

Music



Maggini Quartet at the Sherwell Centre in Plymouth (review)

15th November 2009

It really needed a class act to bring off this assorted programme of quartets from three centuries, and luckily they don't come much better than the Magginis.

Arguably the three works weren't the most technically difficult in the repertoire, but musically they asked questions which less informed players might fail to address.

Haydn's C major Quartet, Op 54 No 2 contains all that is best about the composer, but its finale, effectively a short rapid section sandwiched between two lengthy slow ones, is hard to bring off in performance.

Edmund Rubbra's Third Quartet, is a work which, cast in the composer's quite individual style with its often deeply-moving melodic richness, can strike the listener as merely solemn.

Mendelssohn's String Quartet No 1, on the other hand, can suffer because it was written by a prodigiously gifted twenty-year-old, where it is so easy to be mesmerized superficially by the brilliance of the writing, though which almost paradoxically culminates in an unassuming ending.

But with such an experienced leader as Gina McCormack, *pictured*, whose authoritative playing dominated the performance, the equally-assured support from David Angel (violin), Martin Outram (viola) and Michal Kaznowski (cello), the Magginis certainly succeeded in their elected task.

And with such a delightful encore as Dvorak's First Waltz, Op 54 to send them on their way, there could have been few, if indeed any dissatisfied customers!

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