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STRING QUARTET WOWED CROWD

By Russell Kilde for the Daily News

Do yourself a favour. Go and purchase a recording by the Lafayette String Quartet. Saturday's performance at the Port Theatre proved why these artists-in-residence at the University of Victoria have such an esteemed international reputation. With the inclusion of guest pianist Bruce Vogt, it was a magnificent evening of outstanding musicianship.

The women of the Quartet play with total passion. They interpret the music with their whole bodies, so watching them is as absorbing as hearing them. The music emerges from their bodies, the instruments and the silence around them with impeccable timing. Ann Elliott-Goldschmid was justifiably proud when she told us the musicians now own their instruments which, dating from the mid-18th to the mid-19th century, have wonderful warmth and tonal compatibility.

The program opened with Mozart's String Quartet No. 15 in D minor, K. 421. The piece has a courtly flavour to it: often dramatic and interspersed with light dance rhythms and lush melody lines.

Next was a stellar performance of String Quartet No. 3 in F major, Op. 73 by Shostakovich. This piece has all the colours and characters of a Chagall painting. Dramatically and precisely played, it enthralled the audience.

Vogt joined the Quartet for the Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34 by Brahms. The sweeping phrases of this lush epic composition were heightened by the total physical immersion of all the musicians.

If you missed this concert, by all means catch the Quartet when they next perform in town. You will find yourself on your feet applauding an uplifting, mesmerizing performance.