

# arts

## Prague Quartet

Last Wednesday evening at Convocation Hall, the Edmonton Chamber Music Society presented the renowned Prague Quartet in a recital of music by Haydn, Janacek, and Ravel. The quartet consists of Bretislav Novotny and Karel Pribyl, violins; Jubomir Maly, viola; and Jan Sirc, cello.

The Czechoslovakian composer Leos Janacek wrote two string quartets, the second of which, completed in the year of his death (1928), constituted a novel and felicitous choice for Wednesday's program. The work, in general, seemed curiously constructed: a seemingly endless succession of small, isolated, mutually exclusive and contrasting pockets of musical material. Although individual pockets were often incredibly beautiful and intense, any feeling of unity, continuity, or architectural growth and development was lacking. The first movement, for example, ended with a blatantly obvious appendage which seemed designed to function as a coda.

Janacek used several effects, some - such as the sul ponticello sections, which were hauntingly disembodied - to great advantage. Many of his thematic ideas appeared folk-like in character, redolent of improvisation. The piece was generally Slavic in character, but uniquely Janacek in expression.

The work is subtitled "Intimate Letters". This title may possibly provide an intellectual solution to the problem of understanding this work: that each section, as in a sentence, constitutes a complete, self-contained idea. If this was the case, however, the feeling of continuity normally found in a letter was lacking, and the music suffered accordingly. Possibly the "letters" were of an overly "intimate" nature; possibly they were even censored. In any event the reader-listener was compelled to search between the lines and, as is usually the case in such circumstances, the results were frustrating.

The Ravel Quartet in F major comprised the second half of the program. Although technically polished and musically refined the performance was not an unqualified success. The basic problem appeared to be that of temperament; the dissension between the performers' and the composer's styles was constantly in evidence. That is not to say that a Slavic quartet can not perform French impressionistic music; but it is to say that this performance failed to convey the sensuality and richness which, for example, I associate

with the opening Tres doux. Mr. Maly projected a ravishing sound in the slow movement.

Ensemble was, for the most part, clean and balances were good. In all, a rather pleasant evening, with the quartet shining in the Janacek and in its encore: the finale of Dvorak's familiar Opus 96 Quartet in F major. The evening opened with a dutiful reading of the fourth quartet from Haydn's Opus 76, the "Sunrise".

F.N. Crory

## COCKBURN; EXCELLENCE

Since the release of his first album in 1970, Bruce Cockburn has firmly established himself as one of Canada's finest musicians. Always innovative, Bruce has found a way on each of his recordings to push his music to the outer perimeters of excellence, without ever losing touch with the things that have made his songwriting exemplary in the world of today's composers. A look at a partial list of people who have recorded Bruce's songs attests to the above: Chet Atkins, Anne Murray, Tom Rush, Valdy, David Wiffen, and George Hamilton IV, are just a few.

In the years 1970, 1971 and 1972, Bruce won the coveted Juno Award as Canada's top folk singer. 1973 found Bruce moving away from the strict confines of folk or acoustic music; with the release of "Night Vision," much of Bruce's early musical training began to show. Touches of jazz are a result no doubt of Bruce's two years at the Berklee School of Music, and the touches of rock - Bruce

spent most of the late sixties performing with bands.

Of course, most people by now know that Bruce wrote the music for *Going Down The Road*, but it is less widely known that the movie was named after Bruce's song of that title.

On the concert front by 1973, Bruce sold out most of the concert halls in Canada, including Massey Hall, The National Arts Centre, Place Des Arts, and the Rebecca Cohn. Once again, in 1974, he will be touring coast to coast in Canada. This year, Bruce will be accompanied by Gene Martynec and guitar. Gene has been producing Bruce's records from day one; the latest album, "Salt, Sun & Time", is in fact in largest part, only Bruce and Gene. Their concerts will be featuring most of the songs on the new album.

It is almost impossible to categorize Bruce Cockburn.

Excellence is the only word that would seem to sum it all up. He wouldn't have it any other way



If you want to meet these interesting looking characters, make sure that you don't miss Yevchenia Miroshnischenko, coloratura soprano and Dmytrio Hnatiuk, baritone, at the Jubilee

Auditorium, on Friday, November 5th, 8:00 p.m.

Tickets for Friday's concert are available at The Ticket Office, The Bay Downtown.

Students can obtain tickets for half price.

(Earth News Service)

After a history of last minute cancellations, collapsing on stage, and inability to perform for various reasons, Joe Cocker is definitely back, working and rocking.

Cocker's managers and promo people had been worried about the current tour marking the British singer's return to the stage -- Joe hasn't been up to working the past few years. At the beginning of the tour, Cocker's organization was so worried the tour might kill him that they attempted to persuade him to cancel. Cocker decided to go on. After a slow start in Los Angeles, however, Cocker has made every date, starting a bit shakily, but performing long and hard, as if trying to prove to faithful fans that he can still do it.

Reviewers comments on the Cocker tour have ranged from "disappointed" to "tragic" to "his voice has become a croak". Anyone who knows of Joe Cocker, however, knows that he doesn't sound like Tony Bennett anyway. While Cocker was reportedly sick on stage at last Friday's concert at San Francisco's Winterland, he was a hard-working -- and yes, hard-drinking -- Joe Cocker, at the Saturday night performance. While the performer himself may be suffering, his voice has not suffered -- the raspy, bluesy voice still does "Delta Lady" as well as in Woodstock days.

Those who remember Joe Cocker from "Woodstock" -- he was one of the biggest hits of both the festival and movie --

would be a little surprised at the star's appearance. The rather jerky and spastic-moving performer in high-heeled starchy boots is gone. The current performer is a bit wobbly, with only a touch of the rocking, jerky movements of before; however, when Cocker is at the microphone, the sound is the same.

Cocker's current tour is being noted for his long sets. At both San Francisco dates, Cocker performed for well over an hour -- a feat of accomplishment for any solo performer, but particularly for a performer who drives himself and his voice the way Cocker does. Although the beginning of his Saturday concert was marked by the performer taking long drinks of beer between numbers, Cocker made it. In fact, in the middle of his set, he suddenly seemed to revive and finished his performance without aid of liquor, performing the fans' old favorites to the frenzied cheers of the crowd.

At the Saturday concert, the audience wouldn't let Cocker off the stage. Screaming and shouting "Joe!", "Joe!", "Joe!", the crowd brought Cocker back for an encore even after the long, hard set. Cocker performed "With a Little Help From My Friends", with the crowd helping him along. When the lyrics asked "What would you do if I sang out of tune?" the crowd went into a roar. The cheers continued long after Cocker left the stage for the final time that evening.



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