



Press Info:

FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY

COMPLETE CHAMBER MUSIC FOR STRINGS • VOL. II

- String Quartet in D major, Op. 44 No. 1
- String Quartet in E minor, Op. 44 No. 2
- String Quartet in F minor, Op. 80

MANDELRING QUARTETT

Sebastian Schmidt, violin
Nanette Schmidt, violin
Roland Glassl, viola
Bernhard Schmidt, violoncello

The second volume of “Mendelssohn - Complete Chamber Music for Strings” (four SACDs in total) is dedicated to compositions from the last third of the composer’s life. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy did not compose his six mature string quartets continuously, but at certain turning points in his musical life and biography. Whilst in his youth, the study of Bach and Beethoven was of major importance; later on his encounter with the exceptional violinist Ferdinand David inspired him, between 1837 and 1839, to compose his three Quartets Op. 44 (numbers 1 & 2 on this SACD). They document the mature, formally confident Mendelssohn summing up his instrumental œuvre: virtuoso composition (especially for David’s violin playing), full of colours and formal stimuli, and of romantic attitude.



Just under a decade later, a completely different Mendelssohn appears in the territory of the string quartet, historically dominated by the mature works of Beethoven. Mendelssohn’s Quartet in F minor, Op. 80, seems to be more of an outcry than a cultivated piece of chamber music, triggered by the death of his beloved sister Fanny in May 1847. Mendelssohn, completely devastated by her death, almost lost the ability to compose but mastered the crisis by finding a new tonal language, raw and highly charged, hitherto unknown to him. Tragically, Mendelssohn could not develop this course, for one and a half months after completing his quartet, the 38-year-old suffered a deadly stroke at the beginning of November, 1847.

ordering number: audite 92.657
EAN: 4022143926579
internet: audite.de/en/product/SACD/92657



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