

Several good new string quartets have emerged in Australia over the last 15 years but possibly none so reliably excellent as Tinalley. I had the good fortune to be able to appreciate many aspects of the artistry of these four players when from 2016 to 2018 I was artistic director of the Coriole Music Festival in South Australia and Tinalley was our quartet in residence. What struck me forcibly were the virtuosity and musicianship they displayed in switching with apparent ease between the widely disparate styles of Bach, Bartok, Beethoven, Brahms, Debussy, Janacek, Mozart, Ravel, R. Strauss, Stravinsky and Vaughan Williams over the course of their concerts there. A particularly striking quality that they show – in addition to virtuosity and musicianship – is a consistently perfect balance between the four parts, an ability that enables the players to appear to be completely relaxed in their playing and therefore able to concentrate on their interpretation of the music on their stands.

Now they have turned their attention to Mendelssohn, a composer with whom I suspect they feel a particular affinity. Their recent recording of the Opus 12 and 13 quartets received a five-star review in *Limelight* magazine. The review contains the comment, "Their performance is remarkably unobtrusive...There is no distracting personal statement from any one player", supporting my contention that unusually dependable balance is perhaps their trademark quality.

However, the excellent suggestion from Universal that Tinalley record the rest of the Mendelssohn quartets means that the Quartet must raise the necessary funds to enable this project to proceed. It should certainly happen. Not only would it give music lovers the chance to hear this most gifted of Australian chamber music ensembles in all of this repertoire, but it would enable Tinalley considerably to increase its audience and its reputation in the crowded Australian market.

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