

On Music and Dance – Frances Burnett and the Bowling Green Quartet

The Excelsior – Mexico City

By Maria Teresa Castrillon

Translated by Clifford Gallaut – *Professor of Romance Languages*

If only more often we had quartets (or quintets) of the quality just presented to us at the Mexican-American Institute for Cultural Relations and in the Sala Chopin. The two programs were different with the exception of the most beautiful Quintet by Schumann.

The Quartet has Paul Makara, first violin, Alan Smith, Cello; both founders of the Bowling Green Quartet some twenty-five years ago; Vasile Beluska, second violin and Pamela Ryan, viola, the latter two new members. To these we add the pianist Frances Burnett for the interpretation of the Quintet by Schumann.

In this concert at The Sala Chopin and enthusiastic audience enjoyed a concert of authentic quality. It is difficult to form a quartet and more difficult for it to persevere and remain a quartet. It is well known that famous quartets spent ten years of their existence playing but without talking to one another, due to disagreement. Continuous friction and diversity of opinion on matters of interpretation are a delicate matter. For this reason, there are few quartets and few of this quality.

Their program began with the Quartet Op. 77 in F Major by Haydn, the last work written by the Viennese composer since the following opus 103 is only a fragment. An extraordinary work to which the Bowling Green Quartet gave an interpretation that was correct in its classicism and plasticity and diversified in each one of the entrances of the instruments.

The Italian Serenade by Hugo Wolf followed, a work seldom performed and which is a veritable jewel. It was interpreted with great freshness and transparency. Finally came the grandiose Quintet for Piano and Strings, Opus 44 in Eb by Schumann (which all pianists would love to play) with the excellent pianist Frances Burnett (master teacher and concert artist in Europe and the United States). She interpreted this difficult work with great mastery and with consummate knowledge of Schumann; the dialogue with the others of the Quintet was remarkable. The audience truly enjoyed this concert of the highest caliber.