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JOSEF BENEŠ
THE COMPLETE STRING QUARTETS
MARTINŮ QUARTET

Martinů Quartet:

Adéla Štajnochrová – violin; Lubomír Havlák – violin; Zbyněk Paďourek – viola; Jitka Vlašánková – cello

Recorded in the Domovina Studio, Prague, 15 and 17 November (1-4), 3 and 10 December 2021 (5-8).

Some extraordinarily talented figures' lives and work impressed and significantly influenced their contemporaries, yet their imprint was later effaced just like a footprint by the tide. And many years later, we are thus astonished by the rediscovery of such forgotten legacies. Josef Beneš (Joseph Benesch) was primarily referred to in period sources as a virtuoso violinist and distinguished teacher. Born in Batelov (Battelau), a village on the borderline between Bohemia and Moravia, from the age of 19 he lived in Vienna and Ljubljana, and gave concerts across Europe. During his time in Italy, he familiarised himself with Niccolò Paganini and Alessandro Rolla. He held prestigious posts (music director of the Philharmonic Society in Ljubljana, professor of the Music Academy in Vienna, first concertmaster of the Hoftheater). Few of his works have survived, with the majority of them being music Beneš wrote for his own solo performances. His final pieces, two string quartets (published in 1865 and 1871, respectively) date from the period when he no longer pursued a career as a soloist, yet all the parts require very dexterous players. Now, 150 years later, the Martinů Quartet, who have rediscovered a number of overlooked works of music (S. Taneyev, P. Eben), are evidently the first to perform the quartets, which definitely do not deserve to fall into oblivion.

Josef Beneš's quartets rediscovered – music that should also be heard today



JOSEF BENEŠ (1795–1873)

String Quartet No. 2 in F major, Op. 30

26:18

1/ I. Allegro moderato

8:56

2/ II. Scherzo. Allegro vivo

6:08

3/ III. Poco adagio

5:46

4/ IV. Finale. Allegro

5:18

String Quartet No. 1 in G major, Op. 28

30:15

Dedicated to Ferdinand Laub

5/ I. Allegro moderato

8:43

6/ II. Scherzo. Allegro

7:20

7/ III. Poco adagio

5:23

8/ IV. Allegro

8:43