



10/14-(5)

Niels Wilhelm Gade
(1817-1890)
"Willkommen und Abschied"
Edvard Grieg
(1843-1907)
String Quartet op. 27

Leipziger Streichquartett

1 CD

MDG 307 1870-2

LC06768

UPC-Code:



Musical Journey

The Leipzig String Quartet sets out on yet another musical journey, and a genuine discovery is in store inasmuch as Niels Wilhelm Gade's Quartet "Willkommen und Abschied" is being heard here for the first time in complete form. Since the Dane Gade, like Edvard Grieg, whose Quartet op. 27 is also part of this tour, had important musical roots in Leipzig, the journey also covers home turf.

Poetic Source

During the first half of the nineteenth century the string quartet was regarded as the embodiment of absolute music. It thus may seem to have been a rather bold move for a young composer by the name of Gade to have used a literary source, namely Goethe's poem "Willkommen und Abschied," for precisely this ensemble formation. And the relation to the text is close, as notes from his compositional journal demonstrate. Motifs and keys are assigned to poem verses, and the enthusiastic tone of the Sturm und Drang also makes its presence felt in the composition. Whether it was lack of respect or youthful courage, Gade dared to change the great German poet's text by reversing the order of the final verses.

Dramatic Finish

Then he must have lost his courage, for the concluding movement remained unfinished. Axel Steurich has taken up the fragment and completed the final scherzo. The result can now be heard for the first time – and all the better for it: in the interpretation by the Leipzig four what we hear is a dramatically

compelling work filling an important gap in the repertoire precisely because of its use of an extramusical source text.

Personal Significance

Edvard Grieg studied under Gade in Copenhagen, where he developed ideas for his Nordic music also in ample evidence in his Quartet op. 27. The powerful introduction of the first movement already contains the famous "Grieg motif," from which many themes derive. Grieg himself fueled speculations about its autobiographical connections by working with his "Spielmanslied"; but knowledge of the composer's love and jealousy and his pain and hope is not required: his quartet is a top-class chamber event in this gripping interpretation by the members of the Leipzig String Quartet.

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809-1847)

String Quintets op. 18 und 87
Leipziger Streichquartett; Barbara Buntrock, alto
MDG 307 1806-2

August Klughardt (1847-1902)

String Quintet op. 62; Piano Quintet op. 43
Olga Gollej, piano; Julian Steckel, violoncello
Leipziger Streichquartett
MDG 307 1652-2

Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904)

String Quintet op. 77; String Quartet op. 96
Leipziger Streichquartett; Alois Posch, double bass
MDG 907 1847-6 (SACD)