



# Beethoven String Quartets Op. 130 and 133

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: String Quartet No. 13 in B flat Major · Grosse Fuge in B flat Major

**Vertavo: Berit Cardas, violin · Øyvør Volle, violin  
Henninge Landaas, viola · Bjørg Værnes Lewis, cello**

These unsurpassed masterworks have been part of the Vertavo repertoire as long as the quartet have existed, and now the time has come to record them.

**Celebrating their 25th year as string quartet, the Vertavo now release their very first Beethoven recording. These unsurpassed masterworks have been part of the Vertavo repertoire as long as the quartet have existed, and now the time has come to record them.**

Touring all over the world, with concert dates in the top venues, the Vertavo have established themselves among the first rate chamber ensembles of today. They have released highly acclaimed discs with music by Bartok (complete quartets), Schumann, Brahms, Nielsen, Debussy, Grieg and many more.

## A work in change

The six movement op. 130 was written between August and November 1825, in a rare period of relatively good health for the composer in these his later years. Beethoven's original idea was of course to have the Grosse Fuge as the finale of the op. 130. Only after the Quartet was completed and premiered did he listen to the urgings of friends and issue that finale, of unparalleled intensity and difficulty, as a separate composition. He then wrote a new and more light-hearted finale for the op. 130 Quartet – a movement which chanced to be his very last composition.

## No simple choice

While the Grosse Fuge was, for nearly a hundred years, almost never played, and is nowadays generally performed as a work in its own right, its original function as a finale for op. 130 has never been forgotten. Of course a recording allows the listener to choose between these two finales at will. But the choice is not a simple one. For the movement that is chosen as the finale retrospectively changes the entire orientation of the other five movements of op. 130: it is not a matter of one work with two different conclusions, but five movements which belong, depending on the choice of finale, to two different works. With the Grosse Fuge as finale, movements I-V become essentially a vast and varied prelude to it, preparing the way for the prodigious fugue much as movements I-III of the Ninth Symphony are in one sense the prelude to the huge choral finale. If staying with the final op. 130, the six movements coexist on much more equal terms, with the greatest expressive weight falling on the first, third and fifth movements.

## Vertavo

Formed in 1984, the Vertavo is now established as one of the leading European string quartets. They collaborate with artists like Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Paul Lewis, Leif Ove Andsnes, Håkan Hardenberger and Martin Fröst. Among the many contemporary composers they have worked with are Ligeti, Adès, Widmann, Nørgård, Edlund and Asheim. Vertavo have received a number of international awards for their recordings.

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"- Vertavo har gjort det igjen. De har levert en innspilling i verdensklasse. [6/6 Hroar Klempe / Adresseavisa]"

