

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (The String Quartet String Quartet) Review

Album. Released 31 agosto 2010.



Tracks

- 1 String Quartet
No.1,Op.16 - Allegro molto

- 2 String Quartet
No.1,Op.16 - Adagio, quasi Fantasia, Langsam, mit großem Ausdruck

- 3 String Quartet
No.1,Op.16 - Intermezzo. Ziemlich lebhaft, mit Grazie

- 4 String Quartet
No.1,Op.16 - Finale. Allegretto amabile e comodo

- 5 String Quartet No.2,
Op.26 - Allegro

- 6 String Quartet No.2,
Op.26 - Intermezzo. Allegretto con moto - Molto piu mosso - Tempo I

- 7 String Quartet No.2,
Op.26 - Larghetto. Lento - Con molto sentimento

- 8 String Quartet No.2,
Op.26 - Waltz (Finale)

- 9 String Quartet No.3,
Op.34 - Allegro moderato

- 10 String Quartet No.3,
Op.34 - Scherzo. Allegro molto

BBC Review

Benchmark performances by a string quartet clearly on the cusp of great things.

Michael Quinn 2010-09-30

Now in their 13th year together, the Doric String Quartet made their recording debut last year with a live all-Haydn programme from London's Wigmore Hall. Now comes the first fruit of a new partnership with Chandos Records. And what an auspicious beginning it is.

The Dorics' survey of Korngold's three string quartets comes hard on the heels of the Aron Quartet on CPO earlier this year, and is only the third complete traversal on disc (the other, courtesy of the Flesch Quartet, originally on ASV but newly available at budget price on Brilliant Classics).

From the off, the Dorics stamp their own emphatic claim to ownership with a bold incisive feel for the swirling stylistic and emotional undercurrents in Korngold's characteristically rhythmically alert, sumptuously lyrical and exquisitely crafted music.

They make light (and illuminating) work of the jagged dissonances and chromatic cluster chords of the opening movement of the First Quartet (begun in 1920 shortly after the 23-year-old Korngold had finished his magnum opus, *Die tote Stadt*, and completed in 1923), seem to surf the long-breathed harmonies of the Adagio with balletic ease, are no less nimble in the dancing virtuosity of the Intermezzo. They also despatch Korngold's signature 'Motif of the cheerful heart' and distinctive march-like buoyancy of the finale with beguiling aplomb.

The Second Quartet, unheard live in the UK until 1997, was composed immediately before Korngold's first visit to Hollywood in 1933. It hymns the composer's native Austrian countryside while revelling in a ripe Viennese sensuality that the Dorics capture with watercolour delicacy. The joyful Intermezzo and hauntingly wistful Larghetto are deliciously conjured in impeccable ensemble playing dotted with individual contributions that glitter and gleam like the burnished gold details in a painting by Gustav Klimt.

Incorporating themes from Korngold's film scores, the Third Quartet was written in American exile in 1944 as his father's health began to fail. Noticeably leaner and more distilled, the Dorics mesh its sinewy strands of agitation and nostalgia together with astringent poise – the silvery, slicing Scherzo and autumnal Sostenuuto immaculately realised.

Beautifully produced and engineered by Jonathan Cooper, these are benchmark performances by a Doric String Quartet clearly on the cusp of great things.

