

Kutcher String Quartet

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NOTICES DURING SEASONS 1930—31.

LONDON.

DAILY TELEGRAPH.

DELIUS CHAMBER MUSIC. EXQUISITE RENDERING.

These players are well led and have a 'cellist who is always in tune; their balance is as it should be, each sharing, as it were, in the common weal. This last quality, of course, is of the very essence of chamber music, and makes their performances a real delight to the connoisseur. A modern composer and two classical are represented in each programme, Mozart (B flat major) and Beethoven (C major, Op. 59, No. 3) standing last night for the classical and Delius for the modern. Some of us may count our Beethoven among the romantics—but let that pass. Here he stands among the classics, and is not likely to be misinterpreted whatever the classification. The Mozart playing was distinguished by a certain robustness, especially in the Menuetto where it was least expected, while the final Allegro was almost hilarious in its good humour. They gave us a similar directness throughout most of the Delius; but in that exquisite nostalgic "trio" of the second movement they missed naught of its poetry, and the sweet melancholy of "Late Swallows" was expressed with that restraint which is the very core of Delius's aristocratic art.

H.H.

DAILY TELEGRAPH.

Arthur Bliss's Quintet for oboe and strings was the central work performed by the Kutcher String Quartet, with the co-operation of Léon Goossens. This, produced at the International Festival at Venice in 1927, is a work in which the composer indicated a new independence, free of influences; it belongs to no school, flaunts no new theories, breathes no accepted canons of chamber music, yet is strikingly personal in idiom. It was a great joy to hear it so well done. The last movement was an exhilarating experience. Haydn's pristine work in F major (Opus 3, No. 5) preceded it, and the Debussy Quartet followed it; each played with the straight-forward musicianship so characteristic of these instrumentalists.

H.H.

EVENING STANDARD.

Delius's music did not seem to find itself out of place last night in the up-to-date and highly-efficient atmosphere of the American Women's Club, in Grosvenor Street, and no additional "pep" was put into his dreamy vagueness. The Kutcher String Quartet—they have a fine 'cellist in Douglas Cameron—are a first-rate combination, and they do not, as some quartets do, specialise in the work of one composer only and treat the others with indifference or down-right scamping. The treatment of Delius was most attractive, and they never let the poetry in this music become mere sloppiness. At the other extreme in sentiment and musical mentality lies Mozart, whose Quartet in B flat major was given the lightness and neatness it requires.

P.P.

ERA.

Each member has made good in solo as well as *ensemble* playing and is an accomplished technician. The balance, tonal and intelligent, is very good. . . . Far and away the best performance was of the last work on the list, Beethoven's Quartet in C, third of the Rasoumovsky set. Real delicacy was shown here, in the exceedingly beautiful, almost Schubertian, *Andante con moto*, and in the *Menuetto*. The fugal finale, too, was rendered with admirable clarity and precision.

ERA.

The playing of the Quartet, in so much as I heard, was of remarkable excellence. It is enough to mention that M. Léon Goossens was oboist in the Bliss work to guarantee that the part was as perfectly rendered as any composer could desire. Mr. Bliss and the executants were awarded an ovation at the close of the performance. The Debussy Quartet received one of the best readings, technically and interpretationally, that I have heard for a long time. The playing had characteristic Gallic point, neither too rough nor too smooth, but an intelligent proportionment of both styles, and the balance of *ensemble* was as fine as the finish of individual detail.

[P.T.O.]

MORNING POST.

The Kutcher String Quartet gave the third of their subscription concerts at the American Women's Club last night. Haydn in B flat at the outset put these players in a genial mood and enabled them to set their house in order immediately. This was a happy performance, that caught and conveyed the spirit of the work at every point. The naiveté of the third movement was hit off with a delightful touch. . . . It was impossible to overlook the intelligence of the playing. B.M.

TIMES.

The best performances at the Wednesday evening concert of chamber music at Wigmore Hall were those of Arthur Bliss's Quintet for hautboy and strings, played by Mr. Leon Goossens with the Kutcher Quartet. . . . Mr. Goossens's playing in Bliss's Quintet was most brilliant and he was well backed up by the string players, who took in fine style every fence, even that barbed wire of crossed and tangled rhythms in the *finale*. This is a delightful work and, in spite of some touches of mere cleverness, a solid achievement.

MORNING POST.

Leon Goossens and the Kutcher String Quartet gave an admirable performance of Arthur Bliss's Oboe Quintet. The problem here is to make all the points of stress and balance with precision and yet to let the music give forth its natural spontaneity. The solution brought by these players was extremely skilful. B.M.

DAILY TELEGRAPH.

LONDON MUSEUM.—The Kutcher Quartet and their collaborators provided an altogether delightful programme at last night's London Museum concert. They gave us first of all a performance of Mozart's Clarinet Quintet that was entirely free from any exaggeration of sentiment.

DAILY MAIL.

The players were the Kutcher String Quartet, an excellent combination. Their programme included the Delius Quartet and the first of those by Arnold Bax, of which they gave first-rate performances. E.E.

EVENING STANDARD.

The Kutcher String Quartet are a first-rate combination.

MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.

The Kutcher team, who also gave the Delius Quartet and one by Bax, played sensitively and with admirable finish. E.B.

EASTERN DAILY PRESS, NORWICH.

They form an admirable team, and gave a very good account of what was in some respects an exacting programme.

GLASGOW EVENING CITIZEN.

A DELIGHTFUL CHAMBER CONCERT.—Those accomplished players, the Kutcher String Quartet, well known and admired by listeners, introduced as a first item in their recital of chamber music last night one of Dittersdorf's most melodious compositions, his "Quartet for Strings in E Flat." In three movements, Allegro, Menuetto and Allegro, this charming and fluent composition made a delightful broadcast, which, we are sure, would be enjoyed by all who heard it.

SCOTLAND.

DUNDEE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

The first and highest quality of the Kutcher Quartet is the perfection of their ensemble. Perfection is a word to use sparingly, but it is the only word to employ in describing the clean neatness of attack and finish, the crisp unanimity of phrasing and the complete understanding between all parts. They played as one.

HOLLAND.

DE TELEGRAAF.

The Kutcher Quartet are a real ensemble from every point of view. It was earnest and grand playing, which left nothing to be desired.

HET HANDELSBLAD.

The Kutcher Quartet is an ensemble of which we can say many good things. Of each individually we appreciate technical abilities, and in their playing together they suit each other well. Their Mozart was faultlessly played.

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