



D. Shostakovich: Complete String Quartets Vol. V

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The final instalment of the quartet's sequence of Shostakovich string quartets brings together the 11th, 13th and 15th, pieces linked by their etiolated, elegiac tone.

There's a bleak intensity to these late quartets, riven as they are with the spectre of death – of friends, and the prospect of this confirmed atheist's own – which is most striking in the pale, drained tonal colouration of the opening Andantino of the No 11. Elsewhere, the mournful No 13 features furtive pizzicato tapping bow-woods, like rattling skeletons, while the composer's dark mindset is confirmed in that all seven movements of his final quartet are marked Adagio.