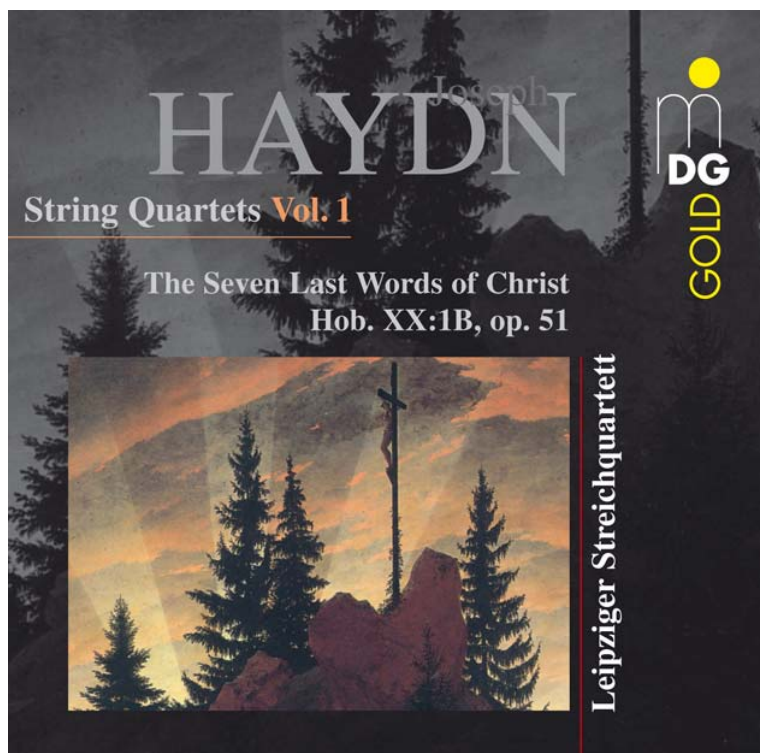


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02/09-(5)

Title:

**Joseph Haydn**  
(1732-1809)

**String Quartets Vol. 1**

The Seven Last Words of our  
Saviour on the Cross  
HOB. XX :1B, op. 51

**Musicians:**

Leipziger Streichquartett

**1 SACD**

**Order Number:**

MDG 907 1550-6

**UPC-Code:**



### Fitting Tribute

The Leipzig String Quartet offers fitting tribute to Joseph Haydn on the occasion of the two hundredth anniversary of his death with its own commemorative edition. Vol. 1 presents *The Seven Last Words of Our Savior on the Cross*, a passion composition for orchestra from 1786 that a priest had ordered from Haydn for the traditional Good Friday ceremony in the little Chapel of Santa Cueva in Cádiz in southern Spain. Later Haydn himself arranged this work for string quartet.

### Compositional Challenge

Precise instructions were submitted to the court music director in the Esterházy castle. He was to compose seven instrumental numbers in a moderated tempo for presentation as meditative music in alternation with the reading and interpretation of the words of Christ in order to offer the faithful the opportunity for devotion. Animating dynamic shifts and other tricks of the compositional trade had no place here, and recourse to acknowledged genres was also out of the question. Haydn, by then in his mid-fifties, drew on his rich experience to master these stipulations with bravura and pleased the southern Spanish canon with his independent musical solution.

### Vivid Depiction

The themes of the seven sonatas are heard in the first violin. The music fits the Latin text so well that the words can easily be sung along to it. First Jesus asks for forgiveness for his tormenters, then he turns to

those who are crucified with him, and finally Mary stands at the center. In the last number Haydn depicts the death of the crucified Christ in a manner suggesting an earthquake. Syncopated beats, accents on unaccented beats, rhythmic figures defying triple time: the ground begins to shake, the force of gravity is suspended, the catastrophe unfolds.

### Promising Future

The Leipzig String Quartet's some seventy CDs, including complete recordings of the quartets of Mendelssohn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Berg, Schönberg, and Webern, have won countless awards. We await with eager anticipation the further releases in this highly promising series.

**André Caplet**, Conte fantastique  
**Claude Debussy**, String Quartet  
**Gabriel Fauré**, String Quartet  
with Marie-Pierre Langlamet, harp  
MDG 307 1430-2



**Leoš Janaček** : String Quartets No. 1+2

**Antonín Dvořák** : Cypresses  
MDG 307 1472-2

### String Quartets

by Wagner, Puccini, Respighi, Verdi & Humperdinck  
Ruth Ziesak, soprano  
MDG 307 1495-2