



PACM 085

# The Hollywood Quartet

Brahms • Dvorák • Schubert • Smetana



Hollywood Quartet flourished briefly during the early years of the long-playing record. Its leader, Felix Slatkin (father of the conductor, Leonard Slatkin) was a pupil of Zimbalist and Remer, and in 1937 became leader of the 20th Century Fox Orchestra. All the members of the Quartet were principals in various Hollywood film studio orchestras, and the ensemble did not attract attention outside the West Coast of America until the advent of LP. On its first appearance in 1952, the authors of *The Record Guide*, Edward Sackville-West and Desmond Shawe-Taylor, hailed the Schubert String Quintet (with Kurt Reher as second cello) as "one of the very best in the discography of chamber music", no small claim but one that does not seem to me overstated. I have periodically played this version over the years and with unflinching satisfaction for apart from their technical finish and perfect ensemble, they seem to penetrate further below the surface than do most of their rivals. I have also long admired their account with Victor Aller of the Brahms F minor Quintet, which it so happens that I played to a visitor quite recently. It is a powerful and thoughtful performance, and holds its own against such distinguished rivals as Serkin with the Busch Quartet from the 1930s, and the 1969 Eschenbach/Amadeus. The Dvorak originally appeared in harness with the Third Quartet of Dohnányi, and my first reaction was to regret that EMI had not left this coupling undisturbed — until, that is, I heard the Smetana. Both these performances were new to me and both strike me as hardly less superb than their companions. The style of these artists has dated much less than many other ensembles: they possess splendid attack and finesse, superb blend and flawless intonation, though there is at times an unrelieved intensity and glare in the leader's tone. The sound is remarkably good for its period with plenty of presence and body, though the acoustic is on the small side. Those who recall the originals will need no promptings from me to invest in this set.

R.L., *Gramophone*, February 1982 - *excerpt, review of EMI reissue from which these transfers were drawn*

### Transfer notes

Sometimes I transfer and remaster recordings for purely selfish reasons - the simple desire to play the records and then hear them in their full glory after remastering. This is one of those occasions: one of my favourite chamber ensembles playing some of my favourite music. I had not read the review reprinted here until I was intimately acquainted with the recordings, and I'm happy to see my own judgement mirrored. The records were all appeared in mint condition and played perfectly. Pitching was unusual however: it's hard to believe the quartet played at the unusually high pitch of A4~450Hz at which some of these recordings were found, leading me to suspect errors in EMI's 1982 transfers. Here they're pitched to concert standard 440Hz. I also noticed the acoustic being "on the small side" and have helped open it out slightly. XR remastering has performed wonders with instrumental tone, with the final results bringing me the great personal satisfaction and enjoyment I'd hoped for. **A.R.**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)  
SARL Pristine Audio, 144 Rue de l'Eglise, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France - Tel. (00) 33 533 821857  
[www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)

# THE HOLLYWOOD STRING QUARTET



PACM 085



**BRAHMS** Piano Quintet  
**DVORÁK** String Quartet No. 12 "American"  
**SCHUBERT** String Quintet  
**SMETANA** String Quartet No. 1 "From my Life"

Studio recordings, 1951-55



## The Hollywood String Quartet

### BRAHMS Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro non troppo (11:43)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante un poco adagio (9:02)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Scherzo (*Allegro*) (7:40)
- 4 4th mvt. - Finale (10:49)

Victor Aller, piano

### \*SMETANA String Quartet No. 1 in E minor, T.116 "From my Life"

- 5 1st mvt. - Allegro viva appassionato (7:05)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Allegro moderato *à la polka* (5:22)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Largo sostenuto (9:02)
- 8 4th mvt. - Vivace (6:28)

### SCHUBERT String Quintet in C, D.956

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro ma non troppo (13:55)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Adagio (13:17)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Scherzo (*Presto - Andante sostenuto - Presto*) (8:44)
- 4 4th mvt. - Allegretto (8:54)

Kurt Reher, cello

### \*DVORÁK String Quartet No. 12 in F, Op. 96, 'American'

- 5 1st mvt. - Allegro ma non troppo (6:49)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Lento (7:54)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Scherzo (*Molto vivace*) (4:02)
- 8 4th mvt. - Vivace ma non troppo (4:55)

**Felix Slatkin, Paul Shure** violins

**Paul Robyn, Alvin Dinkin\*** viola

**Eleanor Aller** cello

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a photograph of  
**The Hollywood String Quartet**

#### Brahms Piano Quintet

Recorded 30-31 March, 1954  
First issued as Capitol P.8269

#### Smetana Quartet No. 1

Recorded 2 November, 1955  
First issued as Capitol P.8331

#### Schubert Quintet

Recorded 15-17 January, 1951  
First issued as Capitol P.8133

#### Dvorák Quartet No. 12

Recorded 23-24 January, 1954  
First issued as Capitol P.8307

Transfers from EMI RLS 765

Total duration: **135:41**

For a full catalogue visit  
[www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)  
or call : (00) 33 979 622713  
© 2013 Pristine Audio