

Quatuor Debussy/Debussy Quartet
in Yokohama

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MUSASHINO NEWSPAPER

by Yuki Takashi

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Debussy String Quartet in Philia Hall

While it's not very often that a French string quartet arrives upon Japan's shores, this particular one has performed here twice in the past few years. Upon attending their first event, I walked away with a favorable impression of the harmony within their musical performance. The latest performance produced a similar sound, albeit with a subtle difference due in part to the substitution of a new cellist.

The music played consisted of pieces native to France: Milhaud's "String Quartet No.4", D'Indy's "No. 2", and Ravel's "String Quartet". From Milhaud's blending of the charmingly diverse bold sound of a melancholy funeral march along with some local Brazilian flavor, an indescribably original worldly sound surfaced.

D'Indy too, left behind many a string quartet, however, No. 2 is truly ingenious with its elaborate composition technique; the four performers are able to keep up a stylish flow in the sound, without it becoming stagnant. Moreover, the quartet expressed the work boldly. Upon the final fortissimo, the audience broke out into applause but it wasn't until the end of the piece that the sound of the clapping filled the hall. It is a masterful concluding technique planned by D'Indy, himself.

The final piece by Ravel brought about a keen artistic sensation; it is a work in which the complete effort applied fills one's facial expression with color, among other feelings. The beginning, especially, gives the experience of handling ceramics that are smooth to the touch. The third movement could be compared to the rich poetic sentiment behind the fleeting feeling of a pale ink painting – simply unforgettable.

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