

Harris Quartet's skilled contrast of young and old

THE Harris Quartet began and ended their programme at Farnham Castle on February 26 with a piece specially composed for them by Adrian Brockless. He was present to enjoy the sensitive first performance of this charming piece, a gentle 'Berceuse' (cradle song) in a very English style with harmonies reminiscent of Vaughan Williams. The large audience enjoyed it so much they demanded a repeat at the end of the concert.

The two main works of the evening presented a fascinating contrast of youth and age: an early quartet by Mendelssohn and a late one by Beethoven. Mendelssohn's opus 12 reflects the former composer's acknowledged admiration for the latter but, overall, the style is unmistakably his own, ranging from romantic ardour to passages that recall skittish



moments from the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture. The stormy finale demonstrated the mature virtuosic skills of the four young musicians, Nicky Olle, Nick Evans-Pughe, Helen Roche and Toby Turton.

It is almost incredible that Beethoven was completely deaf when he wrote

his astounding late quartets. Opus 130 in B flat is considered to be part of his crowning achievement as a composer and presents a great challenge to musicians. The Harris Quartet rose to this challenge admirably, giving a moving rendition of the soft 'Cavatina' and a contrastingly energetic Presto

to end a triumphant performance.

The next member's evening concert on March 26 will be a recital by Claire Jones, official harpist to the Prince of Wales. For more information contact the TBS secretary on 01428 713338 or visit www.tilbach.org.uk
Rosemary Wisbey