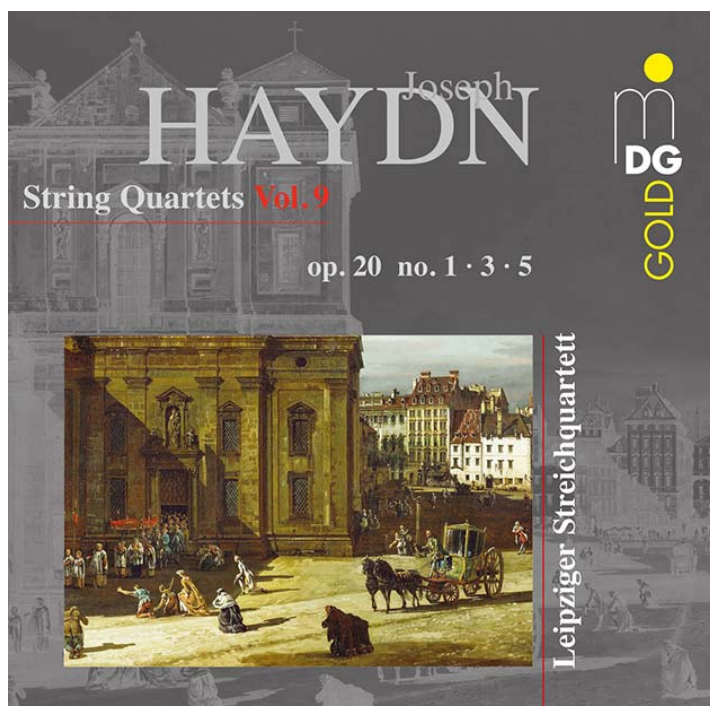


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11/15-(5)

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
String Quartets Vol. 9
Quartets op. 20 No. 1, 3 & 5

Leipziger Streichquartett

1 CD

MDG 307 1925-2

UPC-Code:



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Innovative Opus

Numerous conjectures swirl around Haydn's String Quartets op. 20. Since ten years passed between his first highly original contributions to this genre and this new group of works, might he have been experiencing a creative crisis? This "intermission" is fertile ground for wild speculations, but the Leipzig String Quartet rises above such guesswork. In the ninth volume of their Haydn edition the Leipzig four once again demonstrate the innovative and individual power of this highly fascinating work group now available in full with the new recording of Nos. 1, 3, and 5.

Individual Focus

Even a superficial glance reveals some of the special features of the six quartets forming op. 20. It stands out that two of the works among them are in minor; normally at this time the limit was one such work. Moreover, the sequence of movements in these works, all of them of four movements each, seems not to follow any rule. Sometimes the minuet is in the second position, other times it is in the third position; sometimes a moderato of moderately fast tempo opens the series, other times it is a swift allegro. Haydn was fond of experimentation, and in his op. 20 too he lives up to his reputation for surprises.

Intelligent Plays

What is not surprising, however, is that the Esterházy court chapel master plays with the expectations of his audience even in matters of detail. The development section in the first movement of No. 1 begins like a third repetition of the exposition, and when this section finally begins, the viola and the first violin create confusion about the transition to the

recapitulation while trying to top each other with thematic fragments. The recapitulation initially seems to get going in the wrong key – only rarely do we have the opportunity to hear such intelligent playing with the classical form!

Instrumental Joys

And with the Leipzig musicians this playing is of course in the best hands. The four instrumentalists joyfully savor Haydn's witticisms and toss the chamber balls back and forth with virtuosity. With historically informed playing and bows from the classical period the ensemble uncovers tone colors making the last of Haydn's early quartet radiate with special brilliance – a further glorious moment for all chamber music fans!

Vol. 1: Die 7 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

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Vol. 4: op. 20, No. 2, 4 + 6

MDG 307 1706-2

Vol. 5: op. 64, No. 3-5

MDG 307 1723-2

Vol. 6: op. 33 No. 1, 3 & 5

MDG 307 1812-2

Vol. 7 : op. 42, op. 103, op. 77 No. 1 + 2

MDG 307 1860-2

Vol. 8 : op. 50 No. 2, 3 & 6

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