

Review: Doric String Quartet, Wiltshire Music Centre

2:00pm Thursday 14th March 2013

By Reg Burnard

A LITTLE-known Haydn, some bubbling Bartok and one of Dvorak's most delicious slow movements, all from the soul of the Doric String Quartet, saw only a mere handful of empty seats. Strange how life can change from concert to concert.

But the Doric, basically the Centre's quartet in residence, are rather special. And, surely nothing to do with anything I wrote, there was no annoying foot shuffling.

Haydn's String Quartet in G minor, op 20, No 3, was an interesting starter: there was a glowing sensitivity in successive rising and falling scales with impressive precise unison playing.

The Bartok String Quartet No 5 had a joyful, exuberant flavour into which the Doric imparted a tingling feeling of urgency. It is immensely harmonic – just up the Doric's street.

And so to the gem of the evening, Dvorak's String Quartet in G major, Op 106, of which the slow movement was so movingly played.

The Doric gave it an intense, floating, airy sublimity. Alex Redington's first violin went into the clouds above a rich, multi-layered deep accompaniment. It was the sort of performance that transported listeners to a fireside, ideally with a port or brandy, in a favourite armchair.