

German reviews from Spring 2011 BISQC Winner's Tour

<http://www.konzertdirektion.de/de/kammermusik/streichquartett/cecilia-string-quartet/pressestimmen.html>

Die Rheinpfalz - Ludwigshafen

“Three factors are decisive for high quality. First of all, I noticed the absolute homogeneity of the sound. One would often think that only a single instrument was playing, and that its range was radically expanding. Moreover, one could have hardly wished for a more beautiful quartet sound. The most fascinating part was, in fact, the extremely intensive determination of the musicians to shape the pieces, their creative fantasy, the multifaceted and diversified wealth of their musical diction.”

Bonner General-Anzeiger – Beethoven House

“The young ladies of the Cecilia string quartet left a grandiose impression. Chamber music of such irresistible freshness, without any technical errors, presented with seamless homogeneity - something like this is not easy to find.”

Fuldaer Zeitung

“They opened with Haydn's Op. 20/3. This showed willingness to take risks, because cultivated playing alone does not do justice to this music. An ensemble must be willing and able to follow the intricate paths the composer took beyond the conventional listening experiences created by classical harmony. And this is exactly what the four ladies did right from the start. They presented an expressive sound that sought to emphasize rather than to calm the mysteriousness beneath the sound surface, with a springy piano section that sustained the arcs of suspense across formal sections and communicated an intensity that avoided abruptness and yet impressed with great emphasis.”

Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung

“The ensemble was simply electrifying [...] when they played Dvořák's late work in G major, Op. 106, a piece infused with broad symphonic strokes. Here, they combined original detail work, nuance-rich colour and dynamics, eloquent emotionality and self-assured, hands-on virtuosity to an all-around convincing whole.”

Nürnberger Zeitung – Meistersinger Hall

“It seems one need not worry about the qualifications of the new crop of musicians in the supreme discipline of chamber music, the string quartet. The spirited performance of the Cecilia String Quartet developed a very cultured approach to Haydn's artfully woven Quartet Op. 20, no. 3 [...]. A dense musical atmosphere is developed in Quartet No. 7 by Dmitri Shostakovich. The piece was created as a musical memorial for his wife, Nina Warsar. It is rather impressive to witness how the team of four reconstructs the internalized musical language and expresses the idea of dying in the music.”

...continued

Weser-Kurier - Glocke Bremen

“In Mozart’s KV 387, the ensemble impressed through its perfect homogeneity, soulfully shared spirit and sophisticated formal dramaturgy of their music-making. [...] In Alban Berg’s Lyric Suite, the artists developed wide-ranging musical phrasing filled with a consistently startling intensity of expression. Between an almost inaudible piano and passionate eruptions, between ingenious counterpoint structures and the famous Tristan quotation in the last phrase, the music was so fascinating that the audience was left breathless. The applause continued for a long time, and this rightly so.”

Kreiszeitung Bremen - Glocke

“If it is already hard enough to find the right words to describe exceptional interpretations, it seems a completely impossible task this time. We heard an almost unimaginable level of articulation, communication, timbres, clarity of structure and, again and again, a deep musical rhetoric second to none. With the string quartet in G major, KV 387 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, [the Cecilia String Quartet] made it wonderfully clear that rhetorical exactitude of each individual note and wide, spontaneous, extreme emotional arcs do not need to be mutually exclusive. The way these two elements complemented each other and were even amplified to create theatrical drama sets new standards for the interpretation of this music. Admirable was also the balance between the individual instruments at their highest level of expression – it is incredible to watch and hear how each of the artists seems to be playing for her life – and the unified expression of the ensemble, into which such individuality rejoins perfectly every time. [...] Not only do we want to remember the Cecilia Quartet, we also want to hear them again in Bremen!”

Berliner Zeitung - Konzerthaus

“Enchanting [in Haydn’s Op. 20, No. 3] was the sensibility towards the sound, the transitions between melodic and harmonics, which ensured that the relationship between the four instruments unfolded to reveal acute presence at all times. Amazing was also the mastery that balanced each individual detail against the general rhythmic flow. Also in terms of tonal quality, mostly devoid of vibrato and yet intensive, the balance between expressiveness and interplay was almost dauntingly perfect, and the beauty of the tone in the plaintive melodic magic of the slow movement was simply unbeatable.”