

Press reviews | August 2026

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The Isidore String Quartet Storms the Olympus of Chamber Music

This recording stands out for its directness, emotional honesty, and a maturity that far surpasses the musicians' years. The Isidore Quartet unfolds a transparent, conversational dialogue—here, there is no lecturing, but rather listening, intervening, and shared smiles. The Capriccio thrives on provocative energy and rugged directness, the Menuetto exudes a playful lightness with a wink, and the closing Fuge ties everything together with compelling logic, culminating in a liberating resolution. A perfect contrast is provided by Samuel Barber's famous Molto adagio from Op. 11—a tricky piece for a debut, as sentimentality lurks around every corner. Yet the quartet strikes a touching balance: the cantilena is not served up smoothly, but rather as a painful, earthy process. The viola and cello lend the music warmth and depth, the tension held to the brink of pain—and the silence that follows lingers long afterward. The phrasing displays an impressive maturity. This is a debut that not only impresses but also piques curiosity about everything yet to come from this ensemble.

Online Merker | CD Adorations | Dirk Schauß | March 26th, 2026

Reconciliation in the Spirit of the Enlightenment

Their clean, sometimes lush yet never exaggerated playing offers profound insights into the emotional world of the traveler to America upon his return home.

Frankfurter Neue Presse | Alte Oper Frankfurt | Ulrich Boller | March 23rd, 2026

A Joy to Behold: The Isidore String Quartet at Florian-Waldeck-Saal

From the very first notes of Haydn's Quartet in B-flat Major (Op. 76 No. 4, "Sunrise"), the audience was immediately captivated by the elegance of the performance and the extraordinarily lively and refined playing of the Isidore String Quartet. Both in Brahms and Dvořák, the richness of nuance in their interpretation stood out as a chapter of its own, with sophisticated gradations of sound and colour. This was complemented by exquisitely balanced dynamics, as well as the grace and elegance of the finale in Brahms.

Die Rheinpfalz | Mannheim | Gabor Halasz | March 20th, 2026

Technically Demanding and Fragmented

The entire section is marked by latent to overt unrest. Politically, one might even speak of formal equality without real integration, addressing the composer's [Childs, 4th String Quartet] intent. Fascinating throughout and brilliantly staged by the musicians. Musically, it blends expressionist and impressionist harmonies with classical form, while also incorporating typical American influences such as gospel, minimalism, jazz, and blues. The Isidore Quartet shone here, proving its class and mastery above all in this interpretation.

hboscaiolo.blogspot.com | Alte Oper Frankfurt | Helmut Wäldele | March 20th, 2026

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Debut at Wigmore Hall London

At its Wigmore Hall debut, this all ensemble keenly displayed precisely the qualities that led to its winning the Banff International String Quartet Competition in 2022. In Haydn's 'Sunrise' Quartet in B flat major op.76 no.4, the musicians combined a range of tonal colouring (including sometimes minimal vibrato) and attack with pristine cohesion, always underpinned by joy and naturalness. Most memorable, though, was the group's command of atmosphere in the Adagio, in which time seemed suspended.

The Strad | Edward Bhesania | March 20th, 2026

Bridge-Builders Between Eras and Cultures

It is rare, but it happens: Familiar musical masterpieces, which one might think they know inside and out, suddenly reveal unexpected novelties. This was the experience for listeners at the debut performance of the New York-based Isidore Quartet, founded in 2019, at the Cologne Philharmonic. As a whole, the ensemble possesses a beautiful fundamental sound, whose brilliance and sensuality never come at the expense of vitality and an ever-eventful "here and now" in the music.

Kölner Stadtanzeiger | Philharmonie | Markus Schwering | January 23rd, 2025

A chamber music lightning strike

The Isidore String Quartet showed with intensity, sophistication and humour why it won the International String Competition [in Banff] in 2022. The quartet presented the contrapuntally masterfully constructed Scherzo in an incredibly exciting way. The combination of the voices acting against and with each other reached the pinnacle of artistry and unfolded its striking effect as an eerie ghost dance.

Tegernseer Zeitung (Münchner Merkur) | Tegernsee | Marcus Vitolo | July 3rd, 2024

These four young men were charm personified combining easy grace with carefree beauty and using vibrato only discreetly to colour the sound carefully.

theARTSdesk | Edinburgh International Festival | Simon Thompson | August 29th, 2023

Benjamin Britten's String Quartet no.2 concluded the concert; the Isidore's nuanced playing in the Allegro calmo allowed for long lines and space for the music to breathe. The rhythmic precision and clarity of the Vivace were technically impressive, while the Chacony featured terrific individual solos from each member, culminating in a powerful ending. The commitment and artistry of this young quartet were wonderful to hear and I look forward to following its development as it matures.

The Strad | Leah Hollingsworth | May 23rd, 2023

Exquisite poise and balance.... the Isidore projected the infinite variety that Beethoven mines. Time stood still... exceptional.

Chicago Classical Review | Tim Sawyier | January 14th, 2023

Perfect tonality, precision and an unshakable concentration... the performance earned the quartet a well-deserved standing ovation and no doubt an open invitation to come back.

Arizona Daily Star/Tucson.com | Cathalena E. Burch | December 7th, 2023

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A focus and command beyond their years... the sweeping coherence and blazing virtuosity of their narrative had the audience leaping to their feet at the end.

Violinist.com | Laurence Vittes | September 15th, 2022