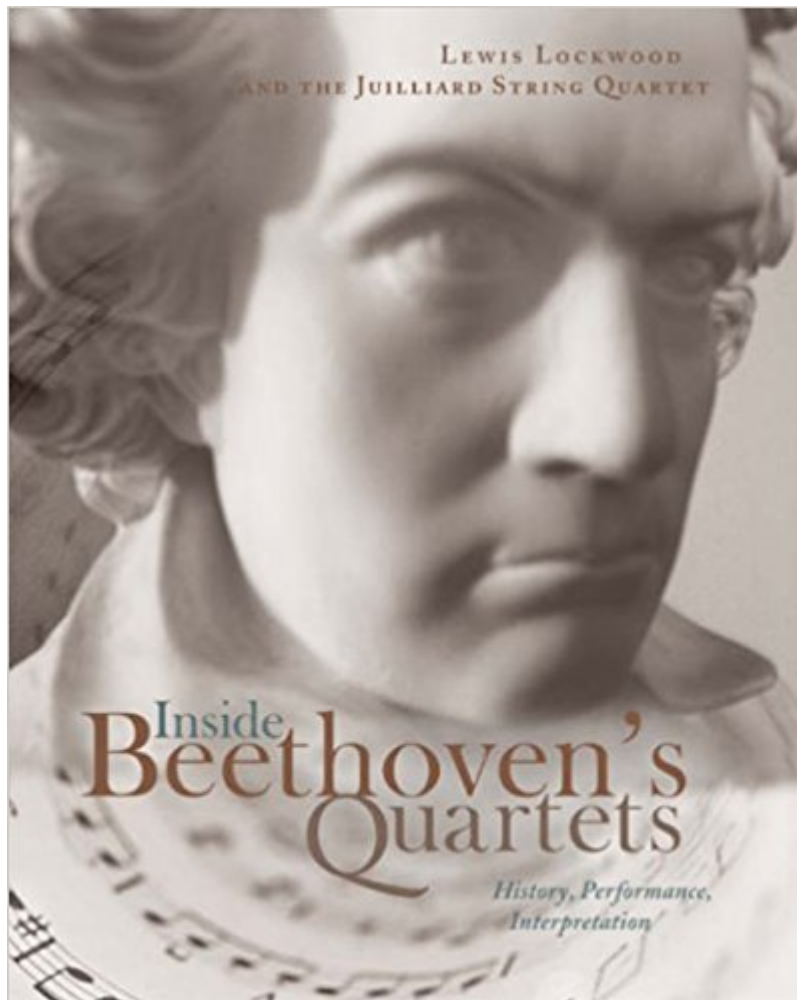




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Inside Beethoven's Quartets: History, Performance, Interpretation



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

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Customer Reviews

Beethoven’s string quartets have been baffling and enchanting academics, musicians, and listeners for almost two centuries. This in-depth guide to three of them combines the scholarship of Lewis Lockwood, one of the world’s leading authorities on Beethoven, with the insights and experiences of

the Juilliard String Quartet, brilliant and knowledgeable exponents of his work. (London Review of Books 2008-06-05) Not every quartet has access to masterclasses, but this book may be the next best thing... The included scores are marked with valuable annotations by the Juilliard members--not merely bowings but also flexibilities of tempo, kinds of bow-stroke, extra expression marks such as *brillante* and *tempo pesante*. Many problems inherent to Beethoven's style are discussed, none more debatable than his use of *subito piano*... On the included CD the Juilliard perform the three movements plus a preliminary version of the Opus 18. This superbly produced book is enthusiastically recommended to all musically literate readers, and is absolutely essential for quartets studying these particular works. (Philip Borg-Wheeler Classical Music (editor's choice) 2008-07-19) In each essay, Lockwood moves deftly from a broad characterization of the period when the quartet was written to detailed analysis of the movement in question... The transcribed five-way conversations will constitute, for most readers, the core of the book. The conversations reveal a mix of personalities, the wealth of experience that the participants draw on, and an absorbing attention to detail. Readers will find themselves referring often to the scores and eventually, with pleasure, to the recordings. We owe gratitude to Lewis Lockwood and the Juilliard Quartet for this fine book. (Robert L. Martin Chamber Music 2008-11-01)

Lewis Lockwood is Fanny Peabody Research Professor of Music, Harvard University. Joel Smirnoff is a member of the internationally renowned Juilliard String Quartet and on the faculty of The Juilliard School in New York City. Ronald Copes is a member of the internationally renowned Juilliard String Quartet and on the faculty of The Juilliard School in New York City. Samuel Rhodes is a member of the internationally renowned Juilliard String Quartet and on the faculty of The Juilliard School in New York City. Joel Krosnick is a member of the internationally renowned Juilliard String Quartet and on the faculty of The Juilliard School in New York City.

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. The \$35 list price (effective at the time of this review) makes it a bargain, considering how attractive and thoughtfully designed the book is and that it includes a CD as well. I plan to spend many delighted hours with this volume.

Birthday gift for my husband. He's very pleased. Arrived on time and as described.

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