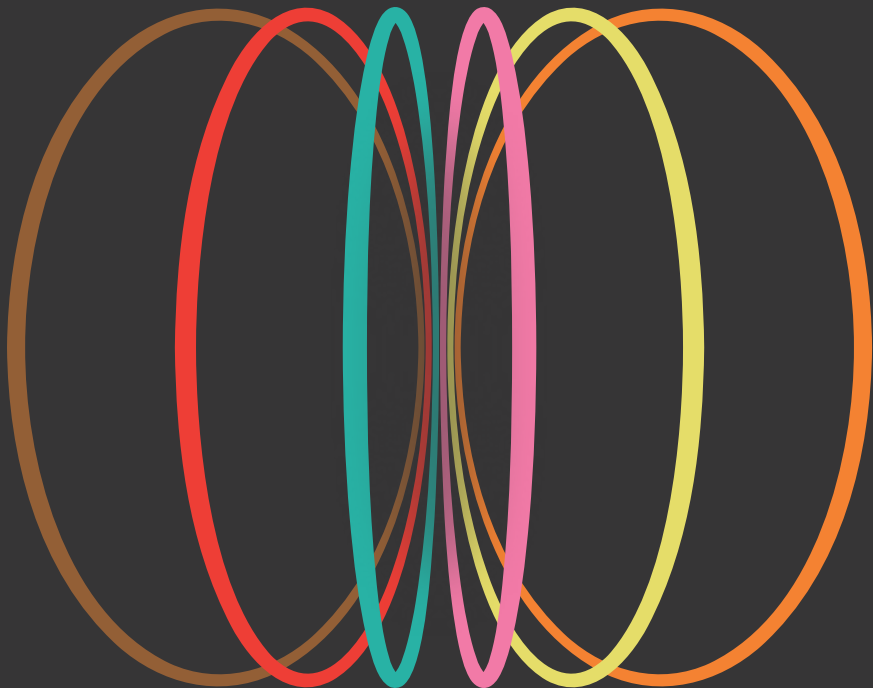


Peter Heise
Complete String Quartets

Nordic String Quartet



Peter Heise (1830–1879)

Complete String Quartets

Nordic String Quartet

Heiðrun Petersen, violin

Mads Haugsted Hansen, violin

Daniel Eklund, viola

Lea Emilie Brøndal, cello

CD 1

String Quartet No. 1 in B minor (1852)

1 I Allegro	23:52
2 II Larghetto	6:15
3 III Scherzo. Prestissimo	7:08
4 IV Allegro vivace	3:34
	6:56

String Quartet No. 2 in G major (1852)

5 I Allegro molto vivace	22:12
6 II Largo	6:04
7 III Menuetto. Allegro	6:34
8 IV Allegro molto	3:14
	6:20

Total 46:06

CD 2

String Quartet No. 3 in B flat major (c. 1853)

1 I Moderato assai – Allegro assai vivace	25:18
2 II Scherzo. Presto agitato	8:58
3 III Andante sostenuto	5:43
4 IV Finale. Molto allegro	4:13
	6:23



Danish Arts
Foundation

String Quartet No. 4 in C minor (c. 1853)	21:47
5 I Largo – Allegro molto	8:40
6 II Andante tranquillo	5:34
7 III Menuetto. Allegro moderato	3:33
8 IV Finale. Vivace	4:00

Total 47:07

CD 3

String Quartet No. 5 in A major (c. 1853)	35:37
1 I Allegretto tranquillo – Allegro vivace	8:20
2 II Andantino sostenuto	7:05
3 III Scherzo. Vivace	4:01
4 IV Finale. Adagio, quasi Fantasia – Allegro energico, ma non troppo presto	16:10
String Quartet No. 6 in G minor (1857)	29:46
5 I Largo – Allegro appassionato	10:21
6 II Andantino, quasi allegretto	6:47
7 III L'istesso tempo, poco a poco accelerando – Presto	4:36
8 IV Finale. Andante sostenuto – Allegro molto	8:01

Total 65:25

World premiere recordings of String Quartets Nos. 4–6

3 CDs 2:38:17

The Lost Quartets

By Jens Cornelius

Amongst Copenhagen's upper class during the 1850s, Peter Heise's time and milieu, string quartets were performed in private. As is often the case in affluent circles, there were many skilled string players as well as room to practise and listen in the salons. 'There was hardly a musical house that did not have its regular weekly quartet evening', wrote the music historian Angul Hammerich in 1886, as he looked back at the musical life of Copenhagen elite in the 1840s in which he had grown up himself.

It was not until 1854 that a string quartet was performed for the first time at a public concert in Denmark. A society devoted to chamber music was formed in 1868, the so-called *Natmandsforening* (The Scavenger's Society), which is still in existence,

and from then on string quartets slowly gained a new status as public music that addressed a broader, ticket-buying audience.

String quartets lived a rather hidden existence in Denmark at the time, but Peter Heise's quartets succumbed to a quite exceptional oblivion. The six works by Heise were not part of the public music scene in his own time, and after his death in 1879, they were packed away and forgotten, each in turn, even though Heise was one of Denmark's most popular and beloved composers. The obscurity has lasted until today, and this recording of Quartets Nos. 4–6 is the first ever. It is music that, until now, has been almost entirely unknown.

Heise was born in 1830 and died at the age of 48 when he was at the peak of his art. Shortly before his death, he had experienced success with his opera *Drot og marsk* (*King and Marshal*), arguably the best Danish opera of the 19th century.



Peter Heise, 1864

His hundreds of songs and romances were very popular and beginning to be printed in large numbers, spreading his music to the many Danish homes equipped with a piano. He was seen, to a high degree, as a vocal composer.

At this point, the manuscripts of the string quartets were in the hands of the cellist Julius Holm, with whom Heise had been friends since his youth. Holm kept them until his death in 1909, when they were discovered amongst his estate by a librarian from the Royal Danish Library, who returned them to Heise's widow, Vilhelmine. The music bore signs of having been used extensively.

Vilhelmine ('Ville') Heise was, by this time, 71 years old, and apparently wished to protect her husband's high posthumous reputation, not allowing unknown works from his youth to disturb the picture. It was most probably Ville who packed Heise's String Quartets Nos. 2-6 together in a folder labelled 'Youth

Works'. The sheet music for the String Quartet No. 1 found itself in a folder with other works which were labelled, 'Heise's hand-written music from old times, not to be printed, maybe better burned'.

All the quartet manuscripts were handed over to the Royal Danish Library following Ville Heise's death in 1912, but as discarded works they received no attention. In short, there was no public knowledge of the quartets' existence. The first biography of Heise from 1926 only mentioned, in a short quotation from a letter, that Heise had worked on a quartet at some point, but it was not until a selection of Heise's letters was published in 1930 that one could read the entire letter in which Heise mentions his String Quartet in G minor (that which is now called No. 6).

The letter excerpt led the music journalist Richard Hove to go through the manuscripts at the Library, where he found the G minor quartet described. It was then performed

in modest circumstances in Hove's hometown, Thisted, in 1931. Ten years later, Hove wrote an introductory article about Heise as a chamber music composer in *Dansk Musik Tidsskrift* (Danish Music Journal) and was the first to say that Heise had written over 20 chamber works, including six quartets.

It was 1945 before the G minor quartet was performed again, in a radio transmission by the day's leading Danish quartet, the Erling Bloch Quartet. Since the 1950s there have been occasional performances of Heise's Quartets Nos. 3, 4 and 6, which now circulated amongst musical Danes in diverse copies. But none of the quartets embedded themselves into the repertoire in Denmark, and none were printed or recorded. This is quite remarkable, as there is certainly not an abundance of Danish quartets from the 19th century to compete with.

Later in the 20th century, it was probably the declining interest in

older Danish music in general that was behind the neglect of Heise's quartets. This has changed today, and in 2017 the works were printed for the first time in a collaboration between the Royal Danish Library and the University of Copenhagen. After a long period of dormancy, the six string quartets can now finally be played, heard and enjoyed.

String Quartet No. 1 in B minor

Peter Arnold Heise was born to an academic family in Copenhagen in 1830. By the time he was 13 he was already composing, taught by A.P. Berggreen, who was also the teacher of Heise's slightly older contemporary, Niels W. Gade.

Although Heise was active in the high Romantic period, he was essentially a Classicist at heart. He sought to imbue his compositions with clarity, precision and transparency, which is evident in his string quartets, particularly in his debut work, String Quartet No. 1. The first movement is

a refined and succinct introduction to the genre, characterised by its clean and precise structure. Despite its minor key, the movement exudes a disarmingly humorous quality, a trait that has traditionally been well-received in Danish music, where grandiose expressions are not typically favoured.

In the subsequent movements, Heise's stylistic influences become more apparent. The second movement, for example, features a slow main section reminiscent of Schubert and a tumultuous middle section evocative of Mozart. The third movement is a simple scherzo with a trio section in a folk style reminiscent of Haydn, while the fourth movement showcases Heise's mastery of Classical fugal technique.

The work was composed during the winter of 1851–52. Unlike String Quartets Nos. 2–6, the preserved sheet music for String Quartet No. 1 bears no signs of use, suggesting that this charming and masterfully

crafted music may have never been performed prior to this recording.

String Quartet No. 2 in G major

Though Ville Heise tried to hide the quartets, as the editor of the new sheet music edition of 2017, Professor Michael Fjeldsøe points out that it is wrong to regard Heise's string quartets from the 1850s as youthful works, though they were composed in Heise's formative years, the same period in which he made a breakthrough in other genres. The first quartet already shows that it has been made by a composer who is skilful in this genre. Heise had heard many performances of string quartets, as well as having played chamber music on his main instrument, the piano, and on the violin.

Heise clearly wanted to master the challenges of the quartet genre and composed his quartets each in their own key. String Quartet No. 2 in G major is from 1852. It has confidence and again a humorous

character in the first movement, which surprises with its rhythmic intricacies. After the lively beginning comes the unexpectedly dark second movement in C minor: It is a tragic largo, although typically for Heise it is in a short format and with a quite unorthodox middle section. The third movement is this time a minuet, and compared to the concise scherzo movement in the first string quartet, the minuet here is more developed and has an elegant wit – Heise was known in Copenhagen’s cultural circles as a highly entertaining and witty person. This trait also permeates the final movement, which, like the first movement of String Quartet No. 1, Heise concludes with a humorous pizzicato punctuation mark.

String Quartet No. 3 in B flat major

In the winter of 1852–53, Heise embarked on a transformative journey to Leipzig, where Niels W. Gade had his breakthrough in the 1840s. The stay was a revelation for Heise, who

quickly developed under the guidance of his teacher Moritz Hauptmann, the cantor at the Thomaskirche. In addition, the range of music in Leipzig was way beyond what Heise could experience in contemporary Copenhagen, spanning everything from Baroque music to new works by Schumann and Wagner. This experience greatly expanded his knowledge of the repertoire, simply because a much smaller selection of European music had reached north to Denmark.

The next three string quartets were written during or immediately after the Leipzig trip. String Quartet No. 3 significantly raises the level of ambition compared to his previous quartets, and the music has moved away from the entertaining. The first movement is expanded with a slow introduction, and the entire movement is far richer and more varied than before. Similarly, the second movement, a twisted and galloping scherzo, has a greater breadth and scope.

The third movement’s *Andante* is a peaceful moment, but the tension is not fully released. In true Romantic fashion, the qualms last until the end: the last movement is stormy and begins with fast changes between minor and major, reminiscent of Nordic folk music and a hallmark of Carl Nielsen’s unorthodox style. In the end of the movement’s development section, Heise inserts a solo cadenza for the first violin, after which the work reaches a light and liberating coda in B flat major.

String Quartet No. 4 in C minor

In his fourth quartet, Heise continues his experiments within a very concise framework. This is especially true of the compact first movement, which opens with a slow introduction that is quite brief, yet expressive and highly effective. The exposition is built upon two short themes in C minor. Eschewing the expected second theme in the relative major (E flat major), Heise instead employs lively modulation and

chromatics. The development section is equally restless, and Heise creates a moment of repose by re-inserting the slow introductory bars as a ‘pause for thought’ before the recapitulation. Given the movement’s activity, it could hardly be more compact.

The second movement in G major is the most inventive of the work. It quickly departs from its starting point – a simple variation movement modelled after Haydn or Schubert – as Heise allows his imagination free rein to an almost eccentric degree, with constantly shifting textures and modulations.

The third movement is a minuet in C minor with a playful, rustic trio in E flat major, while the finale returns to the restless temperament of the opening, bringing the work to a brief and somewhat paranoid conclusion. String Quartet No. 4 is an unusual work – perhaps Heise never expected it to be performed in public, allowing him to experiment with such freedom?

String Quartet No. 5 in A major

Heise's fifth quartet was his most ambitious to date. Here, one senses the influence of the great masters – Schubert, Beethoven and Mendelssohn – prompting Heise to engage in longer and more complex structures. The first movement opens with an atypical main theme in a folk style over a 'fiddler's drone', but the movement soon develops in a different direction. The thematic material, particularly the second theme in the minor, is explored through lengthy developments before the folk theme returns to round off the movement, now transformed into a hymn.

The work's contrasts range from the shadowy second movement to the weighty finale, which is by far Heise's longest quartet movement. This final movement is an *Adagio* which, with a nod to Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, is marked *quasi fantasia*, concluding Heise's largest quartet with real poise and presence. Unlike his earlier quartets, No. 5 feels like a

work intended for the concert hall.

String Quartet No. 6 in G minor

Heise's String Quartet No. 6 in G minor, 1857, was both the last he wrote and the first to be rediscovered. This was thanks to the 1930 edition of Heise's letters, which included a passage stating: 'Now I'm working on a string quartet, of which the first movement is finished, and I am very satisfied with it; it sets off in G minor. If only I could get on as well with the third movement; that's what I've been hunting for these past days.' So wrote Heise in January 1857 to his friend Edvard Holm, brother of the cellist Julius Holm mentioned earlier.

The G minor quartet was composed at a time when string quartets were just beginning to be perceived as concert music in Copenhagen. Yet three-quarters of a century would pass before it received a public performance by the Erling Bloch Quartet. It was reviewed by the critic Nils Schiørring, later a Professor of

Musicology, who called it 'a glorious piece of music, fresh and sweeping, with great musical authority and an immediately engaging musicality'. Another newspaper, *Berlingske Tidende*, wrote: 'It is a stirring and vivid piece of music, masterfully crafted in its form and in its treatment of the four instruments.'

By this point, Heise had achieved total mastery of the classical quartet genre. This refined work possesses a symphonic scale, making it all the more regrettable that Heise did not continue with the genre, nor ever composed a symphony. Heise may have felt that with this sixth quartet he had achieved his private goals for the medium. Having mastered this facet of his craft, other tasks lay ahead – most notably, opera.

It seems peculiar that a composer as gifted as Heise made no effort to promote his string quartets within the musical life of his time. Yet such was Heise's temperament – he was deeply

self-critical and did not compose for fame or financial gain. He became wealthy in 1859 through his marriage to Ville, daughter of one of Denmark's richest men. That Heise did not seek to publish these quartets was not a reflection of his own assessment of their quality. Unfortunately, his humility meant that 170 years would pass before this music reached a wider audience. Hopefully, it is not too late for Peter Heise to gain recognition as a master of the string quartet, alongside his enduring reputation as a master of song.

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Nordic String Quartet

Lea Emilie Brøndal, Daniel Eklund, Heiðrun Petersen, Mads Haugsted Hansen

Nordic String Quartet is a critically acclaimed ensemble celebrated for its nuanced and luminous sound. Formed in 2013, the quartet comprises Heiðrun Petersen (violin, Faroe Islands), Mads Haugsted Hansen (violin, Denmark), Daniel Eklund (viola, Sweden), and Lea Emilie Brøndal (cello, Denmark). Having completed their advanced studies in the soloist class of the Royal Danish Academy of Music under Professor Tim Frederiksen, they have established themselves as leading interpreters of the Nordic repertoire.

Their recordings for Dacapo Records, including the complete string quartets of Nancy Dalberg and the ongoing chronological cycle of Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen, have garnered international praise. Volumes 1 and 2 of their Gudmundsen-Holmgreen series were named Album of the Year at the Danish Radio P2 Awards in 2020 and 2024 respectively, while their Dalberg release

was featured among MusicWeb International's Recordings of the Year in 2019.

Nordic String Quartet has excelled in both traditional repertoire and cross-genre collaborations, earning prestigious honours such as the Odd Fellow Lodge Music Prize and a gold medal at the Berlin International Music Competition.

With this release of Peter Heise's complete string quartets, the ensemble concludes their acclaimed survey of these forgotten masterpieces – a project that prompted *The Strad* to write of the first volume: 'A neglected Dane is compellingly revived'.

De glemte kvartetter

Af Jens Cornelius

I København i midten af 1800-tallet, da komponisten Peter Heise levede, var strygekvartetter noget, der blev spillet privat. Der var mange dygtige strygermusikere i byens velhavende kredse, og deres saloner havde god plads til de udøvende og deres private tilhørere. "Der var vel næppe et rigtigt musikalsk hus, der ikke havde sin regelmæssige ugentlige kvartet-aften," skrev musikhistorikeren Angul Hammerich om den højkulturelle del af den danske hovedstad, som også var hans eget barndomsmiljø.

Første gang en strygekvartet blev opført ved en offentlig koncert i Danmark, var i 1854. I 1868 blev der stiftet en københavnsk musikforening udelukkende for kammermusik, den såkaldte Natmandsforening (der stadig eksisterer), og herefter begyndte

strygekvartetgenren langsomt at få status som offentlig musik, der henvendte sig til et bredere, billetkøbende publikum.

Strygekvartetter levede altså dengang en ret skjult tilværelse i Danmark. Alligevel er det mørke, som har ligget over Peter Heises strygekvartetter, ret utroligt. De seks strygekvartetter af Heise blev ikke en del af det offentlige musikliv på hans egen tid, og efter hans død blev værkerne pakket væk, til trods for at Heise var en af Danmarks mest populære og elskede komponister. Glemslen har varet til i dag, og denne indspilning af kvartetterne nr. 4-6 er den første nogensinde. Musik, der hidtil har været så godt som fuldstændig ukendt.

Peter Heise blev født i 1830 og døde som blot 48-årig, da han var på toppen af sin kunst. Han havde kort før sin død oplevet succes med sin fremragende opera *Drot og marsk*, vel nok 1800-tallets bedste danske opera. Heises hundredvis af sange og

romancer var også meget populære og var begyndt at udkomme i store oplag. Han blev derfor i høj grad regnet for at være vokalkomponist.

På det tidspunkt var manuskripterne til Heises seks strygekvartetter i hænderne på hans ungdomsven, cellisten Julius Holm, der beholdt dem indtil sin død i 1909. I Holms dødsbo blev noderne, der bar tegn på at have været flittigt brugt, opdaget af en bibliotekar fra Det Kongelige Bibliotek, som leverede dem tilbage til Heises enke, Vilhelmine.

Vilhelmine ("Ville") Heise var på det tidspunkt 71 år og ønskede åbenbart, i et forsøg på at beskytte sin mands høje, posthume anseelse, ikke at lade ukendte værker fra hans yngre år forstyrre billedet. Det var sandsynligvis hende, der pakkede manuskripterne til hans strygekvartetter nr. 2 til 6 sammen i en mappe påtegnet "Ungdomsværker". Noderne til strygekvartet nr. 1 blev lagt i en mappe med andre værker, der ligefrem blev påtegnet: "Heises skrevne

noder fra ældre tid, ikke trykkes, måske helst brændes."

Alle kvartetmanuskripterne blev efter Ville Heises død i 1912 overgivet til Det Kongelige Bibliotek, men som frasorterede værker fik de ingen opmærksomhed. Der var kort sagt intet offentligt kendskab til kvartetternes eksistens. Den første biografi om Heise, fra 1926, nævnte kun i form af et kort brevcitat, at Heise på et tidspunkt havde arbejdet på en kvartet, men først da et udvalg af Heises breve udkom i 1930, kunne man læse hele brevet, hvor Heise omtaler sin strygekvartet i g-mol (den kvartet, der i dag har nr. 6).

Brevcitater fik musikjournalisten Richard Hove til at gennemgå manuskripterne i biblioteket, og han fandt noderne til den omtalte g-mol kvartet, som derefter blev opført i 1931 i Hoves hjemby, Thisted. 10 år senere skrev Hove en præsentationsartikel i Dansk Musik Tidsskrift om Heise som kammermusikkomponist og var her den første til at oplyse, at Heise

havde skrevet over 20 kammerværker, herunder seks kvartetter. I 1945 blev g-mol kvartetten spillet i radioen af tidens førende danske kvartetensemble, Erling Bloch Kvartetten, og fra 1950'erne og frem var der enkelte opførelser af Heises kvartetter nr. 3, 4 og 6, der nu cirkulerede i diverse afskrifter. Men ingen af kvartetterne bed sig fast i repertoireet i Danmark, og ingen af dem blev trykt eller indspillet. Ganske mærkeligt, for der er bestemt ikke en overflod af danske kvartetter fra 1800-tallet at konkurrere med.

Senere i 1900-tallet var det nok især en dalende interesse for den ældre danske musik generelt, der lå bag negligeringen af Heises kvartetter. Det har ændret sig i dag, og i 2017 blev værkerne for første gang udgivet på tryk i et samarbejde mellem Det Kongelige Bibliotek og Københavns Universitet. Efter lang tids dvale kan de seks strygekvartetter nu omsider spilles, høres og nydes.

Strygekvartet nr. 1, h-mol

Peter Arnold Heise blev født i en akademikerfamilie i København. Allerede som 13-årig var han i gang som komponist, og som kompositions-lærer havde han A.P. Berggreen, der også var lærer for Heises lidt ældre kollega Niels W. Gade. Selvom Heise var aktiv i den højromantiske periode, var han inderst inde klassicist. Han stræbte efter klarhed, præcise former og gennemsigtigt satsarbejde, og den stræben efter koncise udtryk finder man i hans strygekvartetter. I særlig grad i strygekvartet nr. 1, der er en sikker, kortfattet debut i genren, hvor 1. sats formalt set er skåret ind til benet. Trods mol-tonearten har satsen afvæbnende, humoristiske træk – noget, som gennem tiderne generelt har været populært i dansk musik, hvor patos og overdådighed sjældent har været velanset! I kvartetens følgende satser er Heises stilistiske forbilleder mere tydelige: 2. sats har en langsom hoveddel, der er temmelig schubertsk i stilen,

og et stormfuldt mellemafsnit, der virker inspireret af Mozart. 3. sats er en enkel scherzo med en triodel i spillemandsstil som hos Haydn, mens Heise i 4. sats viser sin beherskelse af klassisk fugateknik.

Værket er komponeret i vinteren 1851-52. I modsætning til strygekvartetterne nr. 2-6 har de bevarede noder til strygekvartet nr. 1 ingen brugsspor, og muligvis har denne charmerende, veloplagte musik derfor aldrig nogensinde været spillet, før denne indspilning blev lavet.

Strygekvartet nr. 2, G-dur

Selvom Heises enke forsøgte at underekspone sin mands strygekvartetter, er det, som udgiveren af nodeudgaven fra 2017, professor Michael Fjeldsøe, påpeger, forkert at betragte Heises strygekvartetter fra 1850'erne som ungdomsværker. De er komponeret i Heises formative år, den samme periode, der gav ham et gennembrud som vokalkomponist. Selv de tidligste af hans kvartetter er

skabt af en komponist, der er fortrolig med genren, for Heise havde hørt mange kvartetopførelser og spillede ud over sit hovedinstrument, klaver, også violin i kammermusikalske sammenhænge.

Heise ønskede tydeligvis at beherske kvartetgenrens udfordringer, og han komponerede sine kvartetter i hver deres toneart. Strygekvartet nr. 2 i G-dur er fra 1852. Den har selvsikkerhed og igen et humoristisk præg i 1. sats, der overrasker med rytmiske finurligheder. Oven på den livlige begyndelse kommer den mørke 2. sats i c-mol uventet: Det er en tragisk largo, omend den typisk for Heise er udformet i et kort format og med et ret uortodokst mellemstykke. 3. sats er denne gang en menuet, og i forhold til den kortfattede scherzosats i 1. strygekvartet er menuetten her mere udfoldet og har et elegant vid – Heise var kendt i Københavns kulturelle kredse som en meget underholdende og vittig person. Det temperament gennemstrømmer også

finalen, som Heise (ligesom i 1. sats af strygekvartet nr. 1) ikke kan lade være med at afslutte med et humoristisk pizzicato-punktum.

Strygekvartet nr. 3, B-dur

I vinteren 1852-53 var Heise på sit livs store dannelsesrejse til Leipzig, hvor Niels W. Gade havde fået sit internationale gennembrud i 1840'erne. Opholdet blev en øjenåbner for Heise, der udviklede sig hurtigt under vejledning fra sin lærer, Moritz Hauptmann, kantoren ved Thomaskirken. Desuden var udbuddet af musik i Leipzig helt uden sammenligning med, hvad Heise kunne opleve i datidens København, og spændte over alt fra barokmusik til nye værker af Schumann og Wagner. Rejsen til Leipzig blev derfor også en stor udvidelse af Heises repertoirekendskab, simpelthen fordi kun et meget mindre udsnit af europæisk musik var nået nordpå til Danmark.

De næste tre strygekvartetter, Heise skrev, blev skabt under eller

lige efter Leipzig-rejsen. Strygekvartet nr. 3 hæver ambitionsniveauet betydeligt i forhold til hans foregående kvartetter, og musikken har flyttet sig væk fra det diverterende. Førstesatsen er udvidet med en langsom indledning, og hele satsarbejdet er langt fyldigere og mere varieret end tidligere. Også andensatsen, en forrevet og galopperende scherzo, har ægte bredde og vingefang, og dermed udvides værkets dramatiske perspektiv.

Tredjesatsens andante er en balsamisk stund, der dog ikke får spændingerne forløst. På ægte romantisk vis varer kvalerne ved lige indtil slutningen: Sidste sats er stormfuld, og den begynder med den slags hurtigt skift mellem mol og dur, der er kendt fra nordisk folkemusik, og som senere også blev et kendetegn for Carl Nielsens uortodokse stil. I slutningen af satsens gennemførselsdel indskyder Heise en solokadence for primoviolinen, hvorefter værket når til en lys og befriende coda i B-dur.

Strygekvartet nr. 4, c-mol

I sin 4. kvartet fortsætter Heise sine kvarteteksperimenter i meget koncis form. Det gælder ikke mindst den kompakte førstesats, som begynder med en langsom indledning, der er ganske kort, men udtryksfuld og velfungerende. Satsens ekspositionsdel bygger på to korte temaer i c-mol. Der er ikke, som forventet, et sidetema i paralleltonearten Es-dur, men til gengæld en livlig moduleren og kromatik. Også gennemførselsdelen er rastløs, og Heise laver en opbremsning ved at indskyde de langsomme introduktionstakter som tænkepause inden reprisen. I forhold til hvor aktiv førstesatsen er, kunne den næppe udformes mere kompakt end dette.

2. sats i G-dur er den mest opfindsomme i dette værk. Satsen forlader meget hurtigt sit udgangspunkt, der anslår en enkel variations-sats efter forbillede hos Haydn og Schubert. I stedet lader Heise fantasien få frit løb i næsten excentrisk

grad, hvor teksturer og modulationer konstant ændrer sig.

3. sats er en menuet i c-mol med en skælmsk, landlig trio i Es-dur, hvorefter 4. sats vender tilbage til det rastløse temperament fra 1. sats og giver værket en kort og ret paranoid finale.

Strygekvartet nr. 4 er et usædvanligt værk – måske regnede Heise slet ikke med, at det skulle spilles offentligt, og tænkte, at han kunne eksperimentere frit?

Strygekvartet nr. 5, A-dur

Heises 5. kvartet blev hans hidtil mest ambitiøse. Her mærker man forbillede i form af de største kvartetkomponister som Schubert, Beethoven og Mendelssohn, og det får Heise til at kaste sig ud i længere og mere komplekse forløb end hidtil. 1. sats lægger ud med et for Heise atypisk hovedtema i folklorestil over en spillemands-bordun, men derefter udvikler satsen sig snart i en anden retning. Temamaterialet, især side-

temaet i mol, vendes og drejes i lange udviklingsforløb, inden folkemusiktemaet afrunder satsen, nu forvandlet til en hymne.

Værkets kontraster spænder fra den skyggeagtige 2. sats til den vægtige finale, der er Heises klart længste kvartetssats. Den begynder med en *adagio*, som med en hentydning til Beethovens *Måneskinssonate* er betegnet "quasi fantasia". Satsen afslutter Heises største kvartet med *pondus*. I modsætning til de tidligere kvartetter virker Heises 5. strygekvartet som et værk, der er rettet mod egentlig koncertbrug.

Strygekvartet nr. 6, g-mol

Heises strygekvartet nr. 6 i g-mol fra 1857 blev både den sidste, han skrev, og den første, som blev genopdaget. Det skyldtes, at man i bogudgaven fra 1930 af Heises breve kunne læse et uddrag, hvor der stod: "Nu er jeg i færd med en strygekvartet, hvoraf det første stykke er færdigt, og jeg er meget tilfreds dermed; den går ud af

g-mol. Havde jeg kun såvel fat på det 3. stykke i den [dvs. 3. sats]; det er jeg på jagt efter i disse dage." Sådan skrev Heise i januar 1857 til vennen Edvard Holm, bror til førnævnte cellist Julius Holm, der modtog kvartetnoderne efter Heises død.

G-mol-kvartetten er komponeret på det tidspunkt, hvor strygekvartet netop var begyndt at blive opfattet som koncertmusik i København. Men der skulle gå trekvart århundrede, før g-mol-kvartetten fik en offentlig opførelse ved en koncert med Erling Bloch Kvartetten i København. Her blev værket anmeldt af Nationaltidendes musikanmelder, den senere musikprofessor Nils Schjørning, der kaldte det "et herligt stykke musik, frisk og fejende med stor musikalsk overlegenhed og umiddelbart smilende i sin musikalitet". En anden avis, Berlingske Tidende, skrev: "Det er et bevæget og levende stykke musik, overlegent gjort i sin form og i sin behandling af de fire strygere."

Heise var nu nået frem til en fuldstændig beherskelse af den klassiske kvartetgenre. Det afklarede værk har symfonisk format, og det gør det ekstra ærgerligt, at Heise ikke fortsatte med flere kvartetter og i øvrigt heller aldrig komponerede nogen symfonier. Heise har muligvis tænkt, at han med denne sin 6. kvartet havde nået sine private mål med genren. Nu beherskede han denne del af sin kunst, og forude ventede andre opgaver, ikke mindst opera.

Det virker besynderligt, at en så dygtig komponist som Heise slet ikke gjorde noget for at få sine strygekvartetter frem i musiklivet. Men sådan var Heises temperament – han var selvkritisk og komponerede egentlig ikke for at opnå berømmelse eller for at tjene penge. Velhavende blev han i 1859 gennem sit ægteskab med Ville, der var datter af en af Danmarks rigeste mænd. At Heise ikke selv prøvede at få kvartetterne udgivet, var ikke udtryk for hans egen

kvalitetsvurdering. Men ydmygheden fik desværre den bivirkning, at der skulle gå 170 år, før musikken blev udbredt til et større publikum. Forhåbentlig er det ikke for sent for Peter Heise at opnå anerkendelse som kvartetkomponist side om side med sit ry som vokalkomponist.

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Nordic String Quartet er en kritikerrost strygekvartet, kendt for sin nuancerede og livfulde klang. Kvartetten blev dannet i 2013 og består af Heiðrun Petersen (violin, Færøerne), Mads Haugsted Hansen (violin, Danmark), Daniel Eklund (bratsch, Sverige) og Lea Emilie Brøndal (cello, Danmark). Efter studier i solistklassen på Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium hos professor Tim Frederiksen har kvartetten etableret sig som førende fortolkere af det nordiske repertoire.

Kvartettens indspilninger for Dacapo Records har vakt international opsigt, herunder Nancy Dalbergs samlede strygekvartetter og den igangværende, kronologiske serie med Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreens kvartetter. Både første og andet bind af Gudmundsen-Holmgreen-serien vandt P2 Prisen for 'Årets album' i henholdsvis 2020 og 2024. Derudover blev Dalberg-udgivelsen valgt som 'Recording of

the Year' af MusicWeb International i 2019.

Nordic String Quartet har excelleret i såvel det klassiske repertoire som i samarbejder på tværs af genrer og har modtaget adskillige hædersbevisninger, herunder Odd Fellow Logernes Musikpris og guldmedalje ved Berliner International Music Competition.

Med denne udgivelse af Peter Heises samlede strygekvartetter fuldender kvartetten deres roste genopdagelse af disse glemte mesterværker – et projekt, der fik magasinet *The Strad* til at skrive om seriens første udgivelse: "En oversat dansker genoplives overbevisende."

DDD

Recorded at Garnisonskirken, Copenhagen, on 24–25 February, 12–13 June and 11–12 September 2022 (Nos. 1–3, previously released as 8.224734), and at Garnisonskirken, on 1–2 June, 3–4 August and 10–11 August 2025

Based on the critical edition *Peter Heise: String Quartets Nos. 1–6*, edited by Michael Fjeldsøe (2017).

Recording producer: Tim Frederiksen

Editing: Ragnheiður Jónsdóttir and Mette Due (Nos. 1–3) and Jonas Eliyah Munch-Hansen (Nos. 4–6)

Sound engineering, mixing and mastering: Ragnheiður Jónsdóttir (Nos. 1–3); Jonas Eliyah Munch-Hansen (Nos. 4–6)

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The Lost Quartets, by Jens Cornelius, translated from the Danish by Colin Roth

Proofreaders: Jens Fink-Jensen, Hayden Jones

Photo p. 6: Georg E. Hansen (The Royal Danish Library), p. 14: © Nikolaj Lund

Design: Studio Tobias Røder, www.tobiasroeder.com

Publisher: Danish Centre for Music Editing (DCM), The Royal Danish Library, Copenhagen

Nordic String Quartet, www.nordicstringquartet.com

This production has been made in cooperation
with the Royal Danish Academy of Music, Copenhagen.



With support from

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8.226283-85 www.dacapo-records.dk

Dacapo Records is supported by the Danish Arts Foundation

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