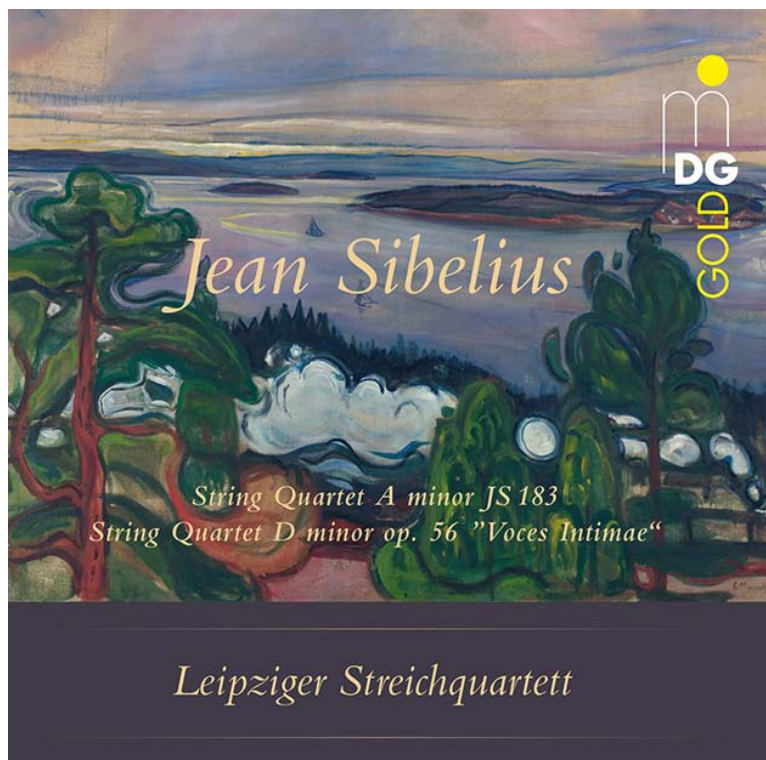


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5/16-(6)

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)
String Quartets op. 56 & JS 183

Leipziger Streichquartett

1 CD

MDG 307 1957-2

UPC-Code:



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LC06768

Climactic Point

Two lonely reindeer herders exchange melancholy greetings over the lake. With the very first tones of his *Voces intimae* string quartet Jean Sibelius transports the listener into a fascinating Nordic atmosphere. At the same time this climactic point in his chamber oeuvre marked the end of a personal creative crisis during which he left late romantic terrain behind him and set out on the path to his modern and most highly individual musical language. The work of the composer's youth that the Leipzig String Quartet has paired with this milestone surprises us with original ideas while also meeting the highest compositional demands.

Perfect Command

Sibelius composed his String Quartet in 1889 as an examination piece and received the highest praise for it. Exciting fugato passages in the first movement demonstrate the student's perfect command of counterpoint; it remains open, however, whether the tango sound today so very popular in Finland formed part of the curriculum at the music academy! Here and there Antonín Dvořák seems to have served as his model, and abrupt alternations between major and minor also point to origins in the folkloric tradition of Eastern and Northern Europe.

Compositional Path

Sibelius leaves classical forms far behind him in the *Voces intimae* composed twenty years later. An adagio of unprecedented expressivity occupies the

center of this work comprising five movements. The composer's dramatic struggle to develop new music is directly conveyed, and it is only at the end that the movement comes to a conciliatory conclusion in the mellow warmth of F major. The fourth movement is also unique – an "Allegretto ma pesante" with a character and melody very much recalling a shanty.

Program Contrast

On this new recording the Leipzig String Quartet develops unrivaled expressive depth. Just listen to the exuberant, wilder-than-wild finale movements forming the greatest possible contrast to the initial loneliness and solitude! The Leipzig musicians offer a welcome addition to the repertoire with the early Quartet in A minor and make us eager to hear more chamber music by this Nordic symphonist.

Niels Wilhelm Gade: „Willkommen und Abschied“

Edvard Gade: String Quartet op. 27

Leipziger Streichquartett

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Sergej Tanejew: Piano Quintet op. 30, Lieder op.34

M. Prudenskaya, mezzosoprano; O. Gollej, piano

Leipziger Streichquartett

MDG 307 1917-2