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Young Concert Artists, Inc.

# MODIGLIANI STRING QUARTET

## Strad

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### CHAMBER



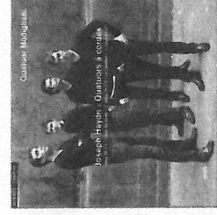
the-Strad SELECTION

Polished Haydn from the Modigliani Quartet



**HAYDN** String Quartets in G major op.54 no.1, in G minor op.74 no.3 'Rider' & in B flat major op.76 no.4 'Sunrise'

Modigliani Quartet  
Mirare MIR 065



These musicians ooze musical insight, unanimity and polish. Their interpretations of the outer movements of op.74 no.3 are powerfully

dramatic without ever going into overdrive, and their account of the slow movement flows freely, even if it lacks some of the profundity and contrasts of Haydn's inspiration. Their Menuetto is on the brisk side for an Allegretto, but little of the trio's chromatic and contrapuntal detail is obscured.

The players use silence wisely in the first movement of op.76 no.4 and contribute some finely wrought playing and delicacy of rhetoric in the grave, ethereal Adagio. They reproduce the joyous, rustic character of the minuet and trio with élan and negotiate the finale with pleasing sforzandos in rubato and well-graduated tempo increases towards the brilliant coda.

Careful shaping and weighting of the line continue effortlessly from one to another in the opening movement of op.54 no.1, though the ensemble of the final cadence is slightly untidy. These players fashion a flowing account of the Allegretto with striking delicacy and well-blended sonority. Leader Philippe Bernhardt's spontaneous rubato is delightful, though his execution of the dotted rhythm of the Menuetto seems unusually severe. Cellist François Kieffer contributes neatly to the dance-like trio. The final Presto seems somewhat steady, but nevertheless combines lean athleticism, lightness and appropriate bonhomie.

Close microphone placement allows various unscripted noises to be audible and reduces the dynamic range such that Haydn's mezza voce indications seem to be ignored. Nevertheless, the resultant sound quality is spacious, warm and clear.

ROBIN STOWELL

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