

Unity – November 2010

***The West Australian*, 10 November 2010**

Reviewer: Neville Cohn

"...the ensemble gave abundant proof of the form that has propelled it to the forefront of the nation's chamber ensembles."

"It [Peter Sculthorpe, Quartet No 6] came across as a grief-stricken utterance blessedly free of the mawkishness that lesser players might have brought to bear on the music."

"There was, too, seamless joinery at top speed as the quartet negotiated rapid note streams with the nonchalance of mastery. The joyousness inherent in much of the first movement was evoked to a gratifying degree."

***The Australian*, 10 November 2010**

Reviewer: Mark Coughlan

"The highlight was the finale of the Beethoven. In the slow introduction to this movement, the quartet created a wonderfully charged atmosphere that carried over into the concluding allegretto."

"This larger-than-life approach worked well in Sculthorpe's String Quartet No 6. Here the ASQ's characterization brought the music to life, highlighting its plaintive soulfulness and expressive intensity. The quartet gave a commanding performance of this work, making the most of its various colouristic and textural effects."

***The Advertiser*, 13 November 2010**

Reviewer: Stephen Whittington

"This performance successfully conveyed the powerful sentiments that evidently motivated its composer [Peter Sculthorpe]."

"Strong dynamic contrasts were a feature of this performance, along with great vivacity in the fast movements and a cool eloquence in the slow movement."

***AUSTA*, November 2010**

Reviewer: David Sanzone

"Opening with Beethoven's Op 18, No 6 (La Malinconia), they brought out its edginess and energy, countered with charming and expressive playing in the tender slow movement."

"While playing with a warm, blended sound, the ensemble gave plenty of exciting and energetic contrasts. A thrilling final movement dazzled with tight ensemble skills, with the leader, Sophie Rowell displaying clear and articulated playing in the fast passages."

"The playing was free and filled the hall with luminous sound. The clarity of the first violin was matched by every voice in the ensemble."

***The Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 November 2010**

Reviewer: Harriet Cunningham

"It is always going to be a challenge for any string quartet to bring their own sense of style and authority to well-trodden repertoire but leader Sophie Rowell is clearly not one to be satisfied with technically perfect, well turned interpretations."

"...the statement of La Malinconia, was slow and deliberate, with the turn on the final cadence blooming emphatically, like a red poppy on a black suit."

"The Australian String Quartet engaged fearlessly with the harsh sonorities and captured the graceful austerity of this deeply individual voice."

"Mozart's String Quartet in C major, K.465, Dissonance, completed the program. It is a work that suits this ensemble well: searching and solemn at times but prone to erupting into virtuosity and brilliance."

"This fine quartet has ability and musicality in spades..."

The Daily Telegraph, 23 November 2010
Reviewer: Meldi Arkinstall

"Beautifully shaped phrases were carefully executed, and Rowell displayed her formidable technique in the last movement."

"Beginning with dramatic gestures coloured with a rich and vibrant sound, the first movement was both intense and reflective."

"The effortless simplicity required for Mozart is difficult to achieve, and this group managed it very well."