

ROSSETTI STRING QUARTET

Performing with Jean-Yves Thibaudet at Napa Valley's Festival del Sole

FROM:

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FESTIVAL REVIEW

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Light and Shade

By [Terry McNeill](#)

“The second half consisted entirely of the imposing Brahms Quintet for Piano and String Quartet, Op. 34. Am I alone in thinking this a work for a formal, winter season concert? Joining Thibaudet was the Rossetti String Quartet, which has played several concerts in San Francisco (see [review](#)) and has also gotten a lot of attention in Europe. The group is currently in residence at the Carlsen Music Center in Kansas. They gave a reading of Brahms' masterpiece that was homogeneous in sound and never in a hurry to get anywhere.

Thibaudet gave the initial Allegro non troppo just enough rhythmic urgency to move things along, and his musical duos with violist Thomas Diener highlighted the stately march of the second movement. Particularly striking was the players' tonal balance in the concluding *poco sostenuto*, beginning hauntingly on open strings and then leading through a short fugue to a fast coda. The playing was compelling, the pianist never content with an unaccented phrase and the Rossetti following apace.

It was grand Brahms, as granitic as the massive surrounding castle walls.”

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