

## French Mastery: String Quartets by Debussy and Rivier with the Mandelring Quartett

### MANDELRING QUARTETT

Sebastian Schmidt, violin • Nanette Schmidt, violin  
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The second part of the Mandelring Quartett's recording project dedicated to French repertoire juxtaposes the "classic" Debussy with an almost forgotten composer of the following generation: Jean Rivier. His two string quartets, the first of which is recorded here for the first time, are a discovery: masterfully composed, passionate and extraordinarily varied.





The Mandelring Quartett's latest double release is dedicated to French repertoire. The first CD, released in April 2021, presents Maurice Ravel's ground-breaking string quartet and the equally colourful one by his contemporary Fernand de La Tombelle. This second release juxtaposes Claude Debussy's quartet with Jean Rivier's two companion works rooted in neoclassicism – an exciting combination!

The immense variety of colours in Claude Debussy's opus 10 continues to fascinate to this day. Paul Dukas compared the unusual harmonies to a "splendid, artfully patterned tapestry"; chromaticisms and whole-tone scales, echoes of Javanese gamelan music, pizzicato and playing with mutes envelop the work in a shimmering cloak of sound.

This quartet repertoire "classic" is followed by a premiere recording of the first of Jean Rivier's two string quartets. The composer, born in 1896 and dying in 1987, led an inconspicuous life, "no scandals, no pompous titles", as a magazine article from 1972 put it. Perhaps that is why his name is largely unknown today, even though his compositions were successful early on. He wrote more than 200 works in almost all genres, and although he remained committed to a neoclassical aesthetic throughout his life, his oeuvre is extremely diverse and varied. This is also reflected in the two quartets written in 1924 and 1940. Rivier's works are characterised by a masterly sense of architecture and complex contrapuntal textures, rich in contrasts and strong emotions. According to the music commentator Paul Landormy, writing in 1943, "Jean Rivier enchants us, touches us, moves us [...]. Sometimes, however, he grips us hard, shakes us, oppresses us, and we are forced to yield to his almost tyrannical will. Let us not complain. No art will give us as much as that which so subdues us."



## Marketing / Promotion

- continuation of the co-operation with the Mandelring Quartett
- second part of the double release with French repertoire
- digital booklet available for download
- HD downloads in stereo
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