

## Vaghy Quartet with Tsutsumi

# Extraordinary performance

By GRAHAM GEORGE

Two magnificent techniques and two magnificent expressive capacities came together Tuesday night in Grant Hall, when the Vaghy String Quartet with Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, cellist, played the Schubert C major Quintet for Strings.

The work itself is perhaps unique in the history of chamber music in its ravishing beauty combined with overwhelming power. (We may observe as far from unique footnote to history that, written in 1828 — the year of the composer's death — it was not performed until 22 years later.)

And the executants, Deszo Vaghy, violinist, David George, violinist, Tibor Vaghy, violist, Robert Dodson, cellist, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, cellist, are of a calibre able to maintain the physical and emotional tension demanded by this huge, 50-minute work.

I think it is true that, on the whole, the now considerable body of listeners interested in chamber music knows very well how fortunate we are to have the Vaghy Quartet resident here. But when they from time to time put on a performance which even by their standards is extraordinary it may not be unreasonable to let them know that we noticed.

I have remarked before that one of their outstanding characteristics is the intensity with which they as it were hurl themselves at music of a vigorous sort, and this quality, along with others such as getting the speeds right and managing alterations of speed with the art - concealing art that only masters of art can achieve, was strongly in evidence during the performance of this stupendous work.

I have now run out of adjectives, and that I use them

all up on one subject is perhaps the best indication of the quality of what happened.

Before the quintet (I am treating the program backwards, for reasons which will become apparent) we heard a relatively new work — though written seven years ago — the String Quartet by Peter Paul Koprowski. Mr. Koprowski is a young Pole who is now almost a Canadian, teaching as an assistant professor at McGill University. His music has a sort of fragmentary, lacy character which gave me the impression that if either the composer or the performers made a mistake the result would be chaos for a considerable length of time. But neither of them did, so it wasn't.

Someone made the comment that a program - note had implied that the work

was meant to be aleatoric — i.e., leaving the performers a good deal of leeway as to how and when they would play what was before them. If it was — and I am led to believe that to some extent it was — I can only say that I never heard such precision - tooling of chance in my life, and I don't see how this highly organised music could be done successfully any other way.

We come now to the sting in the tail; and in view of my lavishing of praises in my first few paragraphs the quartet may forgive me for remarking that in the other Schubert — the one that began the program: the so-called "quartet movement" in C minor — they didn't seem to me to find their sea-legs.