Released to celebrate the American master Elliott Carter’s centenary, this is the first of two discs of the complete String Quartets. Carter himself has written: ‘I probably decided to write what was to be the First Quartet when I read about a composition prize in Liège, Belgium, because there were many ideas swarming around in my imagination about expression, rhythm, and harmony, mostly derived from my Cello Sonata . . . Then my Second, Third, and Fourth Quartets developed my imaginings in different ways until I began to realize that soon I would exhaust this direction, and so my Fifth Quartet became a farewell to the previous four and an exploration of a new vision.’

Pacifica Quartet
Simin Ganatra, Violin I • Sibbi Bernhardsson, Violin II
Masumi Per Rostad, Viola • Brandon Vamos, Cello

Recorded at Foellinger Auditorium, Krannert Center, Urbana, Illinois, from 16th to 18th March, 2007 (Quartet No. 1) and on 3rd and 4th June, 2007 (Quartet No. 5)
Producer: Judith Sherman • Engineer: William Maylone
Editing assistant: Jeanne Velonis
Publishers: Associated Music Publishers, Inc. (Quartet No. 1); Boosey and Hawkes Music Publishers, Inc. (Quartet No. 5)
Booklet notes: Bayan Northcott and Elliott Carter
Cover photograph by Allen Cohen

Playing Time: 60:32

String Quartet No. 1 (1951) 39:21
1. Fantasia: Maestoso – 9:08
2. Allegro scorrevole – 3:28
3. II. Allegro scorrevole – 1:19
4. Adagio – 11:58
5. III. Variations 13:28

String Quartet No. 5 (1995) 21:11
6. 1. Introduction – 1:30
7. 2. Giocoso – 2:31
8. 3. Interlude I – 1:05
9. 4. Lento espressivo – 2:12
10. 5. Interlude II – 1:22
11. 6. Presto scorrevole – 1:07
12. 7. Interlude III – 1:29
13. 8. Allegro energico – 1:53
14. 9. Interlude IV – 1:59
15. 10. Adagio sereno – 2:47
16. 11. Interlude V – 1:39
17. 12. Capriccioso 1:38