



08/14-(5)

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
String Quartets Vol. 7
Quartets op. 42, op. 103,
op. 77 No. 1+2

Leipziger Streichquartett

1 CD

MDG 307 1860-2

UPC-Code:



LC06768

Creative Strength

“All my strength is gone.” Joseph Haydn wrote these words on the final page of his unfinished last string quartet. One can hardly believe him when one listens to this new release by the Leipzig String Quartet – and encounters a composer in full possession of his creative powers. There is nary a trace of the infirmity of old age or fading inspiration; rather, the master draws on all the rich experience of his long artistic life. “I am old and weak” – this self-quotation from his song “Der Greis” (The Old Man) seems to be pure irony.

Circulatory System

And yet Haydn’s powers no longer sufficed for four movements; only the two middle movements have come down to us. But they have what it takes: the minuet, which Haydn untypically sets in D minor, displays harmonic boldness. And the preceding andante also undertakes a long journey around the circle of fifths: after the initial B flat major one suddenly finds oneself in G flat major, and by way of C sharp minor and E major one unexpectedly finds one’s way home to B flat. Here a composer speaks who did not have to prove anything to anybody but could simply do what he felt was right for him.

Conscientious Surpriser

This of course is what Haydn did his whole life long – as the other works recorded here demonstrate. The minuet from op. 77 No. 2 appears to be nothing short of refractory; the triple time becomes completely inconsequential but then creates the impression of even greater idyllic breadth in the trio. A greater contrast could not have been formed. And how it is

that the music finds its way back to the snappish minuet from the idyll is an intriguing listening treat. The extended variation movement holds many a challenge in store for the performers – for example, when the cello offers the theme in the highest tones just prior to the conclusion, while the first violin swarms around them in filigree detailed work of great virtuosity.

Consummate Strings

Here an outstanding ensemble such as the Leipzig String Quartet is called for, and it rounds off its seventh volume of quartets by Joseph Haydn with the impressive Quartet in D minor op. 42. With exemplary lightness the four Leipzig musicians capture just the right tone, rendering audible the Esterháza master’s multivalent winking wit – which is your invitation to wink along!

Vol. 1:

Die sieben letzten Worte des Erlösers am Kreuz
MDG 907 1550-6 (Hybrid-SACD)

Vol. 2: op. 50 Nr. 1, 4 + 5
MDG 307 1585-2

Vol. 3: op. 76, Nr. 2-4
MDG 307 1683-2

Vol. 4: op. 20, Nr. 2, 4 + 6
MDG 307 1706-2

Vol. 5: op. 64, Nr. 3-5
MDG 307 1723-2

Vol. 6: op. 33 Nr. 1, 3 & 5
MDG 307 1812-2

