



Photo: William Marsey

Maggini Quartet Bandstand Chamber Festival – 4 September 2020

Extract from review in *The Arts Desk*

Music going back to nature, or rather the managed nature of a London park, can make you think and feel quite differently about great composers' responses to the world around them. To hear [Dvořák's](#) blissful "American" Quartet the Friday before last in the tender hands of the Maggini Quartet was to realise something of the circumstances around its swift (16-day) composition on a summer holiday in the Czech community of Spillville, Iowa, and to go back to the essence of rustic music-making as well, of course, as the essence of folk music which links the composer's native Bohemia with Afro-American spirituals and native American songs.

The Maggini evening was a sombre one weather-wise; Met Office predictions of heavy rainfall between 6 and 7pm had mercifully shifted to four hours later. Then, as they gave their exquisite if surprisingly downbeat encore, Puccini's *I crisantemi* (*Chrysanthemums*) the horizon glowed reddish-pink. "The shadows are gathering...the flame is going out," sings the dying Manon Lescaut in the final act of the eponymous opera which adapts music from the quartet piece.