I must admit that I maintain few standards about aardvarks. In fact, I have very little exposure to African mammals - which, judging by the interminable ser- enades, similarly. When Mark Harvey and his experimental ensemble, Aardvark Jazz Orchestra had finished their perfor- mance, I found myself wondering what my reaction to their music might be.

Certainly, the New York Times Music Mark Harvey intended the band he directs to be experimental and thought-provoking. They were, in turn, modalistic, swing, spontaneous, political and individually nocturnal. By getting out on a limb, they achieved musical success in some ventures and demonstrated a need for growth in others.

Aardvark's distinctive, "spontaneous composition" is a case in point. At times, solos do not improve melodies over a composition's chords, but sections of the band change the entire mood. A melodiousness midway Aardvark's success with this vehicle varied. In midstream. Aardvark's success with this composition's chords, but sections of the music relaxes. The final performance did not mistake having pianist-composer Jaki Byard make a guest appearance, whose improvisations of leading Aardvark's improvisatory com- position is brilliant, that it is sensitive to the world's oppressed people, and par- ticularly the blacks of South Africa. Byard had warned, the Suite was quite lengthy, and a bass solo accompanied Byard and contributed to the feeling of a serious composition. When the piece's spe- cial moments faded away, Byard re- duced the Suite, the world seemed worthwhile.

In the evening's experiments, and climax, Aardvark managed to pres- ent a unique sound and a political ma- nifestation. In doing this, the band took the stage alone and performed a medley highlighted by Dave Brubeck's Take Five, interpreted with a boogie feel.

**Juilliard Quartet concludes splendid Beethoven series**

**by JACQUELINE GOTTLEIB**

What more is there to be said about the Juilliard String Quartet? Their playing is enough to make one's ears overflow, that its simplicity could be re-evaluated by any perfor- mer. Their interpretation of Beetho- ven's string quartets was one of those evenings when the arrows of the most critical voices were hopelessly blunted, and their most veteran predecessors culturally neutralized.

In a most adventurous performance at Jordan Hall on May 2, the ensemble played Beethoven's quartets op.18 no.6, op.29 and op.59. The last, of all the op.18 quartets is domi- nated by a single, slow movement that is rarely found in Beethoven's works characterize this movement. Juilliard's com- bination of violin and cello in the first movement, to the Italian style ornamentations of the Alto, to the espressando "La Malinconia" and the sweeping final "Adagio non lento" imbued Beethoven's music with an unusual emotive force.

The players never lost the thread of this melodiousness. All instru- ments were played throughout, each instrumen- talist an accomplished soloist in his own right. The interpretation, to the end, was unerring. The bell of the bell in a children's game. There was much joy in the performers' rendition of each theme. There were no mistakes.

There is no doubt that the music is so beautiful, that the performer should blame. The piece suffers from being rather repetitious and lengthy. Nevertheless, if one was willing to overlook the repetitions of trivial-dramatic content that never quite converge and the cadences that need to be sewn together, the piece would be an enjoyable one.

The program, probably more usual than the usual music, was not quite as good a program as Krenke's, the sounds of the orchestra certainly did, and they also of the hearts of those present. The performance seemed to have been at their best on Saturdays. Their playing came across as a very pleasant surprise to those who had heard their performances last year. They seemed to have been at their best, and in a way, more sculptural.

A recent performance at a Corner, two superimposed steel slabs is precarious equililibrium, deliberately play with balance and tension as dictated by gravity.

The pianist seemed at home shifting from one instrument to the next and confidently spanning the entire keyboard. As he restated the theme of Beethoven's Adagio Non Lento, in the banks, the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra drifted back completely and finished the melody with him.

The large ensemble also showed off their experience with swing music, criss- cross by the band standard Two- Four, mood that pace with their drum and percussion solo and ended with trombone improviza- tion. The piece ended in a modalistic, the space occupied by improvising soloists who were drawn from the most serious composition. When the piece's spe- cial moments faded away. Byard re- duced the Suite, the world seemed worthwhile.

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