



## Maxwell String Quartet

The Council Chamber at Kilmory provided the perfect setting for the concert given by the gifted Maxwell String Quartet. Classical Music Magazine described them as “one of the front runners in young chamber music groups” and they certainly lived up to that reputation. Their programme contained three masterpieces in this genre and opened with a lively concert of Hayden’s String Quartet in D op.20 no.4 and subtitled The Rose of Venice. It was obvious from the opening bars that this was a group of musicians totally committed to the music and was a joy to behold.

The second offering was the String Quartet in F major composed by Ravel in 1903. This was a complete contrast to the previous work. It was written in four movements and once more the players brought out every nuance to the score. They played, sometimes at the extremities of their instruments, produced shimmering string effects and together with a huge range of dynamic contrasts, they had a large audience of almost one hundred completely captivated and spell bound.

The evening concluded with a dramatic and stunning performance of Schubert’s String Quartet in D minor subtitled “Death and the Maiden” since all of his movements are related to Schubert’s song of that name. The slow movement is a set of variations on the song itself. It was composed in 1828 four years before his death in 1828 and the music is very dark and deeply moving. This large scale chamber music work demanded exceptional control and the players were completely absorbed in their performance.

The quartet were given tremendous and prolonged applause at the conclusion of the evening and returned to play an encore a delightful, and most unusual quirky Polka by Shostakovich which again drew sustained applause from everyone.

This was an evening to remember with performances that were not only outstanding but exceptional and a musical treat.

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