



LUDWIG van BEETHOVEN

The Complete String Quartets
Volume VI Op. 130 & Op. 133

THE VANBRUGH QUARTET



INTIM
MUSIK



Beethoven String Quartet in B flat major, Op.130

(with Grosse Fuge followed by the "second finale")

Adagio ma non troppo - Allegro

Presto

Andante con moto ma non troppo

Alla danza tedesca: Allegro assai

Cavatina: Adagio molto espressivo

Grosse Fuge Op.133

Allegro



In its original form with the Grosse Fuge as finale, this was the longest of Beethoven's quartets. The fugue was found at first incomprehensible and almost unplayable and Beethoven was at length persuaded to substitute a shorter, lighter, "easier" finale; this was the last thing he ever completed.

Although it seems surprising that Beethoven agreed to this compromise, the artistic reason for it could have been deeper than a mere desire to please, or a lack of confidence in his own judgment. Such indecisions had plagued him before, in the Fifth and Ninth symphonies, in *Fidelio*, or in the appalling cuts and shifts he suggested in the *Hammerklavier Sonata*. Publishing the *Grosse Fuge* separately as Op.133 may well have been done in the hope that it would eventually find its way back to its original place, as it now often does, for it is widely and rightly felt that the small "substitute" finale cannot counterweigh the great first movement. But if the *Grosse Fuge* is restored to Op.130, what are we to do with the other piece? The idea that two such disparate movements are satisfying alternatives could be sustained only by ingenuity. Perhaps the answer lies further back.

Listening to the first movement, notice the mysteriously disembodied effect of the whole second group in the strange key of G flat, approached abruptly, and not grounded in a tonality at all. The same thing happens in the *Grosse Fuge*, even more mysteriously, when everything slips into a wonderful animated cloud of soft G flat. These two events are crucial. The work as a whole also has something in common with a Bach partita;

Beethoven in his later works searches the past ever more deeply.

The first movement is followed by a very fast and short scherzo in the tonic minor; the next movement, ambling gently and delicately, with many original quartet textures, is in the related key of D flat. Then comes the simple *Alla danza tedesca*, but suddenly in the strange key of G major, as far as possible away from D flat - a switch to the other side of the musical universe! This violent dissociation, expressed in the simplest language, is the secret heart of the work, psychologically connected with those in the first movement and the *Grosse Fuge*.

From G it is an easy step to E flat, where we find the touching *Cavatina*, and the note G at the top of its last chord begins both the *Grosse Fuge* and the second finale. The *Fuge* is a mighty struggle stretching mind and sinews to the limit, and besides the great G flat dissociation it contains, it also makes another such rift by means of the key of A flat, the "contradictory" flat seventh of the tonic B flat. But at length, with an unmistakable sense of release, it breaks through into sunlight - the air is all at once fresh and free and the music takes flight. Does not the extra movement say, gloriously, "Now we can play!?" Is it not a felicitous appendix, in its vivid delight the most heroic of all Beethoven's utterances?

His bodily condition was piteous, but his spirit found its way into this sparkling *allegro*, in which all tonal contradictions and dissociations are wonderfully resolved (especially the A flat question, the point of which depends on our having heard the *Grosse Fuge*). There is a powerful case for freeing ourselves from the vexing choice. Beethoven might have welcomed this way out; perhaps he felt that Op.130/133 was somehow not quite finished. Therefore, already in extremis, without time to change existing publishing arrangements, he achieved his happiest music. Shouldn't it take its natural place?

Dr Robert Simpson

THE VANBRUGH QUARTET

Gregory Ellis • Elizabeth Charleson • Simon Aspell • Christopher Marwood

The Vanbrugh Quartet is entering its second decade firmly established as one of Europe's finest and most successful quartets. Since winning the Portsmouth (now London) International String Quartet Competition in 1988, they have built up a thriving career, annually presenting around a hundred concerts, together with radio and television broadcasts, in Europe, the Americas and the Far East. This series of recordings marks their first collaboration with Intim Musik, following seven previous CDs covering a wide range of repertoire.

The Quartet is based in Cork, on Ireland's south coast, where they hold the position of Resident Quartet to Radio Telefís Éireann, the national broadcasting service; they are also Artists in Residence to University College, Cork, and founders of the internationally acclaimed West Cork Chamber Music Festival. In 1995 they were presented with Ireland's National Entertainment Award for Classical Music. Beethoven's String Quartets have been central to the Vanbrugh Quartet's repertoire throughout their career, and they have performed the complete cycle on a number of occasions both in the UK and in Ireland. Most recently, in April 1996, the Quartet performed all seventeen quartets in a single weekend to launch the Vanbrugh Quartet Scholarship Fund, a fund to help further the studies of Ireland's aspiring young chamber musicians; a proportion of the proceeds of these recordings will be donated to the Fund.

The members of the Vanbrugh Quartet play on a fine set of instruments on loan from collections at the Royal Academy of Music, London, and the Maggini Foundation, Switzerland.

For further information on the The Vanbrugh Quartet Scholarship Fund, please contact:

Vanbrugh House, Castle Treasure, Douglas, Cork, Ireland.

DAS VANBRUGH QUARTETT

Gregory Ellis • Elizabeth Charleson • Simon Aspell • Christopher Marwood

Das Vanbrugh Quartett ist nun schon seit mehr als zehn Jahren eines der vorzüglichsten und erfolgreichsten Quartette Europas. Seitdem es 1988 den Internationalen Streichquartett-Wettbewerb von Portsmouth (jetzt London) gewann, hat das Quartett eine glänzende Karriere gemacht, aufgrund derer es jedes Jahr rund hun-

dert Konzerte in Europa, in Nord- und Südamerika und im Fernen Osten geben konnte, und darüber hinaus fanden zahlreiche Übertragungen im Rundfunk und Fernsehen statt. Diese Reihe von Aufnahmen kennzeichnet die erste Zusammenarbeit des Vanbrugh Quartetts mit Intim Music, im Anschluß an sieben vorherige CDs, die ein sehr umfangreiches Repertoire umfassen.

Standort des Quartettes ist Cork an der Südküste Irlands, wo es sowohl beim nationalen Rundfunksender "Radio Telefís Éireann" als "Resident Quartet" als auch an der Universität von Cork eine feste Anstellung hat. Darüber hinaus sind die Quartettmitglieder Gründer des West Cork Kammermusik-Festivals.

Während der Karriere des Vanbrugh Quartetts haben Beethovens Streichquartette schon immer den Mittelpunkt des Repertoires gebildet, und das Quartett spielte bei zahlreichen Gelegenheiten im Vereinigten Königreich und in Irland den vollständigen Zyklus. Noch vor kurzem, nämlich im April des Jahres 1996, wurden an einem einzigen Wochenende alle siebzehn Quartette aufgeführt, um damit den "Vanbrugh Quartet Scholarship Fund" zu lancieren, ein Fonds zur Unterstützung von jungen, irischen Kammermusikern. Ein Teil des Erlöses dieser Aufnahmen kommt dem Fonds zugute.

Die Mitglieder des Vanbrugh Quartettes spielen auf vortrefflichen Instrumenten, die ihnen leihweise aus Sammlungen der Royal Academy of Music, London, und der Maggini-Stiftung, Schweiz, zur Verfügung gestellt wurden.

LE QUATOR VANBRUGH

Gregory Ellis • Elizabeth Charleson • Simon Aspell • Christopher Marwood

Le Quatuor Vanbrugh qui entre dans sa deuxième décennie, s'est fermement établi comme étant l'un des meilleurs quatuors d'Europe. depuis qu'il remporté le concours international des quatuors à cordes de Portsmouth (maintenant de Londres) en 1988, le Quatuor a fait une très belle carrière, donnant annuellement près de cent concerts, et faisant des émissions radio et télévision, en Europe, Amérique, et Extrême-Orient. Cette série d'enregistrements marque sa première collaboration avec Intim Music, après avoir fait sept CDs couvrant un vaste répertoire.

Le Quatuor est basé à Cork, sur la côte sud d'Irlande, et c'est le quatuor en résidence de Radio Telefís Éireann, le service de radio-télévision national; les membres du quatuor sont également les artistes en résidence

de l'université de Cork et les fondateurs du prestigieux Festival International de la Musique de Chambre de l'Ouest de Corc. En 1995, le Quatuor a reçu le trophée national d'Irlande pour la musique classique. Tout au long de l'existence du Quatuor Vanbrugh, les quatuors à cordes de Beethoven ont fait régulièrement partie de son répertoire, et ils ont été joués en entier un bon nombre de fois, en Grande-Bretagne comme en Irlande. En avril 1996, le Quatuor a joué les dix-sept quatuors en un seul weekend, pour le lancement de la "Bourse du Quatuor Vanbrugh" – une bourse permettant d'aider de jeunes musiciens Irlandais à continuer leurs études; une partie des bénéfices de ces enregistrements sera versée au compte de la Bourse. Les membres du Quatuor Vanbrugh jouent sur de très beaux instruments, en prêt de collections de l'Académie Royale de Musique de Londres et de la Fondation Maggini de Suisse.

EL VANBRUGH QUARTET

El Vanbrugh Quartet acaba de entrar en su segunda década. Se ha establecido ya como uno de los mejores cuartetos de Europa. Desde que ganaron en el año 1988 el Primer Premio del Concurso Internacional de Cuartetos de Cuerda de Portsmouth (hoy en día de Londres) han ido prosperando, dando aproximadamente unos 100 conciertos al año en Europa, Estados Unidos y Orientet lejano, así como grabando programas colaboración con Intim Musik, habiendo grabado ya con otras casas 7 CDs que cubren un amplio repertorio. El cuarteto está basado en Cork, en la costa del sur de Irlanda, siendo Cuarteto Residente de Radio Telefis Eireann, el servicio nacional de radio; son también artistas residentes del Colegio Universitario de Cork y fundadores del Festival de Música de Cámara internacionalmente aclamado: West Cork Chamber Music Festival. En 1995 fueron nominados para el Natioanl entertainment Award para la música clásica. Los Cuartetos para Cuerda de Beethoven han sido uno de los ejes centrales del repertorio del Vanbrugh Quartet en su carrera. Han interpretado el ciclo completo varias veces tanto en Inglaterra como en Irlanda. En Abril de 1996 el Cuarteto interpretó los 17 cuartetos en un sólo fin de semana con motivo del lanzamiento del Vanbrugh Quartet Scholarship Fund, una fundación cuyo propósito es ayudar en sus estudios a los jóvenes jóvenes músicos de cámara de Irlanda. Una parte de las ventas de estas grabaciones será donada a la Fundación. Los miembros del Vanbrugh Quartet tocan sobre preciosos instrumentos prestados por la Royal Academy of Music de Londres y la Maggini Foundation de Suiza.

ヴァンブルー弦楽四重奏団は、現在ヨーロッパに於いて十年強もの演奏活動し素晴らしい成功を収めている。1988年の国際ポートマス（現ロンドン）弦楽四重奏コンクールで優勝し、それ以後力強いキャリアを伸ばしている。

現在ヨーロッパ、アメリカ、アジア、又 ラジオ、テレビでのレコーディングを含め年間百余りのコンサートを行っている。インティン、ミュージックとのレコーディングを始め既に幅広いレパートリーで7枚のCDを製作した。

この弦楽四重奏団は、アイルランド南岸のコーク市をベースにしてテレフェイスエイリアン ラジオ国際放送サービスに所属している。コーク大学内での指導の傍ら初めてコーク室内楽フェスティバルを開催した。1995年には、クラシック界のナショナル エンターテイメントの最優秀賞を獲得し国際的にも称賛を浴び始めた。

1996年四月には、アイルランドの若い演奏家達を支援する企画としてヴァンブルー奨学基金を設立するためにベートーベンの17曲全ての室内楽曲を週末コンサートにて全奏した。

使用している楽器は、ロンドン ロイヤルアカデミー 及び スイスのマギーニファンデーションからのコレクションである。

Dr Robert Simpson (programme notes)
Brita van Munster Richter (German translation)
Art et Musique, Madrid (Spanish translation)
Masayo Matsuo (Japanese translation)

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The Complete String Quartets



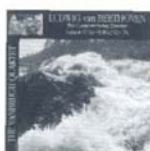
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INTIM
MUSIK

Box 238, 443 25 LERUM, Sweden - Tel. 031-702 06 46. Fax 031-702 52 96

DISTRIBUTION CDA - Box 4225, 102 65 Stockholm, SWEDEN. - Tel. 08 (Int. 468) 442 11 20. Fax. 08 (Int. 468) 442 11 33.

THE VANBRUGH QUARTET



Gregory Ellis

Christopher Marwood

Elisabeth Charleson

Simon Aspell



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Beethoven String Quartet in B flat major, Op.130

1	Adagio ma non troppo - Allegro.....	9:41
2	Presto.....	2:03
3	Andante con moto ma non troppo.....	7:10
4	Alla danza tedesca: Allegro assai	3:14
5	Cavatina: Adagio molto espressivo	7:37
6	Grosse Fuge Op.133.....	17:27
7	Allegro	8:20

Total
time
55:36

The Complete String Quartets Volume VI

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Staffan Cederblom

INTIM
MUSIC

Box 238, 443 25 LERUM, Sweden
Tel. 031-702 06 46. Fax 031-702 52 96

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