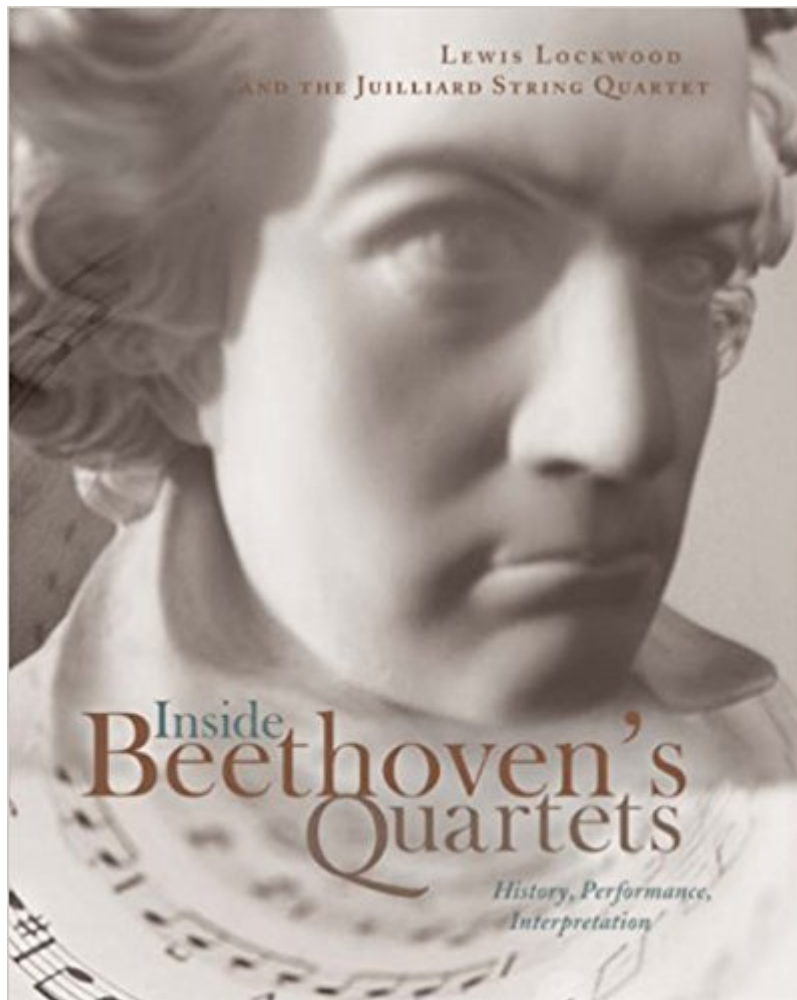




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Inside Beethoven's Quartets: History, Performance, Interpretation



Synopsis

The string quartets of Ludwig van Beethoven, the signal achievement of that noble genre, have rewarded the engagement of scholars, performers, and audiences for almost two hundred years. This book and its accompanying recording invite you to experience three of these profound and beautiful works of music from the inside, with a leading Beethoven scholar and a premier performing ensemble as your guides. Lewis Lockwood provides historical and biographical background along with musical analysis, drawing on the most important insights of recent scholarship on Beethoven's life and works. The members of the Juilliard Quartet share the fruits of decades of performing and teaching these compositions through annotated scores and recordings of the first movements of three representative quartets, including the rarely heard original version of opus 18 no. 1. And all parties join in lively and illuminating conversations that range from details of bowing and articulation to Beethoven's development as a composer to the social history of the nineteenth century. *Inside Beethoven's Quartets* illustrates how scholarly knowledge can inform a performance, as well as how performers' interpretive choices can illuminate this sublime music.

Book Information

Hardcover: 304 pages

Publisher: Harvard University Press (April 30, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0674028090

ISBN-13: 978-0674028098

Product Dimensions: 8.3 x 1.2 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars See all reviews (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,035,768 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #192 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Classical > Chamber Music #214 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Sheet Music & Scores > Composers > Beethoven #2588 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Instruments > Strings

Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful book based on an exciting concept. The Juilliard Quartet and renowned Beethoven scholar Lewis Lockwood have combined their talents to bring a new level of appreciation to Beethoven's string quartets. They analyze, discuss and perform first movements from three

quartets, one from each of the three traditional groupings of early, middle and late quartets: the Op. 18, no. 1; Op. 59, no. 1 and Op. 130. Also included is the "Amenda" (first) version of the first movement of the Op. 18, no. 1. For each selection, there is a section of the book devoted to a brief overview of the entire quartet, movement by movement. This is followed by a thorough discussion of the movement in question, by Lewis Lockwood. Then comes a fascinating discussion among Lockwood and the members of the Juilliard Quartet, ranging across such topics as the tempos, Beethoven's decisions to include or delete repeats, relationships to other components or aspects of the quartet, and parallels among other works by Beethoven or even other composers. Although I am not highly literate in musical matters, I was able to understand and enjoy most of the discussion. Following the discussion is an annotated score for the entire movement being considered. On top of these features, the book includes a CD of the Juilliard Quartet performing each of the movements, including the "Amenda" version. The reader can follow the analysis or discussion with the score and listen to the music simultaneously. There are also footnotes and an index. I cannot imagine a better way for an ordinary person to become thoroughly immersed in Beethoven's string quartets apart from having artists and experts like these appear live in one's home. Harvard University Press deserves real credit for this outstanding concept and handsome volume.

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