



*Nordic Artists Management
represents Den Danske
Strygekvartet world wide.*

DEN DANSKE STRYGEKVARTET

Danish String Quartet, Cadogan Hall

Musical Opinion

1 March 2012

January 10 saw a very fine programme given by the Danish String Quartet at Cadogan Hall in the presence of HE the Danish Ambassador, marking the country's assumption of the 2012 Presidency of the European Union. The Ambassador opened proceedings with a short speech, prefacing Haydn's Opus 64 No 5, Lark Quartet. This received a really delightful account, such as would have engaged and charmed any audience, who may initially have been disconcerted by the 'smart-casual' clothing the young male players in the ensemble chose to wear.

This was followed by Carl Nielsen's Fourth Quartet in F major, which it would appear has been part of the cardio-vascular systems of all four players from their earliest years. Dating from 1904, and therefore predating the Third Symphony, it has that wonderfully sane and open-air approach which is the great Dane's most admirable quality. This was a really fine performance and it was a pleasure thereafter to encounter Mendelssohn's F minor Quartet, post-humously published as his Opus 80. Like Haydn and Nielsen, Mendelssohn was a gifted violinist, and the writing conveys that inherent mastery of the medium which may be rarely met with in modern Danish music no matter, this was a truly first-class programme.

Alexander Leonard

Light Heavenly Spheres And Voluptuos Folklore

Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung

24 January 2012

The four young Danes, who with their spiky hair and T-shirts beneath the jackets knew how they could bring their youthful attitude into the music in the happiest way by playing with lightness and passion. They brought the best forward in Haydn's Lark Quartet. First violin Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen played the finest lark trills which are not found in the score but which suited the piece well. The quartet displayed humour and played with wit, dynamic contrasts and finely pointed

accents. The opening sound in Nielsen's 4th quartet in F Major, one heard dreamy sounds with richness and nuances with ripe and full colours reminiscent of a drama by Ibsen, with autumnal melancholy clarity.

Forget About The Old Classifications

Mannheimer Morgen

24 January 2012

Eight concerts in three days in the festival, and the most impressive is the 'Long Night'. The four from the Danish String quartet were the center of the event. The Second Shostakovich Quartet is daylight and freshness, underlined by the clear and dry acoustics in the hall. In the full hall and with smorgasbord and aquavit they gladly alternate respectively between the foreign music and their roots and play folk music. They played in different and hitherto unknown constellations. Forget all about locking music into separate drawers. We want to have fun.

Heidelberger Frühling

The Classical Boy Group From The North

Main Post

15 January 2012

Much applause for the Danish String Quartet in the Kissinger Winter Enchantment.

"The four boys are all in their late 20's. And considering how casually they behave, one would not be surprised to find that they soon will get a hit on the top of the Charts - if they did not have their instruments with them. Because one did not see electric guitars and keyboards, but two violins, a viola and a cello. Instead of pop we have classical music.

And the musicians proved themselves as temperamental ambassadors of their homeland's music in the well attended Weissen Saal. Above all their interpretation of the last string quartet by Danish composer Carl Nielsen was convincing with their passionate playing. With their hymnical performance of the slow movement they struck the exact right tone in order to make this immensely intense music blossom.

The communication between the instrumentalists was excellent, and they presented themselves as a unit, where they

gave each other room to excell in solo passages. This was particularly the case in the outer movements of Nielsen, where Frederik Øland and Fredrik Sjölin impressed with brilliant and intense playing, whereas in Haydn's Lark quartet they interpreted with a likeable mixture of natural and cool playing".

"The contrast between Nielsen, Hans Abrahamsen and the Scandiavian folk songs could not be greater, and the quartet played the folk music beautifully in good arrangements. Above all Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen clearly felt at home in the folk music as in Haydn.

Impressive

Hufvudstadsbladet. Helsinki

11 December 2011

What a lovely concert! The charming young men in the Danish String Quartet played with an absolutely irresistible fervour and freshness..... already in the first bars of Haydn's socalled Lark Quartet it was clear that they not only knew exactly what they wanted to say abut also how and why In Beethoven's mighty A minor quartet opus 132 one was again impressed by an admirable ability to stretch the legato lines, create meaningful phrases and clearly shape and convey a whole which is normally difficult to grasp

The Danish String Quartet

combines juvenile audacity with mature thoughtfulness in a way which feels both perfectly balanced and wonderfully refreshing. Welcome back as soon as possible!

Mats Liljeroos

For Music Lovers

Kristeligt Dagblad

24 September 2011

The Danish String Quartet entered the podium to play Carl Nielsen's String Quartet no. 4 in F Major. The four lads who have played together since 2001 and who still have the glow of youth in their playing and their manner, lay their souls in the music from Frederik Øland's opening lyrical bowings to the last measure of Nielsen's lovely music. They played both with edge and spirit - four excellent musicians who seem to have

grown into one instrument: a string quartet.

The thought occurred to one, that Nielsen's Opus 44 must have sounded just as dewy fresh when the quartet was performed for the first time on the Fuglsang Manor in August 1906 and Nielsen wrote to a friend: " We have today played my new quartet, and it sounds as I anticipated. I do know the true nature of the string instruments". So does the Danish String Quartet. Their musicianship seems to be the higher meaning of chamber music. And of Carl Nielsen.

Peter Dürrfeld

Danes Sparkle In Hhh Concert

Famham Herald

23 February 2011

The Danish String Quartet came to Haslemere on Saturday evening and captivated the audience at the concert in St. Christophers Church. This was a concert of great entertainment and passion played by a young ensemble of considerable talent and verve. From the very first note of the opening piece in their programme, the Quartettsatz in C minor D703 by Schubert, the quartet, gave notice of their commitment and their keen sense of ensemble.

...'Schubert's Quartettsatz is a masterpiece in its own right an intense outburst from a 24-year old composer obsessed with death and so very close to his own. From the anguished and explosive opening bars, through the tender, song-like, second theme to the dramatic coda, this was a compelling interpretation.

The Quartettsatz was followed by Mozarts String Quartet in C major K465, known as the Dissonance from its unusual slow introduction. In contrast to the preceding Schubert, this quartet is optimistic and ebullient and was given suitably upbeat treatment by the four players of the Danish Quartet. A sparkling first movement was followed by a most delicate Andante cantabile a dancing Menuetto and Trio and an energetic, springy Allegro molto finale.

The evenings most substantial work followed the interval. Shostakovichs String Quartet No. 2 in A major Op. 68 is a 40-minute long piece completed in just 19 days in September 1944 and dedicated to Vissarion Shebalin, one of the few

friends who had defended Shostakovich in the dark days of 1936. This was an exciting, committed performance that fully deserved the enthusiastic reception it received. To round off a splendid evening the Danish players abandoned chairs and music stands to give an encore of Swedish/Celtic fiddle music.

Peter Andrews

Bold Danes Communicate Even In Silence

The News

21 February 2011

Proving that arts and artists know no bounds, this stunning Music in the Round concert ended with the Danish Quartet following heavyweight Beethoven with what was described as a Swedish tune and a Scottish dance. Yes, really.

In fact the young Danes were playing with foot-stomping relish, something they had heard from Swedish musicians in a Celtic band.

The encore further reflected though in totally contrasting style, the energy and earthy characterisation of a concert that was as bold in performance as it was in planning. That boldness certainly dominated the Op. 13 quartet by the players' compatriot Carl Nielsen - music that bears no small degree of the indomitable life-force that characterises his later masterpieces.

In Mozart's Dissonance quartet at the beginning of the concert, the uncompromising playing of the early chromatic writing sent shivers down the spine, as it should. And, compellingly, the clouds of concern were never quite blown away.

Then, at the end of the formal part of the programme, Beethoven's Opus 127 had both trenchancy in the dramatic opening chords and intense, concentrated songfulness in the adagio, with momentum maintained even at a slow tempo.

Above all, perhaps, these players know how to communicate with an audience - not least in Nielsen's and Beethoven's abrupt silences.

Mike Allen

Pittville Pump Room, Cheltenham

Music Web International

21 February 2011

The name may sound familiar, but over the past 75 years there have been no fewer than four ensembles known as the Danish Quartet in the English speaking world. This particular one (called Den Danske Strygekvartet in their homeland) is the latest, and its four youthful members came to prominence in the early years of this millennium. They have won several awards, including First Prize in the Eleventh London International String Quartet Competition.

On their current tour of Britain they are championing the music of their compatriot, Carl Nielsen. Although Nielsen is best known as a symphonist over here, he composed a substantial amount of chamber music. The musicians introduced us to the Quartet in G minor Opus 13 he composed in his early twenties but revised extensively before publication in 1900. Given the date I fully expected to hear echoes of Brahms in the music, but it was clear from the start that Nielsen had already found his own individual voice by that time, and there was much to admire in the energy the Quartet displayed in the restless first movement. Its second theme was much more placid and after more displays of energy the movement ended peacefully. The slow movement was full of glorious harmonies and lyricism, interrupted by a sprightly dance-like trio before reverting to the original tempo. and mood of serenity. The four young men clearly relished playing the scherzo with its rustic feel, sudden changes of tempo and a trio which incorporated folk elements. It is said that Nielsen struggled to complete the finale and the direction *allegro inquieto* may describe his mood at the time, yet the return to the restlessness of the first movement tended to mask any feelings of anxiety and the rhythmic vigour displayed by the Quartet could not fail to impress. Incidentally, the Danish String Quartet, made a CD of all of Nielsen's quartets in 2008.

It was encouraging to see the music of Thomas Adès forms part of the Quartet's repertoire. *Arcadiana* was originally a commission from the Endellion Quartet and is a set of seven miniatures, each an evocation of paradise, and calls for great virtuosity on the part of the players. The first, *Venezia Notturna*, abounded with eerie, nocturnal sounds and set the atmosphere for the pieces that followed with violist Asbjørn Nørgaard providing a gently rocking accompaniment for the ghostly violin duet between Frederik Øland and Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen. The chiming harmonics of *Das klinget so*

herrlich, das klinget so schön included barely perceptible references to Mozart's operas, while Auf dem Wasser zu singen alternated pizzicato with bowed lines. The Tango Mortale was given a suitably dramatic and rhythmic performance which caught one's attention from the start. The succeeding Embarquement could not have offered a greater contrast; inspired by Watteau's painting The Embarkation for the Island of Cythera the music reflected the pastel colours of the picture and undercurrents of uncertainty. There was a strong Elgarian feel to Albion with its lush harmonies and sure-footedness, and the foursome played it with obvious affection before venturing into the underworld in Lethe where Fredrik Sjölin played his cello quietly above the wind-chime sounds of the other instruments to evoke the river of forgetfulness.

The second half of the recital was devoted to more conventional fare, if one can characterise Beethoven's String Quartet in E flat Opus 127 as conventional. The musicians gave a very satisfying performance with a sublime slow movement and a waspish scherzando vivace. For an encore they offered a display of what one might term Scandinavian ceilidh music, which shocked a few members of the audience but also served to underline the versatility of this lively and fresh-sounding ensemble.

Passionate

Irish Examiner
30 June 2010

Carl Nielsens first string quartet, played by the Danish string quartet, winners of the 2009 string quartet competition, proved to be a rich, romantic, passionate work; imaginative, rhythmically interesting and excitingly played by the composers fellow countrymen.

Gramophone Editors' Choice 2007

The Gramophone
1 July 2007

Gramophone editors choice june 2007:

"The new Quartet, all in their early twenties, bring a freshness and energy plus a level of sheer accomplishment that I dont ever remember hearing in these works."

David Fanning

Surprising Lightness And Transparency

Flensburg Avis

1 July 2007

"Niensens works are performed with a surprising lightness and transparency."

An Auspicious Début

International Record Review

1 July 2007

"It is an auspicious début. These musicians play with tremendous energy, complete understanding of the idiom and consistently appealing tone."

Genuine Impact And Tension

Classics Today

1 July 2007

"The group's sonority is warm and full ... You can tell right away that this group knows how to project Nielsen's music with genuine impact and tension."

David Hurwitz

Plenty Of Focused Energy

BBC Music Magazine

1 July 2007

"The Young Danish Quartet brings plenty of focused energy to this music, and every movement has that 'certain current', without which Nielsen claimed his music was 'no good anymore'."

Youthful And Energetic Performances

New York Times

1 July 2007

"These are youthful and energetic performances. And the maturity and authority of the playing suggests that national identity matters. These young Danes seem to have a genuine insight into the music of their country's best known composer."

Lovely Tone And Plenty Of Poise

Dallas Morning News

1 July 2007

"The Young Danish String Quartet play with lovely tone and plenty of poise ... An interesting sidelight on the career of a great symphonist."

High Degree Of Directness

Klassik.com

1 July 2007

"It is rare to experience such a high degree of directness with a quartet"

Mature And Empathetic Interpretations

Klassisk

1 July 2007

"Mature and empathetic interpretations that can match just about anything."

They Make The Music Even Larger Than It Is

High Fidelity

1 July 2007

"They play intensely, virtuosly and with a burning empathy; I feel that they make the music even larger than it is."

Energy And Joy Of Playing

Berlingske Tidende

1 July 2007

How these boys can move and excite us! From the first second, they beam with energy and joy of playing... A cd which no

Nielsen-collection should be without.

Søren Kassebeer

A Remarkably Strong, Young Nielsen

Jyllandsposten

1 July 2007

"The Young Danish String Quartet impress with the first cd in a small Carl Nielsen-series... The flexibility, the rhythmical lightness, the strenght of the expression but also humour, where it is appropriate, make it a remarkably strong, young Nielsen."

A Music Making That Feels Complete

Dagens Nyheter

1 July 2007

"There is, of course, automatically a certain pleasure to be found in the encounter between very young musicians and the classics. But these danes combine the joy of exploring with a music making that feels complete. "

Lashingly Sharp

Politiken

2 May 2007

"Lashingly sharp ... The music is gathered in meaningful marathon performances of quartet art"

?????

CD of the year 2007

Thomas Michelsen

The Sky Is The Limit

Politiken

29 November 2004

What an explosion of talent! The quartet' s playing is youthful in the best meaning of the word, with a voluptuous drive and an appetite for strong expression, but the maturity which gives sensation, the quartet has already. The material is wonderful. The four youngsters breathe together and their playing blends

into a light, slim and softly round sound with warm, firm violins, light cello and an unexceptionally singing viola. In addition there is a clean precision with a clarity in detail of high class. But this is only the beginning: The quartet has a keen ear for the special in any musical situation. In works like Hans Abrahamsen's '10 Preludes' and Carl Niensens Quartet in

F-Major, the ideas were highly strung with swelling (but never in the least forced) fortissimi and whispering pianissimi, carefully chosen sound of character, marked accents and a consciousness of gestures which gave the expression meaning.

Both pieces encourage this, but on different grounds: The short movements in Abrahamsen's simple youthful piece which gave him his breakthrough as composer, deal with the finesse and peculiarity of each idea, eventually put in perspective by simple contrast. With Nielsen it must fit into a wider classical form, and this revealed the quartet's other and just as important quality: the ability to grasp the greater context and convey it naturally and with meaning.

The young musicians give the art of quartet's deep discussions and drama captivating and challenging dynamic life, and in Brahms: Quartet in C minor it was clearly this quality which stood in the foreground with a completely different use of the means than with the somewhat rebelling piquante and classisistic Nielsen. Here was a warm and romantic expression underlining the music the main force.

Jan Jacoby

A Smorgasbord Of Strings, Served With Youthful Vigor And Sense- Jolting Spices

New York Times

24 June 2004

The members of the Young Danish String Quartet are certainly young. All students at the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music in Copenhagen, they range from 19 to 21. Having already played together for several years and won several competitions at home and elsewhere in Europe, these eager musicians have embarked on a career.

The name of their quartet, though, would suggest that they are not planning a long career. Either that or, like the Puerto Rican pop group Menudo, which replaced members once they turned 16, the Young Danish

String Quartet will continue on
with a rotating roster of
Danes.

But there is no need to worry about this now. The

quartet made an impressive New York debut on Tuesday with a bracing program at Scandinavia House on Park Avenue. The musicians proved to be accomplished and appealing artists, all lanky, fresh-faced and serious-minded men whose hair varied in color from extremely blond to brownish-blond: Frederik Oland and Rune Sorensen (violins), Asbjorn Norgaard (viola), Carl-Oscar Osterlind (cello). Other fledgling ensembles from overseas might look to this concert as a model of how to introduce themselves to the United States. The program had news value. What do Danish musicians know that New York audiences don't? Danish music. So the evening opened with a vibrant, punchy 1973 work, "10 Preludes," by a leading Danish composer, Hans Abrahamsen. It was inspiring to see young musicians in an important debut dare to take the stage of the house's 168-seat hall and shake the audience alert with the grating, propulsive and atonal opening prelude of this episodic 20-minute work. There are echoes of Bartok in Mr. Abrahamsen's harmonic language and heavy use of ostinato figures (repeated melodic riffs and pitches and such). But quizzical and unexpected things keep happening. In one prelude a long, sinewy violin melody hovered atop creeping figures in the lower strings; in another the players broke into a restless statement of a gyrating tune, like some Danish brand of country fiddling. The curious final prelude was well behaved and Mozartean. Was it tongue-in-cheek? Not the way these musicians played it, with rigor and buoyancy.

Next came a seldom-heard work by the Danish master Carl Nielsen: Quartet in F,

composed in 1906.

While true to the music's essentially Neo-Classical idiom, the

players were alert to every intriguing oddity: the tendency of a repeated phrase to

go on obsessively, passages of aimless

and haunting harmony, outbursts of everywhich-way

counterpoint. I can't imagine a more involving performance.

After these two Danish works the musicians had earned the right, in a sense, to put

their stamp on a staple,

Brahms's String Quartet in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1. If at times

sustained high notes splattered or the sound quality turned rough when the

musicians became caught up in the intensity

and spontaneity of their performance,

who cared? This was a

committed and exciting account of a familiar work.

So, the

Young Danish String Quartet is off to a good start. And given their ages, they

can probably keep calling themselves young for

another 15 years and still claim truth

in advertising.

Antony

Tommasini