

When using these press excerpts, please comply with copyright regulations!

In the [South African] works, it becomes clear just how far the quartet pushes the boundaries of its instruments. The musicians do not merely bow—they scrape the bow across the strings, strike the instruments rhythmically, stamp their feet, or let their voices ring out. From the four string instruments emerges an entire sound laboratory. These extended playing techniques lend the short compositions a powerfully physical presence—music that is not just heard, but almost felt. A particularly intense moment comes just before intermission: the entire Mirror Hall joins in a sung sound, becoming part of the music itself.

Kölner Stadtanzeiger | Timon Brombach | March 15th, 2026

Tones as Love Letters: Emotional Storms with the Signum Quartet in Bad Tölz

Tones as love letters—unfolded with such artistry by the Signum Quartet that their performance became a Janáček masterclass. Here, exploring the intersections between rock and classical music is part of the program. Even You Really Got Me by The Kinks made ears prick up, revealing how rock music, at its core, is also chamber music.

Bachtrack | Bad Tölz | Michael Vieth | February 3rd, 2026

Shimmering and Chirping

Concert series featuring clarinet quintets only become truly interesting from the fourth concert onward. The first three programs practically write themselves: first Mozart (who hasn't been moved by him?), then Brahms (who hasn't been touched by him?), followed by Carl Maria von Weber (who doesn't appreciate him?). But then comes, for example: Max Reger (who even knows that?).

Before the performance, Jörg Widmann introduces Reger's Clarinet Quintet with remarkably engaging words—he is about to perform it with the Signum Quartet. The key? A major, like Mozart. The variation technique? Like Brahms. The chromaticism? Not like Weber, but like Wagner. There's also the great admiration for Reger within Schönberg's circle. But perhaps most importantly: you can feel Widmann's love for this floating, all-encompassing music that Reger composed in 1915, shortly before his death.

Of course, this music lacks the ingratiating melodies of its predecessors, and unlike Mozart's quintet, no one will be whistling Reger in the men's room after the concert. Yet the first movement, Moderato ed amabile, exudes a rugged, delicately bittersweet charm, while the weighty Largo—the third movement—is filled with sorrow, its many descending figures haunting the listener. Sandwiched between them is a delightful Scherzo of melancholic tenderness, with the viola prominently featured.

VAN Magazin | Berlin | Albrecht Selge | Dezember 8th, 2025

Press reviews | August 2026

With due musical élan, Signum set to work, driving the piece forward with relentless momentum and a tight meter, shaping the melodic interjections, the striking pizzicato accents, the almost jazz-like bursts, and the shimmering high-register passages into a fascinating, kaleidoscopic whole. A captivating musical experience full of surprises, which the enthusiastic audience rewarded with prolonged applause.

Bremen with Nils Mönkemeyer | Gerd Klingenberg | October 28th, 2025

What a CD! One cannot stop marveling.

Fono Forum | CD Flaring | Susanne Benda | October 2025

...performances of great conviction throughout this multifaceted and demanding programme

The Strad | CD Flaring | Carlos María Solare | September 2025

The dramatic passages are approached with verve but without too much pressure. The quiet parts are played very delicate, almost fragile. With their absolutely profound playing, crystal-clear articulation and thoughtful interpretation, the Signum Quartet makes this little-known South African music a first-class listening experience

Deutschlandfunk | CD Flaring | Klaus Gehrke | broadcast September 2025

... tremendous performances and pitch-perfect sound. Recommended.

Gramophone | CD Flaring | Guy Rickards | August 2025

There it is again, that tone I first encountered in the Kronos Quartet's Pieces from Africa: a finger-piano-like, percussive style—supported by pizzicati and the like—wonderfully light-footed and effortlessly flowing, as we now hear again in Komeng by the South African composer Mokale Koapeng. The piece opens the Signum Quartet's CD of music from South Africa. But it doesn't stop there: stylistically, the music is far broader...

Jazz'n'More | Thomas Meyer | July/August 2025

Koapeng's treatment of the material and the Signum's realisation of it, is breathtaking.

The Signum Quartet propel us through it with consistent attack which has a superbly mediated aspect of savagery to it too – virtuosic, scary and thought provoking. „perfectly judged performance“ I thought the Signum's performance here was precise, open-hearted and mesmerising, a fine conclusion to an important album. Huge credit must go to the Signum Quartet for their curation of this disc and the consistent excellence of the performances over a range of styles and influences.

Music Web Interational | CD Flaring | Dominic Hartley | July 2025

Only a bold record label like ECM could have produced A Dark Flaring, a CD that shifts the spotlight from the art music of the Euro-American canon toward the neglected compositional world of South Africa“ „performed with persuasive intensity by the German Signum Quartett“ „But the most powerful

Press reviews | August 2026

voice is Matthijs van Dijk with (rage) rage against the (2018), a furious work in which the cello channels the rebellious spirit of Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin.

la Repubblica | CD Flaring | Gregorio Moppi | July 2025

...performed excellently by the Signum Quartet.

Rondo | CD Flaring | Manuel Brug | July 2025

The Signum Quartet offers world-class

This is how you want string quartets to play! Shaped in every motivic fibre, eloquently articulated, precisely phrased, agogically structured, dynamically differentiated, as well as gesturally pointed to question, answer, agreement, counter-speech. That is world class. This is how one would like to hear string quartets played by the Signum Quartet.

Kölner Stadtanzeiger | Philharmonie Köln | Rainer Nonnenmann | October 29th, 2024

The grandiose finale is Beethoven's revolutionary, groundbreaking "Grosse Fuge". The ensemble performs the novel, free tonal language of dissonance and contrapuntal complexity with unheard-of archaic explosiveness and visionary, upright sublimity, but also allows brief moments of intimate, tender beauty to shine through. An evening of chamber music the likes of which Ingolstadt has probably never experienced before.

Donaukurier | Ingolstadt | Heike Haberl | June 27th, 2023

In the song arrangement, the ensemble brings its instruments to sing beguilingly. In the two quartets, No. 1 and No. 15, with their characteristic gestures, succeed in dramatic intensity, intensity, pointed drasticness, roughness, shimmering suspense, tenderness, earthly momentum and heavenly melodic bliss. It is very stirring and deeply touching. Perfect interplay.

concerti.de | CD Lebensmuth | EW | June 2023

The Signum players relish its rhythmic vitality with a feather-light touch, while plumbing the unexpected emotional depths of the following Siciliano; an agreeably lilting Ländler of a Minuet is followed by a whirlwind Finale. ... A 'Death and the Maiden' that stands tall in a crowded field.

The Strad | Schubert CD - Ins Stille Land | Carlos Maria Solare | January 2021

... an affecting new way of playing and listening to Schubert ... As if they were singers themselves, the quartet in the transcriptions plays with a sensitivity and attention that seems to carry over to their playing of the quartets. ...Prepare for a deeply moving experience.

Strings magazine | Schubert CD - Ins Stille Land | Laurence Vittes | March-April 2021

... passionate, often brilliant, but also clear and lean ... a D 810 finale so swift that it feels genuinely dangerous ... an album that repays careful and repeated listening.

Gramophone | Schubert CD - Ins Stille Land | Richard Bratby | January 2021

Press reviews | August 2026

The Signum Quartett's players are at their best in the slow and quiet segments, which hold special concentration – the variations' theme is a good example, as well as the Haydn-like slow movement of the early String Quartet, D. 74. After few listening sessions, I came to appreciate their tender and inward-looking performance of the String Quartets, as well as their clever way of storytelling through the song arrangements.

The Classic Review | Tal Agam | November 2020

This interpretation presented by the Signum Quartet has nothing massive to it and starting from its very first beat one can hear the quartet's preference of a light aesthetic which reminds us of their last Schubert recording which we liked so much.

Diapason | Beethoven CD | Jean-Michel Molkhou | April 2020

That energy was set up by Walther, Van Dijk, Schmitz and Signum's first violinist, Florian Donderer, in the Schubert, a performance as boldly imagined as a symphony, with startling rhythmic daring in the scherzo and timbres that ranged from ashen to silver in the variations.

The Times | Kings Place London | December 5, 2018