

# Malvern Gazette

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## Quatuor Parisii — Malvern Concert Club

THE MALVERN Concert club has, during previous seasons, offered its members the chance of listening to a host of fine string quartets - both from the UK and from abroad; one remembers with considerable pleasure the playing of outstanding artists like the Vanbrughs, the Borodins, the Chillingirians and many others.

Last Thursday evening we were introduced to a quartet of French artists, who have enjoyed a growing reputation since they came together as Paris Conservatoire students in 1984 - the Quatuor Parisii.

Their programme consisted of three items - Gabriel Faure's Op 121 quartet, the last of Beethoven Op 18 set (the one in Bb), and the G minor Op 10 by Debussy.

Faure's quartet, written shortly before his death, is a profoundly inward-looking work; there is an almost complete absence of excitement or drama of any kind. Nevertheless, the first movement contains some lovely, serene music which the 'Parisii-ans' played with the most beautifully sensitive shading.

Here, too, they revealed at once one of their most outstanding gifts, that of a transparent clarity. From the rest of this music they produced some entrancing sounds and textures out of a score manifestly difficult to make convincing.

The Beethoven which followed

could not have been in greater contrast - the extravert creation of a young man at the outset of his career. The opening Allegro was taken at a brisk pace, the Adagio was played with great control, the violently displaced accents of the Scherzo were convincing, although the speed here was a little too excessive for my taste. The whole think, though, was quite brilliantly played.

The concert ended with the Debussy work, and, for me, the Quatuor Parisii's interpretation of this was the high point in their whole programme; not only was every detail in this magnificent quartet made audible, but also they played as one entity, of one mind. The frequent changes of pace were managed with well-nigh impeccable unanimity, and quite unforgettable was their presentation of the theme which starts the Andantino - it was sheer magic!

Malvern audiences are for the most part warmly appreciative but self-controlled; this evening the many resounding 'bravos' at the end showed what a deep impression these gifted Frenchman had made on their listeners.

The musicians were Thierry Brodard and Jean-Michel Berrette (violins), Dominique Lobet (viola) and Jean-Philippe Martignoni (cello).

ROBERT SOUTH