that Rosetti's music displayed greater 'structural cohesion', an expansion of his harmonic language, more contrapuntal interest and a greater participation by wind instruments. Rosetti's concertos were designed to display the special talents of members of the *Hofkapelle* and featured wind instruments (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn) as well as violin, viola and keyboard. Murray points out that *Harmoniemusik*, unlike the symphony and concerto, 'was not a public type of music and individual compositions were unlikely to gain a wide circulation' (269). Of the twenty works Rosetti composed for wind ensembles, just over half were created specifically for Kraft Ernst's *Harmonie*. The *Harmoniemusik* silhouette alluded to earlier shows nine wind players and one bassist in livery, standing in groups of two.

Rosetti wrote chamber music throughout his career, and Murray devotes a chapter to his string trios and quartets, accompanied and unaccompanied keyboard sonatas (together with a few pieces with mixed instrumentation), noting that it was through printed editions that this music 'reached its largest audience' (348). On the other hand, Murray points to the relatively minor role that music for the Roman Catholic Church played in the composer's creative output. Problems of attribution afflict this repertory, and only nine of the thirteen settings of the Mass Ordinary ascribed to Rosetti can be counted as authentic works.

Rosetti's 'Nonliturgical Music for Voice and Orchestra' (chapter 13) includes two oratorios, a cantata, a chamber opera and a set of choral variations. The oratorio *Der sterbende Jesus* was written for the Wallerstein court during the winter of 1784–1785. Murray regards his second oratorio, *Jesus in Gethsemane*, to be a superior work and the 'high point' of Rosetti's compositional output for the Protestant court at Ludwigslust. Indeed, he describes it as 'one of the crowning glories of Rosetti's creative imagination' (306). Rosetti's contribution to domestic music for amateur musicians consisted primarily of sixty-nine lieder and fifty-six short keyboard pieces such as dances, romances, rondos and capriccios. According to Murray, 'the challenge of this repertory was to produce quality music within the capabilities of dilettante musicians' (377). The compositions appeared in the musical weekly *Blumenlese für Klavierliebhaber*, published by Heinrich Bossler between 1782 and 1784.

In the final chapter, 'Rosetti in Perspective', Murray observes that 'critics praised his music and placed him on a level with Haydn and Mozart' (385). With this volume, which sets the seal on his long-term study of the composer, Murray has succeeded in bringing 'Rosetti and his music out of the shadows and into the same scholarly light as his best-known contemporaries' (390). At the same time he has provided a solid foundation for other scholars to build upon.

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NANCY NOVEMBER
BEETHOVEN'S THEATRICAL QUARTETS: OPP. 59, 74 AND 95
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This is the third volume in the Cambridge University Press series 'Music in Context', which has 'specific musical works, repertoires or practices' at its heart but insists on their illumination in particular contexts; above all, the 'decontextualisation of traditional aesthetics and music analysis' is always to be avoided. Nancy November does not disappoint in this valuable study of the five string quartets which are traditionally understood as Beethoven's 'middle-period' works in the genre. As her title implies, the principal context in which her readings are grounded is that of theatre, more specifically Beethoven's engagement with the

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composition of theatre music: above all, the opera *Leonore* (1805–1806, though November elects to use the later title *Fidelio*) and the incidental music to Goethe's *Egmont* (1809–1810), which are contemporary with the composition of these quartets. Along the way, she is concerned also to challenge the hegemony of the 'late' works in current and earlier reception of the Beethoven quartets, as well as the hegemony of a particular concept of heroism, and the dominance of a 'score-centred paradigm of "true" quartets' (3). We are promised a novel attention to undervalued musical parameters such as timbre and register in analyses 'which aim to be multivalent and eclectic' (4).

Those analyses (chapters 3–7) occupy the great bulk of the book, each movement of each quartet being afforded a generous discussion. Two preliminary chapters deal respectively with theories and practices of the string quartet in the early nineteenth century, and aspects of performance practice in Beethoven's own time (November evidently writes as a practising string player). The concluding chapter 8 deals with reception history from Beethoven's time to our own, taking in compositional responses (Mendelssohn, Schumann), the writings of A. B. Marx, Lenz, Helm (to whom November pays welcome attention throughout), Wagner, Kerman and others, as well as a brief nod towards the analysis of recorded performances of Op. 59 No. 1. The final paragraph posits a symmetrical grouping of the five quartets: Op. 59 No. 1 and Op. 95 are concerned with 'the dialectic of process versus product', while Op. 59 No. 2 and Op. 74 'develop intimacy, expressivity and songfulness'; this leaves Op. 59 No. 3 as the central work, one 'whose plot spins most explicitly against the ideals of "true" quartets, and the "heroic" paradigm in its narrowest understanding', and represents 'Beethoven's "emancipation" of the string quartet from itself' (254). Some readers may find this superstructure somewhat contrived, following upon so many sensitive commentaries which emphasize the individuality of the five works; on the other hand, the implicit separation of Op. 59 No. 3 from its companion quartets both serves as a counterweight to those readings which argue for Op. 59 as a kind of three-quartet 'work' (see pages 162–166 for a discussion) and adds ballast to the arguments of those who sense precisely that the third 'Rasumovsky' is somehow different from – even inferior to – the first two (see for example Alan Tyson, 'The "Razumovsky" Quartets: Some Aspects of the Sources', in Tyson, ed., *Beethoven Studies 3* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 107–140).

Chapter 1 is one of the strongest and most illuminating in the book, and sets up the distinction between what might be termed inward- and outward-facing (my terms) conceptions of the quartet as a genre. The former tends toward a score-based, intellectualized understanding, prioritizing learnedness and elevation of style and thought; it is from the latter that the idea of theatricality can emerge, in an understanding of the quartet as 'implicitly social and entertaining, and visual and visceral in its meanings' (10). November makes good use of early nineteenth-century sources to bolster her case for the co-existence of these 'German' and 'French' conceptions of the string quartet, as she calls them for the sake of simplification, and draws especially upon an 1810 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* article, 'Ueber Quartettmusik', by J. C. W. Petiscus. Surprisingly, perhaps, she understands the well-known metaphor of quartet as 'conversation' as supporting an 'outward' orientation, as opposed to one which would seem more likely to tend towards the isolation of the performers from the audience: certainly, this is what I take to be implied by Goethe's famous 1829 invocation of the metaphor (see page 31). At base, though, and always cautious of simplistic binary oppositions (see page 95, for instance, on 'private' versus 'public' in the opening of Op. 59 No. 2), she is rightly insistent that 'to understand the string quartet *c*1800 in terms of any single, monolithic idea is to oversimplify' (10).

The interpretations of the quartets themselves are full of thoughtful and insightful detail. This is perhaps especially so in the case of Op. 74, which, as November stresses, has divided and confused critics from 1809 onward (the incorrect '1808' towards the bottom of page 173 should not have been allowed to stand; nor the attribution of 'La Malinconia' to Op. 18 No. 5, rather than No. 6, at the top of page 179). Typically, rather than falling one side or the other of a binary divide, November keeps both sides in play, understanding the quartet as 'at once "freudvoll und leidvoll" [joyful and sorrowful] . . . in its overall affect', and drawing on contemporary notions of songfulness, melancholy and a nuanced understanding of a kind of heroism that resides in 'constancy, endurance and resignation, and can involve reflection, passivity and lament' (172). She interrogates Beethoven's intensive turn towards the key of E flat around 1809, and reflects cogently also

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upon his turn toward vocal music around the same time, including his institution of weekly singing parties (176). She is interesting on the similarities between the third-movement Presto and the Fifth Symphony (190–191). Original, too, is her take on the 'Harp' nickname. She first suggests that Beethoven may have been parodying the 'rather mechanical, constrained nature of the single harp' which preceded Pleyel's 1810 double instrument (181); later, though, the connotations of the mysterious carried by the harp (November cites Novalis and Hoffmann, among others; pages 195–196) are harnessed to a reading which, in drawing also upon ideas of 'fantasia', identifies a kind of quest narrative, with Beethoven in the role of the narrating harpist, 'the archetypal purveyor and decoder' (196).

The Op. 74 chapter is also one which emphasizes 'the "secondary" parameters of texture, timbre and register' (171), and to largely good effect. I sometimes wished, though, that November might be more observant, or adventurous, in the matter of (whisper it softly) 'decontextualized music analysis'. The first-violin melody commencing in bar 27 of the first movement 'contrasts emphatically with the [preceding] articulated chordal motif' (179). But might not its overall $\hat{5}$–$\hat{3}$ melodic direction (b$\flat^2$–a$\flat^2$–g^2, bars 27–31) be usefully linked back (note the registral precision) to the second violin's reaching-over the first violin, beginning in bar 4 – a 'registral interchange' that November has already found 'subtly disquieting, . . . confounding the sense of a single voice' (178)? Likewise, more might have been made of the breakdown of lyrical utterance at bars 108–111 of the gorgeous slow movement: all the more so in view of November's reading of this movement in terms of song and 'the way song is undone' (185). (The uncanny resemblance between this moment in the Op. 74 Adagio and bars 151–152 of the first movement of Op. 59 No. 1 goes unnoticed and unexplored too, in terms of the sense of an intruding 'voice' engendered in the earlier quartet.)

Turning to the analytical claims that November does make, some seem simply incorrect. To remain with the Op. 74 Adagio, bars 103–105 (better, 103–106) do not repeat 'material from the first "episode", now in A flat minor' (188): what we hear at this point is the main theme, shifted from major to minor mode. Dealing with the second movement of Op. 59 No. 1, she wonders whether 'bars 391–2 mark the start of the coda?' (68); although she swiftly explains why this is an implausible reading, she rather glosses over the parallel between bar 394 and bar 155, which she is willing to accept as the beginning of a development section (page 64, Table 3.1, and page 66). Closer attention to this '[re]launch of the development' (68) might have led to a consideration of what Linda Correll Roesner has dubbed 'parallel' forms in Schumann's sonata movements (Roesner, 'Schumann's "Parallel" Forms', *19th-Century Music* 14/3 (1991), 265–278), and their possible relevance to the notorious formal conundrum that is Beethoven's Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando – all the more so since Schumann's practice may have its origins in Beethoven's own habit, as in the first movement of the 'Waldstein' Sonata, of 'recapitulating' the initial stages of a development section in a coda. In other cases, her claims can, inevitably, seem less than persuasive. 'The rising third figure in bar 3 of the folksong [Example 5.7, page 138] bears a resemblance to the more angular motion of the F minor music that begins in bar 25 of [Op. 59 No. 3/ii; Example 5.10, page 142]' (140): really? And what is the case for claiming, in relation to the end of the second movement of Op. 95, that the 'scale fragment' A–G♯–G remains 'poetically speaking, incomplete' (221), given that it arrives so decisively at F♯ in bars 189–190? What, moreover, makes these tonic chords 'more transitional than conclusive'?

But this is a volume about 'music in context', and in this respect it undoubtedly succeeds. A substantial and welcome contribution to the Beethoven quartet literature, it is written in a style that will be largely accessible to general readers as well as specialists. Even decontextualists should read it.

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