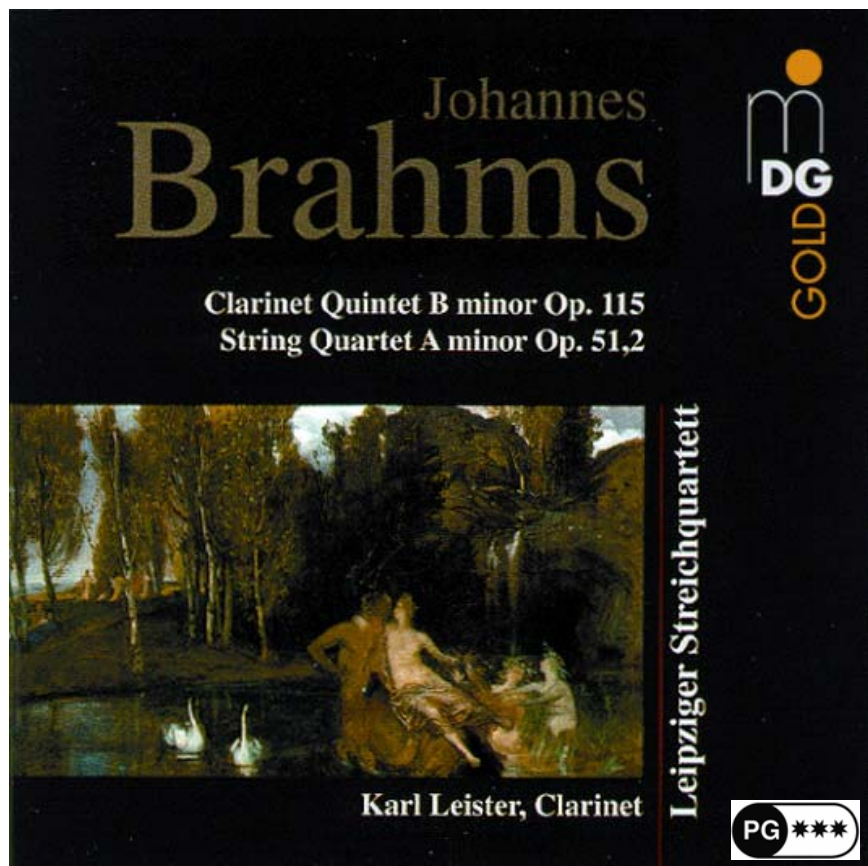


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009610

Title:

Johannes Brahms
Clarinet Quintet op. 115
String Quartet op. 51,2

Musicians:

Karl Leister, Clarinet
Leipziger Streichquartett

Number of CD's: 1

Order Number:

MDG 307 0719-2

UPC-Code:



The Measure of His Craft

While many of his fellow composers did more than just flirt with the more fashionable and spectacular genre of the symphonic poem, Brahms maintained a lifelong passion for chamber music, which he regarded as the measure of the musical craft. Brahms's mastery reached its height in his quartets and quintets, and thus it is only fitting that modern masters like Karl Leister and the Leipzig String Quartet have teamed up for this interpretation of two of his central works.

Autumn

Austere beauty and emotional impact occupy the foreground in the *Clarinet Quintet* op. 115. Brahms composed it in Bad Ischl six years before his death, at a time when he was pondering his last will and testament. It was also then that he met Richard Mühlfeld, an outstanding clarinetist who inspired him to new masterpieces in the autumn of his years.

Summer

If the quintet is an autumn composition, then the String Quartet op. 51/2 represents the summer of Brahms's middle years. One of the most lyrical works of its genre, it also stand out for its masterfully woven motivic network. It begins with a motto of three tones pointing to the confirmed bachelor Brahms: *Frei Aber Einsam*: free but lonesome.

A Man for All Seasons

Karl Leister is one of the genuine greats of the German clarinet world. He was the principal clarinetist of the Berlin Philharmonic under Herbert von Karajan and currently holds a professorship at the prestigious Hanns Eisler Academy of

Music in what was once East Berlin. His artistic achievements have earned him an honorary membership in the Royal Academy of Music in London, and his numerous concerts together with the Leipzig String Quartet, the „most distinguished of the young generation“ (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*), come to their crowning culmination on this CD.

Standard-Setting

Franz Schubert

Complete String Quartets
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