

Review of London Recitals

Making their London debut before embarking on a European tour the International Trio – aptly named since American, Rumanian and Jerman players are involved – immediately impressed by the quality and polish for their music-making. The technical foundations are unquestioned: perfect intonation, precise ensemble and exact rhythm informs all that they did, but more than that, there was complete accord in their interpretive ideas and a confident approach in their expression.

It was a nice compliment to open the recital with the Trio in D major Op.12 by the rarely heard Cipriano Potter, known here mainly as a academician but well-regarded by Beethoven (“Potter has visited me; he seems to be a good man and has talent for composition”). At first hearing the work displayed a Schubertain grace which the players captured with accomplishment, each contributing some personal element to the whole. The pianist, outstandingly brilliant throughout, was perhaps the most vital component; the cellist showed fine judgement and the violinists, cool undemonstrative leadership ensured a finished performance. The chello solo in the andante and the string partnership in the Scherzo were memorable moments in a stylish interpretation.

From the well-made piece to a work for genius; Beethoven’s Trio in D, Op.70 No.1 (“The Ghost”). Quickly adapting their style to the music the trio launched themselves into the challenging opening bars with splendid attack. Bigger tone was forthcoming when required, and the identity of views of the players was nowhere more apparent than in the mysterious slow movement. The concluding Presto was a model of clear and nimble ensemble - playing.

The final item was the Trio in D minor OP.32 by Arensky, a melodious work full of interesting opportunities for imaginative and colorful presentation. The players again matched their style with the music readily, and one welcomed the chance to hear the violinist in a more forthcoming mood. The elegiac third movement dedicated to the memory of the cellist Davidov, was played with sincere expression, while the Scherzo and finale sped along with delightful fluency.