



Joachim Raff

(1822 – 1882)

Volume 2

String Quartets

No. 5 op. 138

No. 7 op. 192,2

„Schöne Müllerin“

Leipziger Streichquartett

MDG 307 2255-2



Miller

To mark the 200th anniversary of the composer's birth, the renowned Leipzig String Quartet presents a world premiere recording of the 5th String Quartet from Joachim Raff's much under-appreciated chamber music. In addition, the four musicians present the quartet op. 192,2 with the epithet "Schöne Müllerin" - and whoever immediately thinks of Schubert is not wrong, but still on the wrong track.

Morning

For unlike Schubert's, there seems to be no tragic ending in Raff's wanderer's fate, but a better one. Here, too, the young man falls in love with the miller's daughter, here, too, there is - as the title of the 4th movement reveals - "unrest", but after an "explanation" the work ends in the snappy "Polterabend" (wedding-eve party). Why Raff did not then also compose a wedding remains his secret...

Model

While the "Schöne Müllerin" is laid out like a suite, the 5th string quartet follows the classical form. Raff had already broken away from Liszt's influence, and so the work is characterised by the extremely skilful treatment of the often catchy motifs. The fast second movement is remarkable, its familiar variations breathing Mendelssohnian esprit.

Myth

Again and again, the Viennese three-fourths blossoms. Is this a reverence to Joseph Hellmesberger, the primarius of many Raff premieres? In any case, the Leipzig String Quartet's joy in this life-affirming music is clearly audible!

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