



Inside Beethoven's Quartets: History, Performance, Interpretation

By Lewis Lockwood, Joel Smirnoff, Ronald Copes, Samuel Rhodes, Joel Krosnick

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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.

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Editorial Review

Review

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)

About the Author

Lewis Lockwood is Fanny Peabody Research Professor of Music, Harvard University.

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Deon Henderson:

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