



09/06- (5)

Title:
Ludwig van Beethoven
String Quartets
op. 59,2 and 95

Musicians:
Leipziger Streichquartett

CDs / Unit: 1

Order Number:
MDG 307 0857-2

UPC-Code:



On the Homestretch

The Leipzig String Quartet on the homestretch: Vol. 8 of the nine-part cycle featuring Beethoven's string quartets on MDG presents two works from his middle period combining the highest artistic ambition with popular appeal. His contemporaries, however, initially regarded these works as difficult to digest.

Wide Screen

Russian melodies lend a special touch to the third movement of the Quartet in E minor op. 59 no. 2 — and this is hardly coincidental. The citations from a collection of folk songs probably were motivated by the express wish of Count Andreas Cirillovich Rasumovsky, who resided as the Russian ambassador in Vienna and had commissioned the composition. When we listen to the quartet, we are reminded of Beethoven's symphonies; here we have intimate chamber music on the wide screen. It was during this period that Beethoven began to experiment with compositional technique, sound, and form — and all of this is quite audible here.

Small Circle

Rumors whirl around op. 95, a very rhapsodical work with unmediated oppositions in mood and out-and-out expressionistic traits. Beethoven later deleted its original title, "Quartetto serioso," and defined its audience as follows: "The quartet is intended for a small circle of music lovers and should never be performed in public." Do certain details, such as the

lack of a highly emotional, slow movement, point to a secret passion in Beethoven's life?

Utopian Success

The Leipzig String Quartet has reaped enthusiastic reviews for its immense repertoire recorded exclusively for MDG. The previously released Beethoven volumes have also won the musicians the highest praise:

- "Highly recommendable" (*Stereoplay*)
- "Perfect" (*Diapason*);
- "Most attractive" (*Gramophone*)
- "Well done" (*Répertoire*)
- "Most sophisticated" (*BBC*)
- "A utopian success" (*FonoForum*)
- "Excellent job" (*Fanfare*).

Track Record

Ludwig van Beethoven: String Quartets	
op. 59,1 and 14	MDG 307 0707-2
op. 131 and 135	MDG 307 0820-2
op. 59,3 and 74	MDG 307 0852-2
op. 18,1 and 4	MDG 307 0853-2
op. 127 and 132	MDG 307 0854-2
op. 18, 2 and 5	MDG 307 0855-2
op. 18,3 and 18,6	MDG 307 0856-2

