



The String Quartets of Joseph Haydn

By Floyd Grave, Margaret Grave



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A monumental accomplishment from the age of Enlightenment, the string quartets of Joseph Haydn hold a central place not only in the composer's oeuvre, but also in our modern conception of form, style, and expression in the instrumental music of his day. Here, renowned music historians Floyd and Margaret Grave present a fresh perspective on a comprehensive survey of the works. This thorough and unique analysis offers new insights into the creation of the quartets, the wealth of musical customs and conventions on which they draw, the scope of their innovations, and their significance as reflections of Haydn's artistic personality. Each set of quartets is characterized in terms of its particular mix of structural conventions and novelties, stylistic allusions, and its special points of connection with other opus groups in the series. Throughout the book, the authors draw attention to the boundless supply of compositional strategies by which Haydn appears to be continually rethinking, reevaluating, and refining the quartet's potentials. They also lucidly describe Haydn's famous penchant for wit, humor, and compositional artifice, illuminating the unexpected connections he draws between seemingly unrelated ideas, his irony, and his lightning bolts of surprise and thwarted expectation. Approaching the quartets from a variety of vantage points, the authors correct many prevailing assumptions about convention, innovation, and developing compositional technique in the music of Haydn and his contemporaries.

Going beyond traditional modes of study, *The String Quartets of Joseph Haydn* blends historical analysis and factual information with critical appraisal in a way that will engage all Haydn enthusiasts.



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Editorial Review

Review

"A comprehensive, eclectic introduction to historical, stylistic, and analytical perspectives on Haydn's string quartets--a repertoire central to the classical style. Readers new to this music will find much to think about, scholars will encounter provocative thoughts on longstanding issues, performers will be inspired to rethink their approaches, and experienced listeners will enjoy the encyclopedic resources."--Joel Lester, Dean, Mannes College

"The book's central purpose is to share with us the authors' understanding of the music, and in many ways this aim is brilliantly achieved. I can't imagine anyone reading the book, even with a previous extensive knowledge of the quartets, and not feeling a new surge of astonishment at Haydn's extraordinary resourcefulness. The String Quartets of Joseph Haydn can be thoroughly recommended to players and listeners-anyone with a degree of musical knowledge and an interest in this wonderful repertoire, one of the greatest contributions to one of the most illustrious genres."--Journal of the Haydn Society of Great Britain

"Both of them eminent scholars, Floyd and Margaret Grave bring to this undertaking not only a comprehensive knowledge to the existing literature but also an admirable ability to present their material coherently and to supplement it with their own analytical insights The scholarly value of this book is enhanced by the high quality of its presentation. Numerous carefully prepared musical examples, analytical graphs and tables illustrate the argument The volume supplies a comprehensive and attractive guide to Haydn's string quartets, presenting an image of this repertory that emerges from the most recent scholarship."--Danuta Mirka, Early Music

"In depth, insightful, and wonderfully readable, this book will satisfy the needs and concerns of Haydn scholars and specialists as well as of music lovers who love the string quartet genre. The Graves have richly illustrated their discussion with musical examples, and their well-chosen words will at once explain, fascinate, and entertain all readers. This is a magnificent accomplishment, and it will assume a lasting place in the literature on Haydn."--Paul R. Bryan, Professor Emeritus of Music, Duke University

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About the Author

Floyd and Margaret Grave have worked both independently and together on a variety of research projects, centering mostly on problems of eighteenth-century music sources, theory, criticism, and analysis. Floyd Grave currently teaches in the Music Department at Rutgers University, where he has served as director of the graduate programs in musicology, music theory, and composition. He has also taught at New York University and the University of Virginia. Both Floyd and Margaret have received numerous research grants and contributed articles to the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, first and second editions.

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