. We feel and see how the performer approaches the music. When we use a projector to add to the concert experience we are sharing something that we think will add to what the audience takes home from the concert. We have gained great inspiration looking at the manuscripts of the

masterworks that we play. Letting the audience see that and explaining some of the meaning of the details can give them a very special feeling of connection with the creation of the piece. Also, we do some playing of music with animations that I have created which are synchronized (by foot pedal) with the music we are playing. We do this because they are expressions of our imaginative relationship with the music we are playing and we want to encourage listeners to think of music not just as some great monument to admire in a static way but as a vehicle that interacts with their imagination, that invites them to explore their own feelings about what is happening.

So, if the projector should fail in a performance nothing essential will be lost. The concert will go on and the essence of the music will be complete. But we do hope that giving another dimension through projection will allow the audience to participate in the rich complexity which is part of our feeling about the music.

JMC: The quartet offers a different twist on classical music by using MacBook Pro laptops, video projection and iPads during its performances. Can you describe how they are used?

We use laptops because they have a fairly large screen (two of us use 17-inch screens) and they have a well tested battery mechanism, though we plug in anyway. Apple computers also happen to be very quiet. For a laptop, the job of reading a pdf is very easy. We do have to do a few things like tell the computer not to go to sleep. As you can imagine, our music folder on each computer holds really the entire repertoire that we play. I keep this backed up on a few thumb drives in my violin case. If a truck should drive over my laptop I only have to borrow some computer and within minutes I will be playing from my own part again. Any computer will work - Windows, Mac, anything that can read a pdf.

The pedal, which as I mentioned is homemade, is really a USB keyboard with two buttons: page down, and page up (iPad is slightly different). All computers respond to these commands. The USB connection means the pedal is powered from the computer, not requiring any battery of its own. On stage each computer is its own system. Each one of us turns our own pages. It has turned out that the computers are extremely reliable, but the comfort is that if any one computer should encounter a problem, there are three more computers with the identical full score on them. We just would turn to our neighbor and read off of theirs. This did happen on one occasion and I just turned my screen towards the violist and we continued without a break.

We read the music from Adobe Acrobat Professional. This is a great program because it is extremely reliable (think of the number of users) and it has extensive annotation tools. We just open the pencil tool and mark as we wish. Also, Acrobat Professional has many tools for adjusting the way the document looks on the page. We can easily get rid of

extra white space or duplicate pages so we can pedal forward only for a repeat in the music. Also, once we save the file in this way, it will open on another computer with the changes, as well as the markings. We just have to remember to save!

As far as iPads, I have also a homemade pedal that works for the iPad. The iPad is nice because it is SO small. In the end it is preferable to play off of the larger screen of the computer, but it would not be too difficult to arrange to play off of iPads. Where the iPad really does come in handy is in coaching. Especially with using the composers



manuscript, often I am coaching a quartet and I want the students to see the manuscript as we work. I created a dual pedal which simultaneously sends a signal to the computer and the iPad. What I then do is put the computer facing the students and put the iPad on the same stand facing me. By using the dual pedal, we are both looking at the same thing. A projector can of course achieve the same thing and fortunately many classrooms are equipped with projectors, so we can often plug into these resources easily. Also, we give an Interpretation Class at our Conservatory, NEC, where we make a point of always projecting the score as we study in the class. When a student arrives with a printed score and no PDF version, I just hook the projector to the camera of the iPad and within a few seconds we are seeing the printed score on the wall.

Computers, we are realizing, are the greatest vehicle to go back into the past, and deeper into the music.

MEDIA ACCLAIM

[Bytes and Beethoven](#)

"The digital tide washing over society is lapping at the shores of classical music. The Borromeo players have embraced it in their daily musical lives like no other major chamber music group."

— Dan Wakin, The New York Times

[Letter V: Virginia Classical Music Blog](#)

"The Borromeo String Quartet is the rock star of chamber music at present."

— Clarke Bustard, Letter V: Virginia Classical Music

[Borromeo gets back to Beethoven](#)

"The Borromeo's playing was restless and insistent, from the piece's edgy opening to the coda, played with a thrilling sense of abandon."

— David Weininger, The Boston Globe

[Summerfest: Masterworks and Premieres](#)

"The Borromeo has always impressed with their uncanny sense of cohesion and unity; as a great pianist plays a solo work with complete control and purpose, so too do the members of the Borromeo Quartet subsume their personalities into a marvelous gestalt which brings to life the notes of composers."

— Christian Hertzog, Sandiego.com

[Borromeo brings vibrancy to SummerFest](#)

"It's hard to think of Haydn as a composer of 'new music.' But the Borromeo String Quartet found a way to make the 1797 String Quartet in B flat major, Op. 76, seem as if the ink were still dry on the page. Or, in the case of the Borromeo, still flickering on its laptops."

— By James Chute, San Diego Union-Tribune

[Borromeo Quartet opens Taos School of Music season](#)

"One of the Borromeo's trademarks is their unusual use of contemporary technology to enhance the musical experience ... each quartet member also reads the full score of music they play from a Macintosh MacBook Pro during live performances."

— By Ariana Kramer, The Taos News

[Quartet brings new technology to the music stand at Rockport Music Festival](#)

"Chamber music hasn't changed for generations. Think that's true? Examine what the Borromeo String Quartet is doing, and think again."

— Keith Powers, Cape Ann Beacon

[Borromeo packs a real wallop](#)

"It was a feast of lush sound and vivid playing."

— Joseph Dalton, Times Union

[Peter Toth and the Borromeo Quartet give Carmel a majestic weekend of music](#)

"In addition to becoming one of the most renowned chamber groups in the world, Borromeo started incorporating a new technology into its concerts that may end up changing the entire classical music world..."

— Adam Joseph, Monterey County Weekly

[Borromeo Champions "Old" and New Masters](#)

"The Borromeo's performance was what most composers can usually only dream of: clean, passionate, exquisite."

— Vance R. Koven, The Boston Musical Intelligencer

[Grappling with Bartok's dark, haunting visions](#)

"Some ensembles give the impression of serving as conduits to an interpretation carefully worked out in rehearsal. But the Borromeo offered an afternoon of edge-of-the-seat music-making that grappled palpably with the composer's dark haunting visions in the process of bringing them to life."

— Jeremy Eichler, Globe Staff, Boston Globe

[Phenomenal!](#)

"In a staggering performance of Carter's overwhelming First Quartet (1951), the greatest 20th-century American work in that genre, the Borromeo String Quartet captured (and liberated) not only the marvelous sounds inspired by the Arizona desert near where Carter was then living -- the whirring, scurrying Allegro scorrevole and the mysterious, heart-stopping/time-stopping night world of the Adagio -- but also the questions of existence and perception they pictorialize."

— By Lloyd Schwartz, Boston Phoenix

[Upshaw and Borromeo Mesh with Golijov Songs](#)

"This is a remarkably accomplished young string quartet, not simply because of its high technical polish and the refined beauty of its tone but, more important, for the searching musical insights it brings."

— John von Rhein, Chicago Tribune

[Schuller's Music Shines](#)

"The performance by the Borromeo Quartet was heart-stopping. Each of the greatest quartets has redefined what the possibilities of the medium are: through the perfection of its ensemble and intonation, through its poise and in its passion the Borromeo's are recreating the medium anew, and we are lucky to be here to hear it."

— Richard Dyer, The Boston Globe

[Islands in the Stream](#)

"Their performance was nothing short of magnificent, one of the best concerts I've ever heard...If ever a quartet offered a window into a composer's soul, this was it."

— Steve Osborn, North Bay Classical Music

[A Tale of Two Quartets](#)

"One of the great attributes of the Borromeo's playing is that through their passion, unequaled technical brilliance and complete absorption in the music, they grab you and insist that you really listen. Their brand of unabashed, emotional undressing is so powerful and personal that anyone who does not respond in kind should have a defibrillator nearby."

— Jeffrey Rossman, Classical Voice North Carolina

[Quartet and Orchestra premiere 'Fragile Solitudes'](#)

"The Borromeo Quartet, renowned for their interpretations of contemporary works, brought a rare level of artistry to the new work. It seemed less a world premiere than a standard in their repertoire list."

— Lynn Green, Columbus Dispatch

[A marvelous start](#)

"The Borromeo gave Beethoven's passions free reign and gave those of us lucky enough to be there a night to remember." [Read More...](#)

— Weslea Sidon, Maine Coast Now

[Look & Listen Festival](#)

"The Borromeo's were almost terrifying in their gritty intensity"

— Bruce Hodges, Music web International

[As a classical ensemble, Borromeo Quartet rocks](#)

If chamber music were an Olympic event, the Borromeo String Quartet would definitely be considered to represent America. They've got what it takes, and plenty of energy to boot. [Read More...](#)

— Rebecca C. Howard, Desert Morning News

[United by Strings and Piano, Soaring Separate but Equal](#)

"One of music's growth industries is the string quartet. Young, accomplished groups are everywhere: beautifully trained, smart and eager, sometimes to a fault. The Borromeo String Quartet is a particular success story."

— Bernard Holland, New York Times

[Quartet Starts Fresh](#)

"These were state-of-the-art performances for a contemporary audience, respectful of style and tradition but emotionally in your face."

— Richard Dyer, Boston Globe

[Borromeo String Quartet](#)

"So rich in detail and variety one might have thought an entire orchestra was playing."

— Mark Carrington, The Washington Post

[Borromeo Quartet Soars with Finely Tuned Precision](#)

"The ensemble work was so precise, the balances so finely matched, the delineation of melody and accompaniment so carefully wrought that one did not think of them as four separate musicians, but rather as an amazingly sensitive gestalt."

— Christian Hertzog, The San Diego Union-Tribune

SELECTED ARTICLES

NEW YORK TIMES

Arts & Leisure, January 16, 2011

[Bytes and Beethoven](#)

"The digital tide washing over society is lapping at the shores of classical music. The Borromeo players have embraced it in their daily musical lives like no other major chamber music group."

— by Dan Wakin, The New York Times

CHAMBER MUSIC MAGAZINE

January 1, 2010

[A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Scanner](#)

"Using his laptop to read from the 1825 autograph of he Mendelssohn Octet, violinist Nicholas Kitchen noticed that it was not exactly the same work he had been playing all these years."

— by Judith Kogan

STRINGS MAGAZINE

January, 2010

[Borromeo String Quartet Settles the Score on Laptops](#)

"Don't be frightened by the unearthly glow on the stage—that's just the Borromeo String Quartet. Trading paper for plastic, the Borromeos are using laptops to read music during performances."

— by Rory Williams

STRINGS MAGAZINE

January, 2005

[The Borromeo Quartet Has a Do-It-Yourself Approach to Quality Chamber Recordings](#)

"Rock fans can go to a concert and, while they're there, order a CD made during the show. That kind of fast-turnaround service isn't common yet in the classical world, but the Borromeo String Quartet is leading the way."

— by Rory Williams



[Nicholas Kitchen, violin](#)

[Kristopher Tong, violin](#)

[Mai Motobuchi, viola](#)

[Yeesun Kim, cello](#)

www.borromeoquartet.com

(Click links above to read individual member biographies)

BORROMEO STRING QUARTET

Ensemble-in-Residence at the New England Conservatory of Music
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Ensemble-in-Residence at the Taos School of Music summer program

Winner of the 2007 Avery Fisher Career Grant
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Ensemble-in-Residence for National Public Radio's Performance Today (1998-99)
Top Prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France (1990)

The visionary performances of the Borromeo String Quartet have established it as one of the most important string quartets of our time. The Chicago Tribune calls the Borromeo "a remarkably accomplished string quartet, not simply for its high technical polish and refined tone, but more importantly for the searching musical insights it brings." The San Diego Reader calls their performances "a musical experience of luminous beauty," and the Boston Globe says "Each of the greatest string quartets has redefined what the possibilities of the medium are: through the perfection of its ensemble and intonation, through its poise and its passion, the Borromeos are recreating the medium anew and we are lucky to be here to hear it."

Audiences and critics alike champion the Borromeo's ability to bring back the contemporary fire to often-heard repertoire, while making even the most challenging new music appreciable. As one of today's most adventurous quartets, the Borromeo continues to push musical, intellectual, and technical boundaries to a level achieved by only a very few.

"To hear and see them perform has always felt to me like taking a private tour through a composer's mind," says Cathy Fuller, Classical New England host on WGBH, Boston's famed NPR station. "They probe and analyze from every angle until they discover how to best unveil the psychological, physical, and spiritual states that a great piece of music evokes. They're champions of new music...but they also thrive on making the old classics sound vital and fresh."

The Borromeo has been redefining the classical music landscape through innovative uses of Macbook Pro laptops, video projection, and iPads in performance. It rehearses and performs entirely from complete four-part scores, and often features onstage projections of handwritten original manuscripts by composers like Beethoven, Schubert, and Bartok to vividly illustrate the creative process hard at work, a practice that has excited audiences of all ages. In schools, the groups use of technology is proving to make classical music very relevant to students who have grown up in the digital age. The Borromeo makes its own live concert recordings and videos while on tour, and in 2003 started The Living Archive, an on-demand recording project that has made it possible for listeners to experience many of the quartet's concerts around the world.

"The digital tide washing over society is lapping at the shores of classical music. The Borromeo players have embraced it in their daily musical lives like no other major chamber music group," says New York Times writer Dan Wakin in his Arts & Leisure feature story on the quartet, "Bytes and Beethoven."

Highlights of the 2012-13 season include multiple performances at the International MIMO Festival in Brazil, the Festival de México in Mexico City, a two-week residency at Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Japan, where it will perform the complete Beethoven String Quartets, a cycle of Dvorak Quartets at the Isabella Stewart Gardner

Museum in Boston, concerts in Nara, Beijing, Shanghai, and Port-au-Prince, and for many distinguished presenters across the United States.

The Borromeo collaborates extensively with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in New York and the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C., and can be heard throughout the year on National Public Radio. It were the ensemble-in-residence for NPR's Performance Today in 1998 and 1999, and their long-standing residency at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum has been called "one of the defining experiences of civilization in Boston" [Boston Globe].

The Borromeo has collaborated with artists that include Angélique Kidjo and Branford Marsalis; violinist Midori; pianists Christoph Eschenbach, Leon Fleisher, Gary Graffman, Menahem Pressler, and Peter Serkin; sopranos Dawn Upshaw and Audra McDonald; clarinetists Richard Stoltzman and David Shifrin; and cellist Bernard Greenhouse, as well as members of the Brentano, Guarneri, Juilliard, and Cleveland string quartets.

In 2007, the group received the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, and since 2006, the Aaron Copland House foundation has honored the quartet's commitment to contemporary music with its Borromeo String Quartet Award, which introduces the work of important young composers to audiences internationally. The Borromeo has enjoyed collaborations with composers Gunther Schuller, Lera Auerbach, Steve Mackey, Osvaldo Golijov, Derek Bermel, John Cage, György Ligeti, John Harbison, Leon Kirchner, Thomas Adès, Robert Maggio, Pierre Jalbert, James Matheson, Mohammed Fairouz, among others.

The Borromeo has been heard in the most of the great concert halls around the world, including the Suntory Hall, Daiichi Seimei Hall, the Concertgebouw, Wigmore Hall, Berlin's Philharmonie, and the Opéra national de Paris-Bastille. In the United States the group is a favorite at the Library of Congress, Carnegie and Alice Tully Halls, Jordan Hall, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. It has been invited to perform at music festivals around the world including the Spoleto Festival in Italy, the Orlando Festival in the Netherlands, the Stavanger Festival in Norway, Music Isle Festival in Korea, and in North America at the Rockport, Marlboro, La Jolla, Music@Menlo, Ravinia, Maverick, Vancouver and Tanglewood music festivals, among many others. First violinist Nicholas Kitchen was artistic director of the Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival for six seasons.

As quartet-in-residence at the prestigious New England Conservatory of Music for twenty years, the Borromeo has opened the doors of perception to a generation of young musicians who are now themselves being heard by audiences around the world. Their informal public masterclass series held at NEC, called "Early Evenings with the Borromeo," regularly attracts standing-room-only crowds. The ensemble returns to the Taos School of Music in New Mexico this summer for its eighth season of mentoring outstanding young musicians.

The quartet recently released a CD of music by Béla Bartók, Gunther Schuller, and Mohammed Fairouz, which features both live and studio versions of Schuller's String Quartet no. 4. Gramophone Magazine hailed the "great clarity and beauty" and "ravishing fury" of the BSQ's studio recording of masterworks by Beethoven, and their CD featuring works of Maurice Ravel was honored with the Chamber Music America/WQXR Award for Recording Excellence in 2001.

The Borromeo Quartet have received many prestigious awards throughout their illustrious 22 year career, including Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Career Grant, as well as their Martin E. Segal Award, Chamber Music America's Cleveland Quartet Award, the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, and top prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France.