

Strad
Selection 

Chamber disc **Schubert** Quartet no.14 in D minor
D810 'Death and the Maiden'

Dvořák Quintet in E flat major op.97 (extracts)

Talich Quartet

CALLIOPE CAL 3346



What impresses on this live recording is the Talich's transparency, assurance and lightness of touch. The Schubert's opening sweeps along deftly, even luminously, and the frequent changes of mood are confidently addressed. Amid the audible forward thrust, darker passages acquire a nice, eerie glow.

The *Andante con moto* opens with

some beautiful sostenuto and subtle hints of the tensions in store, before leader Jan Talich launches the variations with a delicately pointed solo and Petr Prause's cello warmly takes up the tune. The Talich players are not afraid to take risks; yet the confidence of their ensemble helps, overriding periodic doubts about balance. All four score in Schubert's bravura outbursts, which acquire their own energetic momentum, even becoming wayward at times.

This is a lively recording for those who like to feel a spirited performance emerging around them. There's a freshness, a marked passion and a nice unpredictability. The Scherzo and Trio fare equally well and Schubert's buoyant finale is given a witty and engaging reading.

At the start of the Dvořák E flat major Quintet the recorded sound feels just a bit muzzy. Only ten minutes of the quintet are recorded, including, all too briefly, the lovely *Larghetto* viola tune. But the *Allegro giusto* is given in full, with perky viola contributions from the group's founder, Jan Talich senior (the quartet reformed in 1997). Later the folk dance emerges triumphant in a very exciting performance. This makes the disc of extra interest – and the French audience clearly adored both the sizzling work and the characterful performance.