

MUSIC

The Brodsky Quartet and Martin Roscoe

Queen's Hall, Edinburgh



IF NOTHING else, this was a heavy evening for Gina McCormack. The Brodsky Quartet's recently appointed new first violinist—a chamber musician of no little experience—played a prominent role in all three of the meaty Elgar chamber works that made up the foursome's deeply rewarding evening with pianist Martin Roscoe, the first of the new season of New Town Concerts at the Queen's Hall.

In fact, McCormack and Roscoe made a slightly odd pairing in the opening Elgar Violin Sonata, he bold, demon-

strative and muscular, she rather more reedy and piercing in her sound. But there was no lack of passion, nor of remarkable precision, in their fulsome account, and McCormack balanced tenderness and impish wit beautifully in a dark, elusive middle movement, and brought a glorious freshness to the work's finale.

It felt at first as though the Brodsky players were a little too rounded, too smooth in the String Quartet that followed, despite the faultless, unforced ensemble that that approach achieved. But some welcome grit and contrast soon appeared, building to a strongly defined conclusion. All five musicians came together after the interval for an outstanding account of the Piano Quintet, by turns brusque and touch-



↑ Rewarding concert by Brodsky Quartet and Martin Roscoe

ingly vulnerable, perhaps a little episodic in its opening movement, but cranking up the tension nonetheless in some edge-of-your-seat playing. These three valedictory works from the end of Elgar's career clearly mean a lot to

Roscoe and the Brodsky players, and despite the pieces' somewhat similar autumnal moods, the players delivered them with enormous spirit and unflinching conviction.

DAVID KETTLE