

Sunday Times Dec 14th 2008

The **Atrium Quartet** won the London International String Quartet Competition 2003. Their prize was to make a record with EMI. Since then, although this vibrant Russian group has played all over Europe, their recording career has all but stalled. Until, that is, another competition gave them the chance to make this disc. These are distinguished performances, intelligent, moving, mature. The Beethoven is marked by a beautifully poised slow movement and a deftly delivered scherzo. The Shostakovich seems from first note to last to reside in the ensemble's collective soul. ***More, please.***