

# JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET

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## THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

Concert review

### Juilliard Quartet sparkles at CCM

By Kyle Werner • Enquirer contributor • February 11, 2009

The internationally acclaimed Juilliard String Quartet performed Tuesday night at the College-Conservatory of Music's Corbett Auditorium as part of the Chamber Music Cincinnati series. **The musicians proved the acclaim is well-deserved.**

The concert opened with Franz Joseph Haydn's Quartet in C Major, Op. 20, No. 2. The quartet gave a sparkling, vivacious account of this work. While many ensembles strive for a perfectly homogenous sound, the Juilliard members each played with an individual quality. Violinists Joel Smirnoff and Ronald Copes, violist Samuel Rhodes, and cellist Joel Krosnick achieved a strikingly lyrical, almost operatic sound, which highlighted the elegant lines of Haydn's composition. **They brought a playful, lively spirit to the opening and concluding movements of the work. The second movement was full of dramatic contrast, while the third was bright and impetuous.**

The ensemble next turned to a work with which they have a close connection: "Ainsi la Nuit" by Henri Dutilleux. The quartet gave the American premiere of this scintillating work, which Dutilleux composed especially for them. **The musicians played this vibrantly colorful – and fiendishly difficult – work with confidence and dynamism. At times the music was intense; at others, it was trembling, remote, and ethereal.** Unfortunately, during the fifth movement a string broke on Joel Krosnick's cello. The performance halted as he went backstage to replace the string. Then the ensemble re-started at the beginning of the fifth movement and made it to the end unscathed. After intermission, the musicians performed Beethoven's Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 127. This work gave them a chance to showcase the elegance they displayed in the Haydn, along with the sharp contrasts they achieved in the Dutilleux. The first and second movements were rich and powerful. Once again they played with a lushly vocal quality, each member with a slightly different sound. At times the differences became a bit too apparent – their highly soloistic style of playing led to some lack of coordination of intonation and rhythm. However, their dynamics and turns of phrase were very satisfying. The third movement was jovial, and the concluding Allegro was inspiringly panoramic. The audience received this work with enthusiasm, and the musicians returned to perform the Finale of Haydn's Quartet in F Minor, Op. 20, No. 5 for its encore.

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