

Tokyo Quartet shows how it should be done

By Avigdor Zoromb
special writer

Strange as it seems, the Japanese are coming to the rescue in helping the Western world to preserve its artistic and cultural musical heritage.

This is not meant to downgrade other fine chamber groups in existence today. But the Tokyo String Quartet is among this selected elite. This group performed at Orchestra Hall recently on the Chamber Music

Society of Detroit series (CMS).

In addition to its remarkable artistic capability, this quartet is proof that the language of music is universal, transcending national boundaries and identities. The members of the Tokyo String Quartet were exposed to the musical institutions at home (the Toho School of Music) as well as the United States (Juilliard).

String quartets by Mozart, Beethoven and Debussy were performed — three masterful works representing

review

three diverse styles and periods. They offer challenges worthy of such a distinguished group.

THE TOKYO String Quartet exemplifies the art of chamber playing in the best sense. All instruments ac-

tively participate in the creation of music, with no "free rides." This concept was occasionally carried to extreme, as in the case of Mozart's Quartet No. 15 in D minor, K. 421. In some of the more exquisite melodic passages, the first violin would

sometimes fail to shine through the thick texture of the other instruments. But refined sound and expressiveness was the rule.

In Beethoven's Quartet Op. 127, the first of his "late" quartets, the Tokyo Quartet had the intensity, passion, stamina required to perform such a demanding work. The one reservation I had was in the first movement, in which the main theme sounded too heavily weighted, an aspect that hindered its free-flowing nature.

Debussy's quartet had the delightful impressionistic airiness without any compromise in its musical substance. It crowned one of the better programs of the CMS series this season.

The Tokyo quartet played the pizzicato movement from Bartok's string quartet No. 4 as an encore. This is the most famous movement of Bartok's six quartets.

The series concludes at 8 p.m. Friday with the Cleveland Quartet at Orchestra Hall of Detroit.

Painting abstracts

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boundaries around them. It is more cerebral to withhold dropping judgments or labels and simply let the art itself do the talking, so to speak.

Held has titled a painting with vast forms of yellow "Sea of Tranquility II."

THIS HORIZONTAL painting is 72 by 120 inches. However, yellow, as Held uses it, is anything but tran-

quil. It is insistent and demanding, a wonderful display of the handling of a single color, but tranquil? No way.

Held has been a leading figure on the American art scene since the late 1950s and this is a powerful show by a major artist. He studies the old masters, but doesn't do any preparatory drawings.

Donald Morris Gallery, 105 Townsend, Birmingham, is open 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday.



condo
queries

Robert M.
Meisner

Q. My basement was flooded with water that backed up through the floor drains. The flood was caused by a malfunctioning sump pump. Now the linoleum tile is warping, buckling and breaking. I have approached my homeowner's insurance company and the condominium association management agent. The management company claims that although the base-

ment floor is a common element, the floor covering is personal property. Therefore, the building insurance will not reimburse me for replacement of like quality linoleum tile. It is evident that the linoleum tile has been damaged by the water back-up through the floor drains which was caused by the malfunctioning sump pump. I need your help in proving the legal liability of

the management agent.

A. You must check the condominium documents to determine the extent of the insurance coverage which was to be maintained by the association. You should also check with your own insurance agent to see whether, if in fact it, covers "water damage" as a result of the backup. Generally, there is a provision in the condominium documents that the association will be responsible for the incidental damage to an apartment occasioned by a defect in the common elements. Your lawyer should determine whether the sump pump was a common element which caused the damage to your linoleum or

whether or not the linoleum was an item that came with your unit. If it was, more than likely the association may be responsible. It appears, however, that you will need to engage an attorney to present your problem to the association since it is apparently denying responsibility, perhaps unreasonably.

Robert M. Meisner is a Birmingham attorney specializing in condominiums, real estate and corporate law. Questions should be directed to him at 30200 Telegraph Road, Suite 407, Birmingham 48010. This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion.

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