

# THE SPOHR RECORDED QUARTET CYCLE ON MARCO POLO

by Keith Warsop

## Introduction

IN HIS NOTES included with the Marco Polo recordings of Spohr's string quartets, Clive Brown states: "The composition of string quartets ran as a continuous thread throughout Spohr's life. He wrote his first, Op.4, at about the age of twenty, and more than fifty years later his last completed large-scale work was his String Quartet No. 36, Op.157."

Such an oeuvre makes the project of recording all 36 a daunting undertaking, a task made more difficult by the fact that Spohr's quartet output comprises a variety of sub-genres within the main format. There are six quartets plus two potpourris and two sets of variations which follow the example set by the French violinist Pierre Rode whose playing style and compositions Spohr deeply admired.

Clive Brown again: "Since the piano was not yet the universal accompaniment instrument it later became, many violinist-composers wrote pieces with string accompaniment to provide them with a repertoire in which they could display their technical brilliance at soirées and other occasions when an orchestra was not available. The *quatuor brillant*, a kind of chamber concerto, was a natural outcome of this."

Spohr's six *quatuors brillants* are in three movements, without a minuet or scherzo, after the pattern of Rode's prototypes. A few more quartets are in a mixed mode, a title coined by Hans Glenewinkel in his 1912 authoritative dissertation on Spohr's chamber music for strings. The A major quartet, Op.30, features a *quatuor brillant*-type role for the first violin but otherwise the work is close to a "true" quartet with four movements and a considerable degree of involvement for the other instruments. Other four-movement quartets which give a dominant part to the first violin are the G minor, Op.27, the A minor, Op.58, No.2, the E major, Op.82, No.1, and the A major, Op.132.

The amount of preparation necessary by the first violinist for a recording of these particular works puts a premium on time and presents difficulties in adhering to a production schedule. These factors may explain why the 78 and LP era completely shunned Spohr's string quartets until after the launch of the CD in 1983. Possibly motivated by the Spohr bicentenary in 1984, two LPs did then appear though there was duplication in one of the quartets involved. Dabringhaus und Grimm issued MG+GG1144 in 1984 on which the Sonare Quartet (Laurentin Dinka, violin 1, Laurentius Bonitz, violin 2, Frowald Eppinger, viola, and Eric Plumettaz, cello) performed the E flat major, Op.29, No.1, and the D minor, Op.74, No.3, then Jecklin released JD593 in 1985 featuring the Amati Quartet, Zürich (Thomas Wicky, violin 1, Barbara Suter, violin 2, Nicolas Coriti, viola, and Johannes Degen, cello) who played the D major, Op.15, No.2 plus the same E flat work as on the previous LP.

## History of the project

In the summer of 1987 Canadian-based Spohr Society member Paul Gutteridge was searching for violin and piano arrangements of Spohr's violin concertos and investigated the holdings of Boston Public Library. He found that they had scores of the 34 published quartets in eight volumes "made from the parts by Allen A. Brown (manuscript 1894-1898)", according to the library's catalogue. Mr Gutteridge reported on his discovery in Spohr Society Newsletter No. 57

(October 1987) where he added: "As fortune would have it, I was able to relay the above information to David Nelson of Records International just prior to his trip to Hong Kong to arrange the Marco Polo 1987/1988 recording schedule." After discussing some orchestral projects, he added: "Marco Polo is also starting a new chamber music series and anticipates starting right away on the complete string quartets of Spohr, issuing about one CD per month in order to complete the series in just over one year."

This new Marco Polo chamber music series was a co-production with Records International and a few months later David Nelson informed us that the Spohr edition would comprise eight volumes of which the first seven would be two-disc sets with the final volume being three discs while the total number of CDs in the cycle reached 17. He explained that this arrangement was suggested because of Spohr's practice of publishing his quartets in sets: Opp.4 and 15 each consisting of two quartets; and Opp.29, 45, 58, 74, 82 and 84 each of three. The proposed layout allowed for each opus number to be included complete in one volume. Volume 8 included a third disc which contained the two late unpublished quartets, which Mr Nelson had obtained from manuscripts in New York Public Library, and preserved the multi-disc format for all the volumes. The proposed layout also allowed the solo quartets to be divided over the first seven volumes.

The works were to be recorded by the New Budapest Quartet in Budapest who began with a single-disc coupling of the quartets Op.84, Nos.1 and 2, so that Mr Nelson's volume plans were not followed in detail as Klaus Heymann, managing director of Marco Polo, explained: "I have left the release pattern up to the artists so Volume 2 will be whatever they decide to record next, and so on, i.e., whatever is 'in the can' will be released immediately."

This first CD was issued in 1990 and produced divided reactions from reviewers in the American magazines *Fanfare* and the *American Record Guide* (strangely, the British magazine *Gramophone* totally ignored the disc). David Johnson, writing in *Fanfare*, said: "If future volumes live up to the promise of Volume 1, this will be a revelation and one of the great 'completes' of the long-play era." On the New Budapest Quartet, he wrote: "Its four constituents ... cultivate a relationship between their instruments, each other, the music, and the listener that reminds me of the 'old' Budapest Quartet when it was still young and sweet." However, the reviewer in the *American Record Guide*, identified as "Rawson", believed that "despite many felicities, the New Budapest Quartet is not the rip-snorting virtuoso-dominated ensemble to pull these works off." About the music itself, he was rather condescending: "Indulging in some after-dinner Spohr will do no one any great harm. Certainly classical FM stations will find him much to their increasingly bland tastes."

At first the cycle progressed swiftly, though hardly quickly enough to match the optimistic plan of one CD release per month. But between 28 February 1989 and 18 December 1991, the New Budapest Quartet had recorded 19 of the works – just over the halfway mark. However, now came a hiatus. Firstly, during the political and civil chaos in the immediate years following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, some of the quartet material in Budapest was lost so I was requested to supply replacement copies which I was able to do.

Then, more seriously, the New Budapest Quartet began to develop an international reputation with concerts in England in 1989 and 1990 along with a contract with Hyperion Records which led to a number of CD recordings for this company. Consequently, preparation time was at a premium for the Spohr cycle and it was not until February 1995 that two more quartets were recorded. At that point the New Budapest withdrew from the project, citing the difficulty of finding sufficient time to rehearse the music adequately. Volume 9 was released later in 1995 and there the cycle stagnated for eight years with 20 quartets issued and one more recorded but awaiting its coupling. The search now began for another quartet to take on the mantle of the New

Budapest but there were a number of false turnings before the project switched to Moscow. A Milan-based quartet were in the frame briefly but nothing came of this, then it was suggested that the Maggini Quartet should record the remaining works in England. However their first Naxos CDs of British chamber music proved such a big success that they embarked on a major series of further such recordings which ruled them out of contention for the Spohr cycle.

At the close of the 1990s violinist Sophie Langdon and harpist Hugh Webb recorded Spohr's complete chamber music with harp for Naxos and at the same time Sophie Langdon's own quartet, the Fourth Dimension, had a disc of chamber works by Carl Goldmark issued by ASV which received excellent reviews.

The Marco Polo Artists and Repertoire manager of the time was highly impressed by the Goldmark CD and therefore engaged the Fourth Dimension for Spohr quartet recordings. Unfortunately, shortly before the first recording was made at Potton Hall in Suffolk, two of the quartet's personnel left and had to be replaced at the last minute. As a result, when Klaus Heymann heard the recording he decided that problems with tuning meant it did not reach the level of quality he demanded for Marco Polo discs and so, even though he had financed the recording, wrote off this cost and declined to issue the resultant CD.

The project had appeared to enter another blind alley but Mr Heymann acted with decisive swiftness. Only weeks after rejecting the Fourth Dimension recording, he arranged for Dmitry Yablonsky, the Russian cellist and conductor, to oversee the Spohr cycle in Moscow with the Moscow Concertino Quartet as the main recording artists.

Accordingly, in August 2003 I was asked to send the material used by the Fourth Dimension to Mr Yablonsky (quartets Op.141 and Op.152). I also included two more quartets (Op.82, Nos. 2 and 3) so that the performers would have them in hand when required for a follow-up recording. Imagine my surprise to discover some months later that all four quartets had been recorded in December 2003 and were scheduled for release early in 2005.

After discussions with Mr Yablonsky I sent him the material for all the remaining unrecorded 11 quartets as well as the four short display pieces. These had not been part of the original project but it became clear that the playing time on some of the CDs still to be recorded would fall below 50 minutes so that these fillers would enable this mark to be exceeded.

The 2005 releases in the rejuvenated project brought an ecstatic response from Julian Haylock in *International Record Review* (December 2005) where he wrote: "Louis Spohr's string quartets are perhaps the most consistently undervalued works of their kind, so it's hats off to Marco Polo for at last producing a series of all 36, especially when they are played with such obvious devoted affection as by the Concertino String Quartet, whose members are all drawn from the Moscow Philharmonic. Beautifully written (only Mendelssohn is his equal in this respect) and meticulously crafted, they are as much a pleasure to play as they are to listen to. His melodies have an easygoing naturalness (once again Mendelssohn is brought to mind) and unlike so many composers inclined towards the lyrical he doesn't struggle when craft takes precedence over naked inspiration, as witness his sleight-of-hand transitions between contrasting themes and always absorbing development sections. The quartets embrace music of an unusually wide emotional range, from sublimely radiant contentment (a rare gift indeed!), to an unsettling handling of the minor mode which thankfully avoids chest-beating, *Sturm-und-Drang* clichés. Of the latest releases, Volume 10 featuring Quartets Nos.24 and 25 is the more melliflously played and easily assimilated ... while Quartets Nos.32 and 34 on Volume 11 are among the finest of the series."

By December 2009 34 quartets had been recorded – 21 in Budapest and 13 in Moscow with the latter city also covering three of the four short display pieces. At the time of writing, only the

final Volume 17 remains to be recorded and so bring the project to its conclusion some quarter of a century after it was first planned.

### **The performers**

András Kiss, the leader of the New Budapest Quartet, was a prizewinner at the 1968 Leipzig International Bach Competition and in the same year he was appointed to the staff at Budapest's Liszt Academy. The quartet itself was formed in 1971 when it immediately took third prize at the Haydn International Competition in Vienna and second prize at the Carlo Jachino International Competition in Rome. After studying with the famous Hungarian String Quartet they began extensive touring in Europe, the United States and Canada leading to a successful London debut in 1989.

They were then signed by Hyperion Records for whom they recorded the complete quartets of Bartok, Beethoven and Brahms as well as the piano quintets of Brahms and Medtner. The other members of the quartet, Ferenc Balogh (violin 2), László Bársony (viola), and Károly Botvay (cello), were all leading Hungarian musicians.

The Concertino Quartet, who are all members of the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, made their debut in 1994 and have devoted themselves to rare repertoire plus original arrangements and performances of miniatures and jazz best-sellers. The leader, Jaroslav Krasnikov, has also featured as a concerto soloist, including BBC broadcasts in Vivaldi, Bach, Mozart and Brahms, which makes him particularly fitted to take the solo part in Spohr's *quatuors brillants*. Following the recordings made in 2003, the quartet's viola player, Pavel Zhdanov, left the group and was replaced by Olga Zhmaeva.

For Volume 12, recorded in the winter of 2005-06, the Concertino were replaced by the Dima Quartet, Moscow, a group specially put together by Dmitry Yablonsky for these sessions. Its members had appeared as soloists with many Russian orchestras and the leader, Sergey Girshenko, studied with David Oistrakh as well as partnering Sviatoslav Richter. Second violinist Alexey Gulianitsky is a laureate of international violin competitions and on the teaching staff of the Moscow State Conservatory while Georgy Kapitonov has appeared in concerts as viola soloist in such works as Strauss's *Don Quixote*. Dmitry Yablonsky has featured as solo cellist and conductor on numerous highly-praised Naxos discs.

### **Critical commentary**

When we listen to string quartets established in the repertoire by composers such as Haydn, Mozart or Beethoven and performed by experienced players we hear interpretations honed by many rehearsals and concerts so that we can perceive all the finer nuances being brought out. In contrast, taking on unknown pieces such as the quartets of Spohr can put the performers to a severe test. Unless they have managed to play a particular quartet regularly over time they have to concentrate on such essentials as an accurate rendition of the notes, tempi and dynamics. Finer nuances might be found during rehearsal but there is no performance tradition to help them to find their way into the music.

That perhaps explains the divided views of the two American critics referred to above when considering the first release in the Marco Polo cycle. While one reviewer was carried away with enthusiasm by what he found in Spohr's music, the other missed the finer nuances the New Budapest might have brought to the works if they had lived with them for a long time.

As an example on this point, take the development section in the first movement of the D minor quartet, Op.84, No.1, which appears on that first disc. A *pianissimo* opening to this section slowly builds up the tension, leading to three successive *fortissimo* outbursts before things gradually ease off to lead into the recapitulation. The New Budapest certainly play well and accurately here but they seem rather polite and lack the passion this dramatic music demands.

Their performance of this quartet is not without some merit however; the lyrical and relaxed slow movement and lively finale find them at their best.

The six early quartets featured on their third and fourth discs are more satisfactory and many of their later recordings are also excellent; particular examples are the C major, Op.45, No.1, the E flat major, Op.58, No.1 and the A minor, Op.74, No.1. One or two of the driving finales do lack something in excitement, well as they are played otherwise. Two which bring this point home are those to the E minor, Op.45, No.2, and Op.74, No.3, which definitely need more light and shade to make them bubble along as they should.

Another movement which finds the New Budapest flat-footed is the opening one in the A major, Op.93, which takes them 14 minutes 34 seconds at an amiable jog-trot. However, this was on only their second CD, recorded about the same time as the first one so they were not yet fully into their stride.

With 21 quartets under their belt it was inevitable that the New Budapest would vary in the success of their approach to the various works. For instance, tempo instability rears up in the *Andante con Variazioni* movement of Op.58, No.2. Here Spohr inserts a Scherzo as a variation of the theme with the tempo changing to *Vivace*. After the Scherzo, Spohr asks for *Tempo primo*, meaning a return to *Andante*, but the New Budapest stay at the Scherzo tempo for the concluding variation and coda.

I have mentioned the below-par tempo in the first movement of Op.93. As this is a *quatuor brillant* it might be put down to a cautious approach by the first violinist faced with a solo virtuoso role but he proves completely on top of his part in the work's finale and also in the two other *quatuors brillants* with which he was involved, the D minor, Op.11, and the E major, Op.43, both recorded only months after Op.93. He especially gets his teeth into the big, luscious melody in the first movement of Op.74, No.3 and shows it to be a real romantic inspiration.

Overall, the New Budapest offer us more delights than disappointments in their traversal of their 21 quartets and I have listed my main criticisms above. In comparison, the Concertino Quartet seem more consistent in their approach than the New Budapest in the 11 quartets so far recorded by them which means that we do lack some of the impressive romantic ardour offered by the Hungarians at their best. As a generalisation, we could say that the Concertino are classical and the New Budapest romantic in their performances.

The Concertino's tempi are generally spot on and the driving finales such as that in the G major, Op.82, No.2, come off with plenty of life and sparkle. I particularly enjoyed the expansive tempi in the slow movements; the *Larghetto* of the C major, Op.141, which lasts eight minutes 57 seconds, is worth a mention here. A couple of private, non-commercial recordings take 7-17 and 7-26 respectively and the Concertino make far more of this movement.

They also make the most of Spohr's last quartet, the G minor, Op.157, which he embargoed for performance and publication. On this interpretation the Concertino justify the praise given by Hans Glenewinkel to the work in his 1912 dissertation on Spohr's string chamber music.

The other "embargoed" quartet, also praised by Glenewinkel, the E flat major, Op.155, is beautifully played by the Dima Quartet but the coupling of the G major, Op.146, perhaps needed a little more preparation and rehearsal. The Scherzo is hardly taken at Spohr's prescribed *Presto* tempo and so loses something of its perkiness. More could also have been brought out in the first movement which here sounds rather flat and tame though the players are excellent in the touching *Adagio molto* and bring plenty of *sturm und drang* to the minor key finale.

#### **Evaluation of the quartets**

The opportunity of hearing the works again and again in decent professional performances means that we can get to know them well enough to begin to evaluate them and sort them into various

categories of excellence. Of course, there are some shortcomings in the interpretations which have been discussed in the previous section but these can be allowed for in formulating our judgments.

Before the Marco Polo cycle came along, deep knowledge of Spohr's quartets had to be gleaned from a very, very occasional broadcast, trying to get to grips with Glenewinkel's German-language 1912 dissertation or studying the published editions. This was hard work because scores existed for only a handful of the quartets and the remainder were available only in the separate string parts. A few lucky string players could, of course, try them out if they could track down the editions and also find three like-minded colleagues to join in. Finally, it was also possible to buckle down to the hard labour of writing out one's own scores from the parts.

Glenewinkel put at the top of his list of outstanding quartets the trio comprising Op.29, No.1, Op.58, No.1, and Op.74, No.3, because he considered these works attained high quality in each of their movements. He added that a number of other quartets came close to this level and cited ten: Op.15, Nos.1 and 2, Op.29, No.3, Op.45, Nos.1 and 2, Op.74, Nos.1 and 2, Op.82, No.2, and Op.84, Nos.1 and 2.

I have some doubts about the inclusion of the two Op.15 quartets in this list. Delightful as they are, they seem slighter and less individual than the others, and if I had to nominate one of the early quartets to replace them I would go for the G minor, Op.4, No.2, which certainly seemed a popular piece in the nineteenth century with numerous published arrangements, especially of its *Adagio*. Of the Op.29 set, I would prefer the C major, No.2, rather than the F minor, No.3, on account of its beautiful slow movement and sparkling finale whereas the last movement of No.3 strikes me as falling below the high standard of the remainder of the work as it involves a lot of routine writing.

Glenewinkel is certainly correct in his assessment of the quartets from Op.74, Op.82 and Op.84 though I would add the A minor, Op.82, No.3, and the B minor, Op.84, No.3, to this list. In addition all three quartets of Op.58 reach a very high standard as Chris Tutt argued in the 2010 *Spohr Journal*.

Indeed, it is simpler to note the quartets which disappoint in one way or another though here I put the six *quatuors brillants* to one side for the moment as they require separate treatment. The F minor, Op.45, No.3, suffers from a lengthy and monotonous slow movement while the finale, despite a richly tuneful second subject (which Spohr obviously recognised as a "hit" by bringing it back right at the end) has over-long stretches of first violin virtuosity. Also deficient in this area is the first movement of Op.82, No.1, though things improve after this.

Glenewinkel omits any mention of the six late works in his selection of the best quartets in line with his theory of the slow decline of Spohr's inspiration from about 1834 but he appears to have overlooked an important factor in his consideration of these six. Contrary to a number of music reference books which suggest that Spohr was merely repeating himself in his late period, these quartets show a definite stylistic development.

Clive Brown has put his finger on the matter with his suggestion that Spohr's style moves closer to Brahms with richer and more involved textures along with more complex harmony. Therefore, I take the view that at least two of these late quartets, Op.141 and Op.146, deserve to be added to the list of Spohr's best, in the case of Op.141 for an overall consistent quality and with Op.146 because of its superb slow movement and powerful finale. After these two, Op.132 picks up impressively after a rather low-powered opening movement while the E flat quartet, Op.152, is more variable in its inspiration, though containing many fine things. The two "posthumous" quartets, Op.155 and Op.157, return to the slighter but attractive elements found in the Op.15 pair though the first movement of Op.157 suggests that had Spohr been granted

more years and composed more quartets he would have used his “purified” musical language to explore more weighty matters.

Turning to the *quatuors brillants*, Spohr defined this genre as one which allowed a soloist to display his virtuosity in small circles with a performance in which all the technical devices of concerto playing were allowed with the only exception the necessity to reduce the tone of the instrument when playing in a small room. Therefore, Spohr’s six works in this form must be judged with different criteria from those applied to “true” quartets. With this in mind, I recommend Op.11 as a really attractive piece in which the soloist dominates completely while the three accompanists have little to do. In contrast, Op.43 seems nearer to a “true” quartet by cutting back on outright virtuosity and involving the other players a little more. This quartet and the A major, Op.68, probably have the most to offer a modern listener with the *Larghetto* of the latter a luscious “lollipop” which brings to mind the violin Romances of Beethoven. The E flat major, Op.83, has a catchy, foot-tapping polonaise finale while the last movement of Op.93 is also very tuneful and enjoyable.

To sum up, my top ten Spohr quartets are: G minor, Op.4, No.2; C major, Op.45, No.1; E flat major, Op.58, No.1; D minor, Op.74, No.3; G major, Op.82, No.2; A minor, Op.82, No.3; D minor, Op.84, No.1; A flat major, Op.84, No.2; B minor, Op.84, No.3; and G major, Op.146. I know that a number of Spohr scholars including Clive Brown and Chris Tutt would almost certainly wish to include the E flat major, Op.29, No.1 and the E minor, Op.45, No.2, in such a list but I have limited myself to ten and have gone for my own favourites.

#### **The four short pieces**

Spohr wrote two potpourris and two sets of variations for a solo violin plus second violin, viola and cello which date from 1804 to 1808. When he played Beethoven’s recent Op.18 quartets in his 1804 concert tour he discovered that audiences found them difficult to assimilate but when he rounded off the programme with Rode’s Variations in E flat major they proved a hit and sent everyone home happy. This gave Spohr the idea of writing similar pieces himself using the *quatuor brillant* texture of Rode’s work and so arose these four compositions which in effect provide a built-in encore and gave audiences a sweetener to help the medicine of the Beethoven to go down. Therefore, these works were part of Spohr’s early quartet concerts and so can be considered an appendix to his own quartet output.

As they were not originally part of the Marco Polo project, the New Budapest did not have to tackle them but they were added at the time of the switch to Moscow in order to lengthen the playing time of the discs containing the last two quartets and a couple of three-movement *quatuors brillants* which would otherwise have dropped below 50 minutes, a fatal outcome in these days of well-filled CDs.

Sergey Girshenko of the Dima Quartet was first in the field with the Potpourri in G major, Op.5, which works with a theme from a 1796 opera by Pierre Gaveaux (1761-1825) and he is fully on top of his task as a latter-day Spohr, handling the demanding passage-work with aplomb. Then Jaroslav Krasnikov, the leader of the Concertino Quartet, took over with equal ability for the Potpourri in B major, Op.24, which features two themes by Mozart, and he continued with the Variations in A major, Op.8, which, along with the Variations in D minor, Op.6, used themes by Haydn, according to Spohr’s statement in a letter to his publisher. These “Haydn” themes have never been identified so perhaps Spohr took them from some of the many spurious works attributed to Haydn by publishers at the time. After all, that is exactly what Brahms did in his famous Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op.56.

Although the potpourris were receiving their first recordings, the two sets of variations had been previously released on Koch Schwann CD 311088 H1 in 1989 after appearing three years

earlier on LP and cassette. Ernő Sebestyén was the soloist supported by Heidrun Ganz (second violin), Wilfried Strehle (viola) and Martin Ostertag (cello) in accomplished performances.

### Conclusion

I have now heard 16 of the planned 17 CDs in the Marco Polo cycle and have written the booklet notes for 11 of the discs so I have lived closely with these works ever since 1990. Therefore, what I have said about the music and the performances are not snap verdicts after a cursory hearing but a considered evaluation of the project. As such, I hope my opinions will be helpful to others and perhaps encourage more to engage with these fine compositions. At present two CDs are ready to be released in 2012 but the final Volume 17 is still to be recorded. It will include the A major quartet, Op.30, the B minor *quatuor brillant*, Op.61, and the D minor Variations, Op.6. Those who have played and studied Op.30 rate it one of the most inspired of Spohr's quartets though the soloistic writing for the first violin will always tell against its frequent performance. So it looks as if we will be able to celebrate a grand finale to this groundbreaking project and in conclusion I congratulate Klaus Heymann for sticking to his pledge to complete the cycle when it looked at times as if we would never get there.

### MARCO POLO DISCOGRAPHY

#### PERFORMERS

**New Budapest Quartet:** András Kiss (1st violin), Ferenc Balogh (2nd violin), László Bársony (viola), and Károly Botvay (cello).

**Moscow Concertino Quartet:** Jaroslav Krasnikov (1st violin), Sofia Krasnikova (2nd violin), Pavel Zhdanov (viola) in volumes 10-11, Olga Zhmaeva (viola) in volumes 13-16, and Victor Kozodov (cello).

**Dima Quartet, Moscow:** Sergey Girshenko (1st violin), Alexey Gulianitsky (2nd violin), Georgy Kapitonov (viola), and Dmitry Yablonsky (cello).

**Note:** The numbering of the quartets follows publication order. The numbers in parentheses indicate composition order when it differs from that of publication.

Volume 1: 8.223251 (1989) Total time:	57.46
No.27 in D minor, Op.84/1	27.38
1. Allegro vivace	10.19
2. Larghetto	6.04
3. Scherzo	5.02
4. Finale: Allegro	6.13
No.28 in A $\flat$ major, Op.84/2	30.08
5. Allegro	10.51
6. Adagio	5.56
7. Scherzo	6.06
8. Rondo: Allegretto	7.15

#### New Budapest Quartet

Recorded: Budapest, 17-25 Mar., 1989

Producers: János Mátyás and Dóra Antal

Notes: Clive Brown and Chris Tutt

Cover illustration: Vienna, 1830

Volume 2: 8.223252 (1990) Total time:	60.33
No.29 in B minor, Op.84/3	33.12
1. Allegro	10.23
2. Minuetto: Moderato	7.14
3. Adagio	9.41
4. Finale: Allegretto	5.54
No.30 in A major, Op.93 ( <i>Quatuor brillant</i> No.6)	27.21
5. Andante—Allegro	14.34
6. Larghetto	7.20
7. Rondo: Allegretto	5.27

New Budapest Quartet

Recorded: Budapest, 28 Feb., 2-3 Mar. (tracks 1 & 2), 18 Mar. (3 & 4), and 26-29 Sept., 1989 (5-7)

Producers: Monika Feszler (1 & 2), János Mátyás (3 & 4) and Jenó Simon (5-7)

Notes: Clive Brown and Chris Tutt

Cover illustration: Dusseldorf, 1855

Volume 3: 8.223253 (1991) Total time:	68.14
No.1 in C major, Op.4/1	21.22
1. Allegro spiritoso	9.17
2. Menuetto: Allegretto	3.08
3. Adagio	3.33
4. Allegro	5.24
No.2 in G minor, Op.4/2	23.15
5. Allegro moderato	7.07
6. Poco Adagio	6.06
7. Scherzo: Allegro	5.27
8. Finale: Rondo Vivace	4.35
No.5 in D major, Op.15/2	23.37
9. Allegro moderato	12.24
10. Scherzo: Allegro vivace	4.13
11. Finale: Largo—Allegro molto	7.00

New Budapest Quartet

Recorded: Budapest, 26 Feb.,-1 Mar., 1990

Producer: András Soós

Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

Cover illustration: Braunschweig, 1855

Volume 4: 8.223254 (1991) Total time:	74.45
No.3 in D minor, Op.11 ( <i>Quatuor brillant</i> No.1)	19.52
1. Allegro moderato	8.26
2. Adagio	4.44
3. Rondo	6.42
No.4 in E $\flat$ major, Op.15/1	23.29
4. Allegro vivace	7.31
5. Andante	5.12
6. Menuetto: Allegretto	5.04
7. Rondo: Presto	5.42
No.6 in G minor, Op.27	31.24
8. Allegro moderato	12.37
9. Adagio	6.44
10. Menuetto: Allegretto	6.54
11. Finale: Vivace	5.09

New Budapest Quartet

Recorded: Budapest, 26 Feb.,-1 Mar., 1990

Producer: András Soós

Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

Cover illustration: Carlsruhe, 1845

Volume 5: 8.223255 (1991) Total time:	57.54
No.7 (9) in E $\flat$ major, Op.29/1	30.51
1. Allegro	8.27
2. Andante con Variazioni	11.03
3. Scherzo: Moderato	3.30
4. Finale: Vivace	7.51
No.8 (10) in C major, Op.29/2	27.03
5. Allegro	9.25
6. Adagio	8.30

- |                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| 7. Menuetto: Allegretto | 2.23 |
| 8. Finale: Vivace       | 6.45 |

New Budapest Quartet

Recorded: Budapest, 17, 21 Apr., 1990

Producer: András Soós

Notes: Clive Brown

Cover illustration: Bonn, 1845

Volume 6: 8.223256 (1992) Total time: 59.04

No.15 (16) in E♭ major, Op.58/1 31.46

- |                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| 1. Allegro vivace | 8.59  |
| 2. Adagio         | 10.44 |
| 3. Scherzo        | 5.17  |
| 4. Rondo: Vivace  | 6.46  |

No.16 (17) in A minor, Op.58/2 27.18

- |                            |       |
|----------------------------|-------|
| 5. Moderato                | 10.53 |
| 6. Andante con Variazioni— | 5.21  |
| 7. Scherzo: Vivace—Tempo 1 | 4.26  |
| 8. Rondo all' Espagnola    | 6.38  |

New Budapest Quartet

Recorded: Budapest, 1-3 Mar., 1991

Producer: Jenó Simon

Notes: Clive Brown and Chris Tutt

Cover illustration: Hamburg, 1830

Volume 7: 8.223257 (1993) Total time: 58.04

No.11 in E major, Op.43 (*Quatuor brillant* No.2) 27.45

- |                                      |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Allegro                           | 11.20 |
| 2. Adagio                            | 8.22  |
| 3. Tempo di Minuetto: Un poco vivace | 8.03  |

No.12 in C major, Op.45/1 30.19

- |                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| 4. Allegro          | 12.40 |
| 5. Scherzo: Vivace  | 4.42  |
| 6. Andante grazioso | 5.46  |
| 7. Finale: Presto   | 7.11  |

New Budapest Quartet

Recorded: Budapest, 13, 15-17 June, 1991

Producer: Jenó Simon

Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

Cover illustration: Mannheim, 1840

Volume 8: 8.223258 (1993) Total time: 70.00

No.13 in E minor, Op.45/2 35.04

- |                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| 1. Allegro vivace     | 11.53 |
| 2. Larghetto          | 5.37  |
| 3. Menuetto: Moderato | 5.02  |
| 4. Finale: Vivace     | 12.32 |

No.14 in F minor, Op.45/3 34.56

- |                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| 5. Adagio—Allegro vivace | 10.06 |
| 6. Adagio                | 8.56  |
| 7. Scherzo: Presto       | 4.49  |
| 8. Finale: Vivace        | 11.05 |

New Budapest Quartet

Recorded: Budapest, 13-19 June, 1991

Producer: Jenó Simon

Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

Cover illustration: Munich, c1820

Volume 9: 8.223259 (1995) Total time: 61.16  
 No.20 in A minor, Op.74/1 31.38  
 1. Allegro vivace 14.12  
 2. Larghetto con moto 6.00  
 3. Scherzo 4.13  
 4. Rondo: Allegretto 7.13  
 No.21 in B $\flat$  major, Op.74/2 29.38  
 5. Allegro vivace 10.15  
 6. Larghetto 5.25  
 7. Allegretto con Variazioni 7.46  
 8. Finale: Allegretto 6.12  
 New Budapest Quartet  
 Recorded: Budapest, 18 Dec., 1991 (tracks 5-8) and 21, 25-26 Feb., 1995 (tracks 1-4)  
 Producer: Jenó Simon  
 Notes: Clive Brown and Robert Jordan  
 Cover illustration: Stuttgart, c1810

Volume 10: 8.225306 (2005) Total time: 59.13  
 No.24 in G major, Op.82/2 31.07  
 1. Allegro 8.54  
 2. Adagio 7.03  
 3. Alla Polacca: Moderato 6.53  
 4. Finale: Allegro 8.17  
 No.25 in A minor, Op.82/3 28.06  
 5. Allegro 8.48  
 6. Andante 5.05  
 7. Scherzo: Vivace 5.20  
 8. Finale: Andante—Allegro 8.53  
 Concertino Quartet  
 Recorded: Moscow, 16-30 Dec., 2003  
 Producer: Lubov Doronina  
 Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop  
 Cover illustration: Kassel, Belle Vue Straße, 1836

Volume 11: 8.225307 (2005) Total time: 66.05  
 No.32 in C major, Op.141 34.30  
 1. Allegro moderato 11.20  
 2. Larghetto 8.57  
 3. Scherzo: Allegro 5.31  
 4. Finale: Presto 8.42  
 No.34 in E $\flat$  major, Op.152 31.35  
 5. Adagio—Allegro 9.29  
 6. Larghetto con moto 5.27  
 7. Menuetto 7.46  
 8. Finale: Allegro 8.53  
 Concertino Quartet  
 Recorded: Moscow, 16-30 Dec., 2003  
 Producer: Lubov Doronina  
 Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop  
 Cover illustration: Kassel, Friedrichsplatz, 1850

Volume 12: 8.225316 (2007) Total time: 69.41  
 No.33 in G major, Op.146 32.43  
 1. Allegro 9.32  
 2. Adagio molto 7.03  
 3. Scherzo: Presto 5.28  
 4. Finale: Molto Allegro 10.40

No.35 in E♭ major, Op.155	21.49
5. Allegro	6.30
6. Romanze: Andantino	4.58
7. Menuetto: Moderato	3.23
8. Finale: Allegro non troppo	6.58
Potpourri No.1 in G major, Op.5	
9. Grave—Allegretto—Andante—Poco Adagio—Tempo di Menuetto —Più lento—Allegretto—Tempo 1	15.09

Dima Quartet

Recorded: Moscow, 25 Nov., 2005-9 Jan., 2006

Producer: Lubov Doronina

Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

Cover illustration: Kassel, court theatre, 1850

Volume 13: 8.225315 (2009) Total time: 54.15

No.9 (7) in F minor, Op.29/3	32.29
1. Allegro	10.44
2. Scherzo: Vivace	6.25
3. Adagio	6.57
4. Finale: Allegro	8.23
No.17 (18) in G major, Op.58/3	21.46
5. Allegro	8.07
6. Menuetto: Moderato	5.37
7. Adagio molto—	1.42
8. Allegro—Adagio molto—Allegro	6.20

Concertino Quartet

Recorded: Moscow, 10 Nov., 2007-17 Jan., 2008

Producers: Pavel Lavrenenkov and Natalia Ruzhanskaya

Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

Cover illustration: Kassel, St Martin's Church, 1842

Volume 14: 8.225982 (2011) Total time: 60.28

No.31 in A major, Op.132	28.54
1. Allegro vivace	7.24
2. Adagio	6.45
3. Scherzo: Vivace	6.53
4. Finale: Allegro molto	7.52
No.36 in G minor, Op.157	21.09
5. Allegro	7.52
6. Larghetto	5.17
7. Menuetto (Trio: Un poco più moderato)	4.06
8. Finale: Allegro molto	3.54

Potpourri No.4 in B major, Op.24

9. Adagio con molto espressione—Allegretto—Andante —Grazioso—Allegro vivace—Allegretto	10.25
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Concertino Quartet

Recorded: Moscow, 15 Nov.-20 Dec., 2009

Producer: Pavel Lavrenenkov

Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

Cover illustration: Kassel, railway station, 1860

Volume 15: 8.225981 (2012) Total time: 62.57

No.19 in A major, Op.68 ( <i>Quatuor brillant</i> No.4)	25.25
1. Allegro moderato	13.13
2. Larghetto	6.24
3. Rondo: Allegretto	5.48

No.22 in D minor, Op.74/3	37.32
4. Allegro	12.59
5. Adagio	7.08
6. Scherzo: Vivace	6.32
7. Finale: Presto	10.53

Concertino Quartet (tracks 1-3)

New Budapest Quartet (tracks 4-7)

Recorded: Moscow, 15 Nov.-20 Dec., 2009 (tracks 1-3) and Budapest, 25-26 Feb., 1995 (tracks 4-7)

Producers: Pavel Lavrenenkov (tracks 1-3) and Jenó Simon (tracks 4-7)

Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

Cover illustration: Kassel, Königsplatz, 1840

Volume 16: 8.225983 (2012) Total time: 56.53

No.23 in E major, Op.82/1 23.03

1. Allegro	6.24
2. Andantino	5.40
3. Scherzo: Allegro	4.29
4. Finale: Allegro	6.30

No.26 in E $\flat$  major, Op.83 (*Quatuor brillant* No.5) 26.04

5. Allegro moderato	11.38
6. Adagio	7.21
7. Alla Polacca	7.05

Variations in A major, Op.8

8. Introduzione: Adagio—Thema: Andante—Più Allegro —Più lento—Minore: Adagio—Tempo 1	7.46
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Concertino Quartet

Recorded: Moscow, 15 Nov.-20 Dec., 2009

Producer: Pavel Lavrenenkov

Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

Volume 17 (awaiting recording):

No.10 (8) in A major, Op.30

1. Allegro	
2. Adagio	
3. Menuetto: Allegretto	
4. Finale: Moderato—Vivace—Moderato— Vivace—Moderato—Vivace	

No.18 (15) in B minor, Op.61 (*Quatuor brillant* No.3)

5. Allegro moderato	
6. Adagio	
7. Finale: Allegretto	

Variations in D minor, Op.6

8. Introduzione: Adagio—Thema: Andante più Allegretto —Var.1—Var.2—Var.3—Var.4—Tempo 1	
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Notes: Clive Brown and Keith Warsop

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