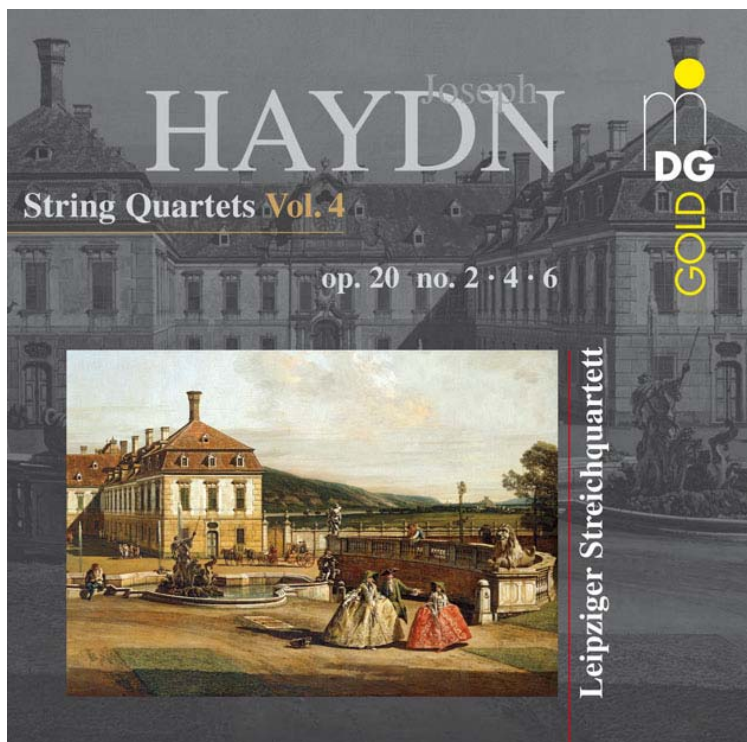


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09/11-(5)

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
String Quartets Vol. 4
op. 20, No. 2, 4 + 6

Leipziger Streichquartett

1 CD

Order No.: MDG 307 1706-2

UPC-Code:



LC06768

Harsh Criticism

Harsh criticism from faraway Berlin may have motivated Prince Esterházy's music director in his own special way. In 1771 the pedagogue and theologian Johann Christoph Stockhausen had accused Haydn and other representatives of contemporary modern instrumental music of "lack of uniformity and style and incapability in counterpoint." Here we have the musical answer: the String Quartets op. 20.

Resourceful Response

When compared to the two earlier string quartet cycles of op. 9 and op. 17, op. 20 stands out for what is a previously unprecedented variety in its movement sequences. None of Haydn's earlier quartets even comes close to attaining the degree of contrapuntal complexity to which he aspires here. The formal experiments in the first movements, the diverse characteristics of the slow movements, and the individual pointing of the minuets and trios qualify these quartets as a work group in which Haydn fully exploits all the resources available to him during this period.

Time-Honored Art

With a playful wink at his Prussian critic, Haydn enhances the concluding movement several times with the time-honored art of fugue – not without subordinating it to the modern style with its touch of levity. Just listen to the extremely lively Fuga a 4 Soggetti of the C major quartet in a dancy 6/8 time!

AAA Rating

Elegance and taste, a natural virtuosity, most finely detailed dynamics and intonation along with the most precise knowledge of the score, and a flawless sense for the right moment to let loose – these are the hallmarks of the Leipzig String Quartet, which with its more than seventy CD recordings in twenty years with MDG has produced countless standard-setting releases and has long won its place among the world's top quartet ensembles.

Joseph Haydn: String Quartets

Vol. 1 Die sieben letzten Worte
unseres Erlösers am Kreuz
MDG 907 1550-6 (Hybrid-SACD)

Vol. 2 op. 50 No. 1, 4 + 5
MDG 307 1585-2

Vol. 3 op. 76, No. 2-4
MDG 307 1683-2



"One is immediately transfixed by the elegance and poise of the phrasing, the exactitude of the intonation, the silvery sheen of the sound - enhanced by MDG's airy, yet perfectly focused recording." (BBC Music Magazine)

"This should turn out to be one of the most interesting cycles in recent years" (classical.net)

"These artists help fulfil Haydn's aim to make 'the greatest impression possible on the soul' "
(The STRAD)