

# THE Strad

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By HARRIS GOLDSMITH

Violinist **Helen Armstrong** and pianist **Gerald Robbins** gave Stravinsky's Pulcinella-derived Suite Italienne its requisite spirit when it opened the Weill Hall concert of the **Armstrong Chamber Players** (24 October), but I found the lackluster account of Schubert's Trio in B flat major a depressing affair. Tempos were hustled along non-committally with blunt, unmelodic phrasing and balances that were often awry. In the slow movement Armstrong made a few wrong entrances and throughout she was technically no match for Robbins and the far more assertive cellist, **Nathaniel Rosen**. Matters improved somewhat in the first three movements of the Piano Quartet in C minor op.60 of Brahms, in which **Jesse Levine** was a forthright violist, but the finale was rushed off its feet. The climactic forte chords in the piano were perhaps the greatest disappointment of all.