



Second Edition

GUIDE TO THE PIANO QUARTET LITERATURE

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Introduction and Preface

The main objective of this guide is to provide both professional and amateur chamber music players, as well as concertgoers, with a practical guide to the piano quartet literature. But it is a special type of guide which until now has not existed in English—a guide which can be used as an aid to exploring the wider world of chamber music, most of which in my experience, is virtually unknown to professional musicians and the listening public. However, this guide is by no means a mere compilation or an encyclopaedia of works, nor is it an academic treatise which analyzes how a composer wrote his music.

It is unfortunate that today's concertgoer is presented with the same works over and over again. As far as chamber music concerts go, most of them are by string quartets or piano trios, and only very occasionally is a piano quartet or quintet presented. And when one is presented, it is invariably a piano quartet by Mozart, Schumann or Brahms. The argument in support of this is that, since piano quartets are almost never performed in concert, you might as well program the most famous. Still, it is a shame that most chamber music lovers will never hear a piano quartet performed live that is not by Schumann, Brahms or Mozart. Their only recourse has been to obtain recordings.

In talking with professional players over many years, I have heard several explanations put forward for this sad state of affairs. One scapegoat often cited is the demand of the box office. Common wisdom has it that only well-known or famous works will fill the concert hall. Sometimes the fault lies with the sponsoring organization which requests the old chestnuts. Often the artists themselves neither wish nor have time to explore and prepare new works which run the risk of being poorly received. Whatever the reasons, the result is that the same works are performed over and over to the exclusion of any others.

There are two other reasons that piano quartets are so seldomly heard in concert. First, there have been very few permanent piano quartets before the public. This fact alone, while quite important, does not entirely explain the situation. Perhaps even more important than this is the issue of cost. If, for example, an organization wishes to have a piano quintet performed, they must not only engage a string quartet but also a pianist, so programming a piano quintet is costlier than programming string quartets. What is surprising is that when a pianist is engaged as well, only one piano quintet is presented. The other two works are string quartets. What a wasted opportunity!

There are literally dozens if not hundreds of permanent string quartets performing before the public. However, unlike a piano quintet, the piano quartet is not a string quartet plus piano, but a string trio plus piano. There are virtually no permanent string trios performing before the public. This means that if a piano quartet is to be programmed, the host organization must either engage a string quartet and a pianist, or find a “pick up” group of string players and a pianist. If a string quartet and pianist are engaged and a piano quartet is to be presented, one of the violins must sit out, but the cost to the organization is the same as if they had presented a piano quintet. So, as far as cost goes, a “pick up” group of freelancers makes the most sense. But even in big cities where there are hundreds of freelance musicians, programming organizations almost never take advantage of the situation to present piano quartets. Again, this is understandable since a no-name group is not going to sell the same number of tickets as a known group.

As grim as the situation is for live performance by professionals, it is far better for amateurs or professionals who are just playing for their own enjoyment. When cost doesn't enter into the equation, an evening of piano quartets can easily be arranged. And some of the best and most appealing chamber music ever written is for piano quartet. Of course, one should start out with the famous as they have in most cases obtained their fame based on their excellent qualities. But the story does not end there. Mozart, Schumann and Brahms are not the only composers who wrote first-rate piano quartets.

There have been many composers forgotten by posterity whose music has been brought back to life through the efforts of devotees. For example, it seems incredible that Bach could have been consigned to oblivion at the start of the 19th century, yet this was the case, at least as far as public performance went. It took Mendelssohn to get Bach's music back into the concert hall. In part, this was due to changing musical fashion and tastes. Schubert could not get his quartets or his symphonies published during his own life time and was virtually unknown for anything other than his lieder until 40 years after his death.

After the First World War, literally dozens of 19th-century Romantic-era composers, who were well known until that time, were consigned to the dustbin of musical history in the wake of a strong anti-Romantic sentiment. Judging from what commentators of that period have written, no Romantic composer's reputation was left entirely intact by this reaction. Mendelssohn and Schumann were downgraded, while lesser luminaries such as Raff, Hummel, Herzogenberg, Kiel and Rheinberger, to name only a few, were relegated to an existence in encyclopedias and musical dictionaries. After the Second World War, the big names gradually bounced back, but it was not until the 1960's, and almost exclusively thanks to the record industry, that the public was able to hear the music of other composers from the Romantic period.

Until the 20th century, the piano quartet, after the string quartet and piano trio, was the most popular chamber music ensemble and most composers wrote at least one and usually more. Neither Mozart, Beethoven nor Mendelssohn wrote a piano quintet, but each wrote more than one piano quartet. Brahms and Robert Schumann each wrote three piano quartets but only one quintet. Part of this can be explained by the fact that home music making was a major pastime of the middle and upper classes of Europe and America in the 19th century. The situation changed in the 20th century as less and less home music making took place and the concert hall became the main venue for performing chamber music.

As with my other guides, this guide will not deal with atonal and experimental music. The listening public has now been exposed to it for more than a century and for those who wish to know the truth, the verdict is in. Despite many fervent supporters and committed performances by professional groups, the music of these composers, great as it may be on paper to a musicologist or the student of music theory, are not an experience the average listener generally wishes to repeat. Experimental music, as it has come to be regarded, may be an extraordinary experience both visually and aurally, but ultimately it is not music which someone turns on a radio to hear. It is not my purpose to pass judgment on or write a polemic against atonal or experimental music, some of which is extraordinarily interesting. Nor do I wish to attack composers who write for the violin as if it were a kind of percussion instrument. I put forward these thoughts to explain why the reader will not find detailed analysis of atonal or experimental music which does not seem to recognize that violins, violas and cellos

are stringed instruments. Fortunately, there is a plethora of recent music which, while quite daring in many ways, is nonetheless appealing. The problem is having the opportunity to hear this music. Where possible, I attempt to draw attention to such new works.

Given this guide's main objective, little attention will be expended on famous works as opposed to lesser or unknown pieces which also deserve our consideration. Entire books have been devoted to many of these famous pieces. For example, take Beethoven's chamber music: there is little if anything more of importance to be said on the subject by anyone writing today. Hence, this guide in many cases will only briefly discuss or merely list such works for the sake of completeness.

The reader has the right to inquire as to the qualifications that the writer brings to his task. I have had the opportunity to play several times a week and regularly perform chamber music for the past 40 years, mostly in amateur groups, but occasionally as a member of a professional or semi-professional ensemble. Along the way, I developed a love of the broader chamber music literature to which I was first exposed through the medium of phonograph records. To my chagrin, years of concert going made clear that I was unlikely to ever hear such music performed live, either because the professionals did not know of it or because the music was unavailable. When I realized this state of affairs, I undertook to obtain some of the music I had heard on disk so that at least I could play it. To this end, I began to search music stores, antiquarian dealers and libraries both in America and Europe. Later, I used my briefly-held position as chamber music critic for a classical music radio station to further the cause of lesser-known, but fine chamber music by encouraging many of the groups passing through our city to examine them. I have, on occasion, sent copies of some of the works I unearthed to well-known ensembles currently performing. Additionally, I have served as the editor of and a frequent contributor to *The Chamber Music Journal* for 30 years and have headed up The International Cobbett Association for Chamber Music Research for all but two years of its existence.

Over the years, it occurred to me that a guide such as this was needed by players and possibly by listeners. Guides to chamber music have appeared from time to time, but have been little more than detailed analyses of a few famous works. In contrast, Cobbett's marvellous and mammoth *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music* is just that—an encyclopedia, not a practical handbook that the performer, whether professional or amateur, can rely upon in navigating the literature.

Despite recognizing the need for a different kind of guide, I did not initially consider the possibility of undertaking it myself until a number of my chamber music friends and colleagues, after regularly hearing me complain that such a book was needed, suggested I had the knowledge and experience, and urged me to write it myself. To this end, I have been fortunate in having had the opportunity to play thousands of pieces of chamber music by several hundred composers and, with a strange sense of foresight, I had in many instances made notes on the pieces played. I have also been fortunate in collecting many little-known works over the years through my searches. Finally, I have had the opportunity to hear many works through the medium of records that I would otherwise never have encountered.

As to the question of whether a work is a good one and deserving of attention, the answer unfortunately must be subjective. There is, as they say, no accounting for taste, and intelligent men can differ on such things. Fashion and tastes change over time as

well. My judgments as to the value of most of the works discussed obviously come into play and I make no apology for them. At the same time, unlike late 19th-century Viennese music critics, such as Eduard Hanslick, I do not consider myself a tsar on the question of musical worth. Therefore, I have taken considerable pains to arrive at a composite judgment based not only on my own feelings but also the opinions of my fellow players and performers, and, in many instances, the audiences in front of whom I have had the opportunity to perform. This fact has allowed me to be able to comment with some confidence on whether a given work might be well received by an audience or would be fun for an amateur group to read through or to work on.

Still, no one person is going to know it all and I make no claim to this. Even *Cobbett's Cyclopedia*, with its several hundred contributors, is incomplete. This fact, in and of itself, was enough to make me consider the hopelessness of what seemed a daunting undertaking and, for a long time, I thought of abandoning it. However, upon reflection I concluded my goal was to broaden the general public's knowledge of chamber music and to rescue as many unjustifiably ignored works as I knew about. It is hoped this guide will serve as a catalyst by informing chamber music lovers about the music.

When record collectors buy records from those companies offering new selections, they increase the chances that previously unrecorded works will see the light of day. When professional chamber music groups are urged by their audiences to present a wider offering of works from all periods, concert halls will be filled with the sounds of new and long-forgotten works. Inevitably, a by-product of this will be that music publishers will bring out modern reprints and publish new music, which in turn will increase its availability among amateur players. This is something which I have already undertaken by founding a publishing firm, Edition Silvertrust, which has, to date, made over 2,500 chamber works available. So it is with this goal in mind that I offer the reader this work.

I had originally intended to try to include whether the work had been reprinted or generally available and or had been recorded in recent times, i.e. during my active musical life, beginning circa 1960. But works go in and out of print, sometimes quickly, as do recordings. And such information for those reading this guide years in the future would no doubt be next to useless. Nonetheless, if they have been available in recent times, there is a good chance, especially via the internet, that musicians and record collectors will be able to track down a copy of what they are looking for. I think it is important to take the long view. More rediscovered works have been reprinted and recorded during the past 20 years than at any other time.

While it is arguable that there is no point in discussing works which the player is unlikely to ever get a chance to play, I have, nonetheless, included many such works which I consider to be of merit and which I have found in antiquarian music shops. In my experience, if one is persistent, there is a good chance of finding out-of-print works. There is also the possibility of obtaining such works through university and national libraries. And now, there are several websites dedicated to digitalizing and making available parts and scores of thousands of works which have never been reprinted.

I wish to acknowledge all of those who have been of especial help to me over the years and without whom this work would not have been possible. Most of these individuals have been my fellow chamber music enthusiasts who joined me in playing through a huge amount of chamber music. Some are professionals, some

are teachers, and some introduced me to works which I had not known. I must begin with my son and daughter: Skyler Silvertrust and Loren Silvertrust. Both are violinists and together, with an army of violists and, of course, pianists, we have played through more piano quartets than probably most people on the face of the planet. Among those who joined me on this adventure are Gordon Peterson, Henry Coretz, Eric Eisenstein, Kathleen Tumminello, Richard Sherman, Thalia Collis, Dr. Prof. Hugo Zeltzer, Willi Boskovsky, Walter Willinhganz, Herman Essak, Beverly Bloom, Dr. Maurice Burke, Sylvie Koval, Tom Weyland, Siegfried Moysich, Carl Fox, Dr. Bernard Resnick, Mordy Rhodes, Lillian Cassey, Joseph Kirschner, Naomi Feldman, Gerda Bielitz, Jeff Wagner, John Kula, Arlene Kliningberg, Edward Torgeson and Seth Grosshandler.

*Raymond Silvertrust
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Preface to the 2nd Edition

That there is a second edition is due to the generosity of Professor Carolyn Higbie who, of her own accord, approached me and graciously offered to correct all of the hundreds, if not thousands, of errors I left behind in my haste when hurriedly typing the first edition. Even though I proof read the first edition, proof reading your own work is a sure recipe for missing your errors. What's more, I must admit I am not a good proof reader. So, when Professor Higbie, a true chamber music enthusiast, contacted me, I jumped at her offer.

Finally, in addition to the correction of errors and confusing text in the first edition, I have added several new works which, at the time I wrote the first edition, I was either unfamiliar or had not had a chance to play or hear.

*Raymond Silvertrust
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A Guide to the Piano Quartet Literature

Mozart is often regarded as the father of the piano quartet, but prototypes are to be found in the music of composers in Mannheim and Vienna from the 1760's onwards. The most important precedents are probably the 4 *Sonates en quatuor pour le clavecin, avec accompagnement de deux violin[s] et Basse ad libitum* of the Silesian composer Johann Schobert (ca. 1735-67), whom the 7-year-old Mozart met in Paris in the winter of 1763-64 (and who died infamously from eating poisonous mushrooms). There is notable similarity between Schobert's Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 7 no. 1, and Mozart's second quartet in the same key. Equally influential was the *galant* style of Johann Christian Bach (1735-82). Curiously, the 14-year-old Beethoven wrote 3 piano quartets in Bonn in early 1785, just months before Mozart began his first piano quartet, but Beethoven is never mentioned as the founder, perhaps because his were published posthumously. Given the variable scoring of quartets for keyboard and 3 string instruments in the later 18th century, Mozart's inclusion of the rarely-used viola with the customary violin and cello was notable. Perhaps he included it because he often performed on it when he played chamber music. His personal regard for the instrument as well as its additional coloristic potential must have led to its inclusion in the "new" genre.



Elfrida Andrée (1841-1929) was born on the island of Gotland, the child of avid amateur musicians, and was sent at age 14 to study the organ in Stockholm. She became a virtuoso, the first woman cathedral organist, the first woman conductor and the first woman symphonist in Sweden. If this were not enough, she also became the first woman telegraphist. Her composition teachers included Ludwig Norman and Niels Gade. Besides her musical work, she was politically active and played an important role in the Swedish feminist movement.

Andrée's **Piano Quartet in a minor** was composed in 1865. It is in 3 movements—Allegro molto moderato, Adagio con espressione, and Allegro. There are good melodies and fine part-writing, and the movements are well constructed. Mendelssohn and Schumann are the composer's sources of inspiration. It is a good, if not great work and can be recommended to amateurs as it plays without any great technical difficulties.



Georges Antoine (1892-1918) was born in Belgian city of Liège. He studied at the conservatory there, winning several prizes. An asthmatic, Antoine nonetheless enlisted in the army at the outbreak of WWI in 1914. The war years did not improve his condition, and he died shortly after the war's close.

His **Piano Quartet in d minor** was composed in 1916 while on active duty. He sent the score to Vincent d'Indy, who suggested some revisions which he duly made. The work was not published, however, during Antoine's lifetime. In 3 movements—Modéré-Animé, Assez lent and Résolu et animé—it is in the late French Impressionist style. It is an interesting work with many appealing ideas, but thematically it seems to lack a certain cohesive quality and a lack of contrast in the outer movements. Not particularly difficult from a technical standpoint.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788) was the son of the famous composer Johann Sebastian Bach. His second name was given in honor of his godfather the famous Hamburg composer



Georg Philipp Telemann. He was one of four Bach children to become a professional musician and was taught almost entirely by his father. C. P. E. Bach was an influential composer working at a time of transition between his father's baroque style and the classical and romantic styles that followed it. His brother Johann Christian, music master to the Queen of England was, the known as the "London Bach," C.P.E. Bach eventually became known as the "Berlin Bach" during his residence in that city, and later as the "Hamburg Bach" when he succeeded Telemann as Kapellmeister there. His compositional style was expressive and often turbulent and was quite different from the more mannered galant style which was in vogue during much of his life. Though today, his name is still known, his music, much of it deserving revival, is not often played.

His **Piano Quartet in a minor, H.537** was composed in 1788, the year of his death. It was commissioned by a friend and patron of the Bach family Sarah Izdig, a student of his older brother Wilhelm Friedemann and an avid collector of his music. The title quartet only signifies the number of players but not which instruments. It appears that the work was intended for either Violin, or Flute, Viola, Cello and either Fortepiano or Harpsichord. In three movements, it opens with an engaging Andantino and is followed by a sensitive and lovely Largo e sostenuto. The finale, is an upbeat Allegro assai



Bela Bartok (1881-1945) was one of the best known and influential composer of the 20th century. Written by a 17 year old Bartók in 1898, this four-movement, work shows the composer having mastered Brahms' rhythmic characteristics, thematic processes and chamber textures completely. Before his career-changing encounters with folk music, Bartók was on his way to being a German composer, and a good one too. His **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op.20** This is a warm and gorgeous piece which not only shows the influence of Brahms, but also of Schumann and Schubert, all of whom he would have encountered during his early musical education. This said, it would be a mistake to say it was imitative or derivative.



Arnold Bax (1883-1953) was born in London and studied at the Royal Academy of Music. Of independent means, he never needed to teach or conduct. He was a fine pianist, but his main interests were composing music and poetry. His strong affinity for Ireland led him to spend considerable time in that country which influenced his outlook and music. The 1916 Easter Uprising there and its brutal suppression, which included the execution of several of his friends, had a profound influence upon him. Bax is remembered mostly for his orchestral compositions, but he wrote a great deal of chamber music. His music shows many influences, perhaps the strongest of which is Impressionism. The **Piano Quartet in One Movement** dates from 1922 and is quite challenging; it ebbs and flows in various sections with many different tempo markings and myriad moods. This is not a work for the average amateur player.

Beethoven transcribed his Op. 16 work for winds and piano as the **Piano Quartet in E flat Major**. Dating from 1798, it is not a great work and had he not been the composer, it would be long

forgotten. There is yet another work, **WoO 36**, which on its own is forgettable, but has been recorded and performed because Beethoven wrote it.



Wilhelm Berger (1861-1911) was born in Boston, but went to Germany with his family within a year of his birth. He grew up in Bremen, where he received his first lessons in voice and piano. A scholarship allowed him to study with the famous composition teacher Friedrich Kiel in Berlin at the Hochschule für Musik. After graduating, Berger held several teaching positions, including that of Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy. He also served as director of the famous Meiningen Court Orchestra. Berger, though his compositions had won many prizes and were often performed, did not quickly achieve the fame he deserved. Highly respected by the cognoscenti, he never promoted or advertised himself with the wider musical public. Fame finally did start to come, but just at the moment of his death, at which time he was starting to be regarded, along with Max Reger, as Germany's most important successor to Brahms. Unfortunately, the First World War and its aftermath led to a total lack of interest for many decades of nearly all Romantic composers, and the reputation of those who were less well-known, such as Berger, never really recovered.

Berger's **Piano Quartet in A Major, Op. 21** dates from 1885. It is well written. The melodic material of the serious opening Allegro could be richer and more memorable. The Andante ma non troppo which follows is somewhat dry, except for the middle section which is full of passion. The third movement, Intermezzo, allegro scherzando, is quite effective, especially the lyrical trio section. The bustling Finale is characterized more by its rhythm than its themes.

Berger wrote his **Second piano Quartet No. 2, Op. 100**, in 1908, but remained unpublished until 2011. It was composed toward the end of his life, when he no longer was a follower of Brahms and seems to have taken Rigger's ideas on tonality as his model.



Charles-Wilfrid de Bériot (1833– 914) was a French pianist, teacher and composer not to be confused with his better known father the famous violin virtuoso Charles Auguste de Bériot. He became a professor of piano at the Paris Conservatory. His style was of the French romantics. His piano concertos enjoyed some popularity, his chamber music less so and disappeared from the concert stage after the first world war and in any event did not receive much of an audience outside of the francophone countries. He wrote two piano quartets.

Piano Quartet No.1 in a minor, Op.50 dates from 1881 and was dedicated to Belgian composer Auguste Gevaert. It has three movements. The first has a substantial slow introduction Andante largemente leading to an exciting Allegro. The middle movement is a lyrical Andante. The finale is an impassioned Allegro assai. An appealing work.

Five years later came his **Piano Quartet No.2 in d minor, Op.55**. It was dedicated to the violin virtuoso, Hubert Leonard. I am not familiar with it.



Émile Bernard (1843-1902) was a French Romantic composer and organist. He was born in Marseille and studied at the Paris Conservatoire. His **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op. 50** dates from 1899. Although the Vienna Classics serve as his model, his own voice is apparent. The main theme of the first movement, Allegro con fuoco, is pow-

erful and full of energy. A more lyrical second subject provides adequate contrast. The second movement, Andante, except for its restless middle section, is tender. A jovial Allegro giocoso in rondo form follows. The finale begins with an elegiac introduction which leads to the main section, a lilting Allegro con spirito. This is a good work, deserving of the occasional concert performance, and certainly can be warmly recommended to amateurs who will enjoy it.



Theodore Blumer (1881-1964) was born in the German city of Dresden. He studied at the Dresden Conservatory with Felix Draeseke and enjoyed a long career as a teacher and conductor besides working as a composer. He left works in virtually every genre.

Blumer's **Op. 50 Piano Quartet** appeared in 1925. The marking to the opening movement, Allegro con brio, Leidenschaftlich bewegt, perfectly describes the music, which is exciting, dramatic and full of passion. It is quite effective. The Adagio non troppo which follows is warm and atmospheric. The third movement, Vivace, is a very original-sounding scherzo, and the tricky rhythm creates a feeling of playfulness. The finale, Allegro appassionato, sehr schwungvoll, has many of the same characteristics of the opening movement. Particularly striking is a hymn-like section and the very effective Presto coda. A first-rate work, deserving a place in the concert hall as well as on the stands of experienced amateur players.

Gerard, the cataloguer of **Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805)**, the famous Italian cellist and composer, lists 6 piano quartets, which until the time he catalogued Boccherini's works, traveled under the opus number 26. Now they are nos. 195-200 in his catalogue. Other than possibly some historical significance, these are not particularly worth the time to investigate.



Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897) was born in the Alsatian town of Ensisheim. He moved to Paris after the Franco-Prussian War, when Alsace became part of Germany. In Paris, he studied organ, piano and composition at the École de Musique Classique, winning many honors. After graduating, he worked as a teacher at the École. His compositions won him considerable recognition and he almost certainly would have made a greater name for himself had he not died at the young age of 35.

Boëllmann's **Piano Quartet in f minor, Op. 10**, which was awarded a prize by French Société des Compositeurs, dates from 1890. In the first movement, Allegro un poco moderato, rich harmonies in the strings create an atmosphere of rich, hazy color over which the piano introduces the somewhat mysterious main theme. In the Scherzo, which is full of joie de vivre, the piano's accompaniment of running arpeggios creates an exquisite background for the sunny theme in the strings. The rhapsodic slow movement, Andante, has for its main theme a simple, flowing melody with the mood of a nocturne. The marvelous finale, Allegro, is full of unstoppable rhythmic energy. This French masterpiece is first-rate from start to finish. It goes without saying that it belongs in the concert hall and will bring much pleasure to those amateurs discover it.



René de Boisdeffre (1838-1906) was born in the French village of Vesoul. He came from a distinguished military family and moved to Paris at the age of 4 when his father, at that time a captain in the army, was transferred. His parents did not allow him to enter the Paris Conservatory, but he received private piano and composition lessons

from Charles Wagner and later from the respected French composer and professor at the Conservatory, Auguste Barbereau. These came to an end when Saint-Saëns warned him away from Barbereau and briefly took the aspiring composer under his wing. Of independent means, de Boisdeffre was able to devote himself to composition. He was especially fond of chamber music, writing several trios, quartets and quintets, all with piano, as well as a number of instrumental pieces. He wrote 2 piano quartets and a set of 3 character pieces for the same grouping.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in g minor, Op. 13 appeared in 1879 and shows the influence of Saint-Saëns and, to an extent, Schumann and Mendelssohn. It is a good work, fun to play with appealing melodies. It would do well in concert and will be enjoyed by amateurs.

His **Trois Pieces en Quatuor** dates from 1890. It is a set of 3 Romantic pieces: Les Echoes, Elegie and Serenade. Each is lovely and contrasting. They make a fine short program selection and any of the 3 movements could be used as a fine encore. They are also suitable for amateurs, since they present no technical difficulties.

The **Piano Quartet No. 2 in E flat Major, Op. 91** was completed in 1906, shortly before de Boisdeffre's death. Except for the middle movement, it does not show the influence of his countrymen, who were busy writing Impressionist works, but like his first quartet, takes the Austrian and German Classical and Romantic composers as his models. It is beautifully written and quite charming to hear. The opening movement's 2 main themes are expressed by different tempo markings—the first, Andante espressivo, the second, Allegro con brio. Only in the Vivace, a spirited scherzo with an Andante espressivo trio, does the music take on a French flavor. In the finale, Allegro vivace, march-like, almost military, spirited themes bring this good work to a close. It will succeed in the concert hall, if given a chance, and will make a hit with amateurs.



Mel Bonis (1858-1937) **Melanie Helene Bonis 1858-1937** was born in Paris and named Mélanie Hélène Bonis. A gifted, but long underrated composer, she used the pseudonym Mel Bonis because she rightly felt women composers of her time weren't taken seriously as artists. Her parents discouraged her early interest in music, and she taught herself to play piano until age

12, when she was finally given private lessons. A friend introduced her to César Franck, who was so impressed with her abilities that he made arrangements for her to study at the then all-male Paris Conservatory in 1876. She won prizes in harmony and accompaniment, and showed great promise in composition, but a romance with a fellow student, Amédée Hettich, caused her parents to withdraw her from the institution in 1881. Two years later, she married and raised a family. Then in 1893 she again encountered Hettich, now a famous critic; he urged her to continue composing and helped launch her career in fashionable Parisian salons, where her music made a considerable stir. Her music represents a link between the Romantic and Impressionist movements in France. Although it was much played and praised, she never entered the first rank of her contemporaries as she probably would have, because she lacked the necessary vanity for self-promotion. It did not help that she was a woman. As a result, by the time of her death, she and her music had fallen into obscurity. She composed over 300 works in most genres.

Saint-Saëns highly praised Bonis' chamber music and after hearing her **Piano Quartet No. 1 in B flat Major, Op. 69**, he was said to have remarked to its dedicatee Jean Gounod, "I never thought a woman could write something such as this. She knows all the clever tricks of the composer's trade." This was both a compliment and a sad commentary on the fact that women

composers were basically ignored and regarded as second-rate. Piano Quartet No. 1 was completed in 1905. The opening movement, Moderato, begins gently, but its main theme also shows a marked intensity of feeling. The music has a certain diffidence. The second theme is used to slowly build tension. The second movement, Intermezzo, allegretto tranquillo, also begins quietly but momentum picks up almost immediately, although the laid-back mood of an intermezzo is retained. The lovely Andante which follows is the work's center of gravity. The first part of the main theme has a sad, searching quality, while the second half is surprisingly optimistic. From this she branches out, building beautiful tonal episodes. In the finale, Allegro ma non troppo, the relaxed geniality is substituted for passion, drama and excitement. This is an important work which any piano quartet group, professional or amateur, would be well served playing.

In 1928, Bonis published **Piano Quartet No. 2 in D Major, Op. 124** at her own expense. It was never publicly performed in her lifetime and although she considered it her musical testament, it has never gained any traction, even in France. The opening Moderato begins in a quiet, reflective fashion. There is a gentle, valedictory mood throughout. The Allegretto which comes next is a pleasant, lively scherzo-like affair. Here we encounter echoes of Impressionism of the best kind. The third movement, Lent, is subdued and perfumed, but not particularly gripping. It is only in the restless finale, an Allegro, that any real excitement is created.

The 3 piano quartets **Op. 25 in g minor, Op. 26 in A Major and Op. 60 in c minor** of **Johannes Brahms (1833-97)** are among the best known and very best. Every piano quartet group owes it to themselves to become acquainted with these fine works. There is no need to discuss them here, since they have been analyzed and discussed many times elsewhere and there is little more to add.



Caspar Joseph Brambach (1833-1902), also known as Carl Joseph Brambach, was born in in the German village of Oberdollendorf directly across the Rhine river from the city of Bonn. His early music lessons were from his father. At age 15, he began formal studies on the violin as an external student at the Cologne Conservatory while at the same time working as the concertmaster of the Bonn Opera House Orchestra. When he turned 18, he was admitted to the Cologne Conservatory as a regular student. There, he won several awards for his chamber music and songs. After graduating, he continued his studies privately with Ferdinand Hiller and Carl Reinecke before he himself became a teacher. In 1861, he obtained the position of Municipal Music Director of the City of Bonn. His chamber music and his songs received great attention and praise and were widely performed throughout Germany. The style of his instrumental works can be described as Post-Mendelssohnian with a rich, lyrical, cantabile, singing style.

His Piano Quartet No.1 in E flat Major, Op.13 was completed in 1868 and was dedicated to Clara Schumann. The opening movement begins with a short, sweet Andante introduction leading to a bright, upbeat Schumannesque Allegro molto, full of energy. In the big second movement, Adagio, the piano introduces the sober main theme before the strings enter to restate it. After the Adagio comes a scherzo-like Allegro-quasi Andante con moto and by then it comes clear that the movement, though not so marked is a kind of loose set of variations. The third movement, Molto allegro vivace quasi presto, is a breathless, nervous scherzo full of forward energy with vague echoes of Mendelssohn. A contrasting and more lyrical middle section given over to the strings provides a fine contrast. In the finale, the piano pounds out a short, powerful introduction before the triumphant

main theme is given out. The music is jovial and full of good spirits. This is a first rate work, really as good as anything being written around this time (1860-70). Unlike the works of so many other contemporary composers, it owes nothing to Brahms, which gives it an appealing freshness.

He wrote two other piano quartets: Piano Quartet No.2 in a minor, Op.43 from 1880 and No.3 in g minor, Op. 110 from 1899. I am not familiar with either of them.



Frank Bridge was born in in the English city of Brighton and learned to play violin from his father. He studied violin and composition, the latter from Charles Stanford, at the Royal College of Music. He later played viola in prominent quartets and was a respected conductor.

Bridge's **Phantasy for Piano Quartet** was, like his other works bearing the title "phantasy," composed for the annual and prestigious Cobbett Competition. These competitions were designed to encourage the younger generation of British composers to write chamber music. Its founder and benefactor was the chamber music aficionado William Wilson Cobbett. The rules of the competition provided an alternate format, the old English Fancy for Fantasia from the time of Purcell, to the traditional 4-movement work which had developed from Haydn onwards. Although there was to be only a single movement, there are several sections, each embracing a different mood, tone color and tempo, while at the same time retaining an inner unity. Bridge's phantasy was composed in 1910. The opening Allegro moderato, after a boisterous, brief introduction, begins with a march-like subject. The second melody has an almost Latin-American quality to it with a lovely lyrical tune over the cello's quasi-arpeggio figure. The main theme of the Andante moderato is reminiscent of the song "Londonderry Air," which Bridge also arranged for string quartet. Again, the highly romantic second subject has a Latin-American mood to it. The final section, Allegro ma non troppo, begins in sprightly fashion with a very updated tonality for the time. It leads to a very attractive and more lyrical second subject which alternates with first. This is a fine work which would do well in the concert hall, but will present no technical difficulties to amateurs.



August Bungert (1845-1915) was born in the German town of Mühlheim. He studied at the Cologne and Paris Conservatories, after which he briefly served as a music director in a small German resort town before moving to Berlin and studying composition with Friedrich Kiel. Although he was primarily a composer of opera,

Bungert's **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 18** won the 1877 Florentine Quartet prize. The judges of the competition which selected this work were none other than Johannes Brahms and Robert Volkmann. Bungert's piano quartet was very popular for many years, especially during the last part of the 19th century when piano quartets were more often performed in concert than they are today. The opening movement, Con brio, is distinguished by 2 fine themes, the first quite captivating, the second more vigorous. The second movement, Adagio con moto, subtitled Volkston (a folk tune), is highly expressive. A gloomy middle section provides a superb contrast. The third movement, Un poco agitato, is pervaded by a thunder-charged atmosphere which gives way to a heroic middle section. The finale, Allegro giocoso, is melodious and full of gaiety. This is a fine work, unjustly forgotten, deserving of concert performance, but which can also be warmly recommended to amateurs since it makes no extraordinary technical demands.



Adolf Busch (1891-1952) was born in the German town of Siegen. He studied violin and composition at the Cologne Conservatory and became one of the leading soloists of the day, specializing in the Classical repertoire. He also founded 2 famous string quartets, the Vienna Konzertverein Quartet and the Busch Quartet. He was influenced by Max Reger and eschewed

Schoenberg's atonalism.

While Busch's **Piano Quartet in b minor, Op. 59** cannot be said to have singable or long-lined melodies, it is, nonetheless, entirely tonal and not at all unpleasant to hear. Playing it is another matter, since it requires either professionals or very experienced amateurs with a high degree of technical competence. It is a very big work, especially the outer movements. The engaging opening movement, Con passione, is restless and searching throughout and highly interesting. The weighty Largo ed espressivo which follows proceeds in ponderous fashion, devoid of any upbeat lyricism, but is lyrical in a quiet and somewhat dejected fashion. The third movement, Vivace, is characterized by its lopsided rhythm rather than by its thematic material. It is busy without being frenetic. The big finale is in 2 substantial sections, opening Moderato, un poco sostenuto ma con fuoco and closing Con fuoco, ma non troppo presto. Powerful and thrusting, it is also searching and restless. This is a fine mid-20th century work, still tonal and following in Reger's footsteps. It will certainly make a deep impression in the concert hall.



Alexis de Castillon (1838-1873) was born in the French city of Chartres. As a member of the nobility, he was initially expected by his parents to have a military career, which for a time he pursued, joining the imperial cavalry. However, his love of music, which came from the piano lessons he had received as a boy, led him to enter the Paris Conservatoire, where he ultimately studied with César Franck. Castillon's health, always of a fragile nature, was not helped by his military service in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71. His health deteriorated and he never really recovered. He composed several chamber works which his contemporaries considered to be first-rate. Vincent d'Indy called Castillon one of the best chamber music composers of his time.

The **Op. 7 Piano Quartet** was completed in 1869 and dedicated to the Russian pianist Anton Rubinstein. One can hear in the quartet the influence of Robert Schumann's work, which had impressed Castillon, although Schumann's music was generally met with hostility when it was played in France during the 1860's. Castillon's opening Larghetto, with its succession of chromatic chords, creates a mood of reflective melancholy. The main section of the first movement, Allegro, opens in a turbulent, impassioned fashion. However, the slower reflective opening section suddenly returns before the appearance of the lyrical second theme. The second movement, Scherzando, begins in a rather subdued fashion, sounding more like a minuet than a little scherzo. It is the impassioned trio section with its fine string writing which leaves a stronger impression. The third movement is actually 2 bound together. It begins as an engaging Mendelssohnian song without words, Larghetto quasi marcia religioso. A highly romantic second theme is full of pathos, then eventually leads to the lively Finale which is played without pause. The music is boisterous but with a sense of ceremony.

Georgy Catoire (1861-1926) is generally considered the father of Russian modernism. He was born in Moscow to a French noble family which had emigrated to Russia in the early 19th century. Although fascinated by music, he studied mathematics and science at the University of Moscow, graduating in 1884. After



graduation, however, Catoire decided to devote himself to music. His early compositions showed the influence of Tchaikovsky, who described Catoire as talented, but in need of serious training. Eventually Catoire was to study composition with Rimsky-Korsakov, Lyadov, Arensky and Taneyev. In 1916, he was appointed Professor of Composition at the Moscow Conservatory, a position he

held for the rest of his life. Catoire wrote several treatises on music theory, which became the foundation for the teaching of the subject in Russia. His composition style was a synthesis of Russian, German and French styles—Tchaikovsky, Chopin, César Franck, Debussy and Richard Wagner were his chief influences. From them, Catoire developed a highly personal and original idiom. His championing of Wagner is partially responsible for the fact that his works are relatively unknown today. Rimsky-Korsakov's circle disliked Wagner's music intensely and did little to promote it. They also shunned Catoire's music because he was a Wagnerite.

Catoire's **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op. 31** was composed in 1916 and is his last chamber music work. Like his other chamber works, it is quite individualistic and original sounding. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins softly with an attractive melody veiled in the aura of mysticism. The music quickly becomes rather dramatic and creates a sustained sense of tension. The mood of the second movement, *Andante*, is subdued and dreamy. The finale, *Allegro molto*, conjures up a modern vision of elves, sorcerers and fairies. Catoire's music, it must be said, is beyond most amateurs, because it is very hard to put together. Nor is it to everyone's taste. It is tonal but requires some getting used to—certainly it is a cerebral work.



Ernest Chausson (1855-1899) was born in Paris into a wealthy family. Although he received some musical training as a boy, a career in music was never envisaged by either his father or himself. He studied law and became a barrister, but realized he had no interest in the law. After dabbling in writing and painting, he decided to study music and entered the Paris Conservatory in 1879,

where he studied first with Jules Massenet and later with César Franck. His friend Vincent d'Indy introduced him to the music of Wagner. Scholars generally divide Chausson's work into 3 chronological periods. His very early works tend to show the influence of Massenet. In those which come later, there is also the influence of Franck and Wagner.

Chausson's **Piano Quartet in A Major, Op. 30** dates from 1897. The lovely opening movement, *Animé*, is warm and bright—sunny skies and well-being are conjured up. The second movement, *Très calme*, has a limpid, poetic quality. It is lyrical and gentle. Next comes a kind of *intermezzo*, *Simple et sans hâte*, essentially gentle and pleasant. The finale, *Animé*, opens in frenetic fashion, full of breathless anxiety. And here Chausson shows he is still a bit under the influence of his old teacher Franck, since themes from all of the preceding movements are given a recapitulation. There is no mistaking this work as a child of French Impressionism. Of its kind, it is a very good work. It deserves to be heard in concert, but although it does not require a virtuoso technique from the performers, it is not particularly easy to bring off.

Carl Czerny (1791-1857) is remembered as one of the most famous piano teachers of all time. He was a child prodigy. When Beethoven heard Czerny play, he invited the boy to study with him, which Czerny did for 3 years. He also studied with Muzio Clementi and Johann Nepomuk Hummel. Besides being Liszt's only real teacher, Czerny taught a host of other famous pianists.



Today, the only music of Czerny's which is ever played are his pedagogical works for pianists, such as his etudes and his famous *Art of Finger Dexterity* and his *School of Velocity*. But Czerny composed over 1000 works in virtually every genre, although most were for the piano. The bulk of his oeuvre—potpourris based on opera arias and such which made his publishers rich—

was composed at their request. These salon pieces were incredibly popular throughout the 19th century but for this very reason Czerny was attacked by most critics as nothing more than a hack. Very few of his other works received more than a premiere, and it is highly doubtful that his critics ever heard his symphonies, lieder or chamber music. Had they done so, their opinion about Czerny and his music would certainly have been very different, because Czerny was not only a master craftsman, but also a composer with a gift for melody.

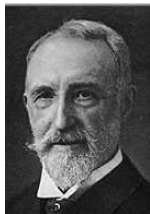
His **Piano Quartet No. 1 in c minor, Op. 148** is an excellent example of this. It was published in 1827 and composed not long before. It not only shows the influence of Beethoven, but also that Czerny drank from the same cup of Viennese melody as had Schubert. The opening *Allegro molto agitato* begins quietly in a foreboding mood. Suddenly a storm of passion breaks loose as the music almost bursts the bounds of chamber music. A second theme is more lyrical, though it has almost as much forward motion as the opening subject. Next comes a hard-driving scherzo, rhythmically very similar to that of Schubert's last string quartet. A finely contrasting trio section offers a lovely melody first sung by the cello and then the rest of the strings. A deeply felt Beethovenian *Andante sostenuto* comes next. The strings present the long-lined melody over the soft piano filigree accompaniment. The captivating main theme of the finale, *Allegro vivace*, is first heard in the piano over the strings' quick 16ths which almost sound like a tremolo. It is a rhythmic horse ride. The Romantic second subject is highly lyrical and followed almost immediately by another lovely melody.



Ernst von Dohnányi (1877-1960)—Dohnányi Ernő in Hungarian—is generally regarded, after Liszt, as Hungary's most versatile musician. He was active as a concert pianist, composer, conductor and teacher, and must be considered one of the chief influences on Hungary's musical life in the 20th century. Certainly, his chamber music is very fine, with most of it being in the masterwork category. Yet, sadly and inexplicably, it has virtually disappeared from the concert stage. Dohnányi studied piano and composition in his native Pressburg (Bratislava) before entering the Budapest Academy. His first published work, his Piano Quintet No. 1, was championed by no less an authority than Johannes Brahms. Upon graduating in the spring of 1897, Dohnányi embarked on a dazzling career as a concert artist, often playing in chamber ensembles. Later, he also devoted considerable time to teaching and conducting.

His **Piano Quartet in f sharp minor** is an amazing work. Although Dohnányi composed it in 1891 at the age of 14, it displays an incredible maturity. Had Brahms heard it, he would have thought himself in the presence of a second Mozart. There is no question in my mind that this work ranks alongside those of the great masters. The attractive main theme to the opening *Allegro moderato* is brooding and weighty. From the opening notes, Dohnányi makes clear he is in the camp of Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann and Brahms, and not that of Liszt and Wagner. The clever second movement, *Scherzo, allegretto vivace*, is a somewhat bizarre, pulsating dance. The gorgeous *Adagio molto espressivo* which comes next begins in a mock Baroque style, but quickly migrates to the chromaticism and intense feeling of the

late German Romantic period. The finale, *Allegro con brio*, is a lively rondo permeated with the characteristics of a Hungarian dance.



Théodore Dubois (1837-1924) was born in the French town of Rosnay. After an impressive career as a student at the Paris Conservatory, where he studied with Ambrose Thomas, he won the coveted Prix de Rome. Among the many important positions he held during a long career was that of director of the Madeleine, where he succeeded Saint-Saëns, and later director of the Paris Conservatory.

Dubois' many students included Paul Dukas and Florent Schmitt. Dubois wrote a considerable amount of music in nearly every genre. Like Saint-Saëns, he eschewed Impressionism and continued on in the French Romantic tradition which Saint-Saëns had helped to pioneer. The style was characterized by logic, clarity, fine melody, drama and a refined sense of taste. Dubois' music is beautifully crafted and clearly shows that he was a gifted melodist. It is truly a pity his chamber music is unknown because it is absolutely first rate.

The **Piano Quartet in a minor** dates from 1907. The opening *Allegro agitato con calore* begins with a sweeping theme in the strings over a breathless accompaniment in the piano. Here by turns we find drama and gorgeous melody, all swept along by a tempestuous breeze. The sweet *Andante molto* which follows is full of Romantic lyricism. The third movement, *Allegro leggiero*, is a buoyant and rhythmically bouncy scherzo, full of lightness and humor. Dubois specifically states that the finale takes its themes from the preceding 3 movements and as such is a summary of the entire work. These themes are masterfully transformed in the powerful and exciting denouement. This is a first-rate work by any standard and a marvelous example of late French Romanticism.



Thomas Dunhill (1877-1946) grew up in London and was part of the Dunhill family which founded the famous tobacco shop in that city. He studied composition at the Royal College of Music with Charles Villiers Stanford. After graduating, he enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a teacher and composer, eventually serving as a professor at the Royal College. He was especially fond of chamber music and wrote a considerable amount.

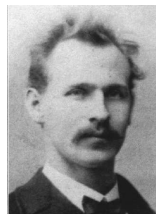
The **Piano Quartet in b minor, Op. 16** was composed in 1901 and won the prestigious Leslie Alexander Prize. The opening *Allegro* begins in a pensive and emotional vein. A series of charming themes, one after the other, is presented and developed in a very natural fashion. The second movement, *Adagio non troppo*, has vocal qualities in its melodies and the way that they are presented by the strings. The depth of emotion is to the fore with one of the greatest viola solos in the literature. A very effective, pulsating scherzo with a Brahmsian trio follows. The finale begins with a lengthy, somber *Molto lento e serio* introduction. However, in the main part of the movement, *Allegro*, a calm sense of affirmation prevails. This is a first-rate late-Romantic piano quartet which surely would have taken its place in the repertoire except for the prejudice against Anglo-American composers at that time.



Jan Dussek (1760-1812)—Dusík in the Czech form—was one of the first great touring piano virtuosos during the last quarter of the 18th century. He concertized throughout Europe and served as pianist to the likes of Catherine the Great, whom he was later accused, probably speciously, of trying to assassinate. He also served as pianist

for the King of Prussia, Prince Radziwill of Poland, Marie Antoinette and later Talleyrand. While in England, he collaborated with the famous piano maker John Broadwood and encouraged him to extend the piano's range and power. Broadwood's piano with Dussek's improvements was eventually sent to Beethoven and became his favorite instrument. Not a lot is known about Dussek's teachers, however, it is thought he may have studied composition with C. P. E. Bach. Dussek wrote a huge amount of music, most of it for piano in one form or another, including a considerable amount of chamber music with piano. Dussek's contemporaries often considered his music very modern and hard to understand because of his use of chromaticism and certain harmonies. Today, of course, they sound more or less typical of the Vienna Classical era. Dussek's **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 56** of 1802 was dedicated to his star pupil Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia, a virtuoso pianist and a fine composer in his own right. The style shares an affinity with that of Carl Maria von Weber and Johann Nepomuk Hummel. In 3 movements—*Allegro affetuoso*, *Larghetto quasi andante* and *Allegro moderato*, which shows that structurally the work is rooted in the Classical era. However, the melodic writing already exhibits some of the trends of very early Romanticism.

Antonin Dvorák (1841-1904) wrote 2 piano quartets, Opp. 23 and 87. After Brahms, Mozart and Schumann, if piano quartets are to be performed in concert, one of his is often heard. They are not, in my opinion, in the same league not only of the above 3 demigods, but also of many other works which I discuss in this guide. While they are not bad works, they are not the composer at his best and probably would not be performed except for the fact that he composed them.



Catharinus Elling (1858-1942) was born in Oslo. He studied piano and composition briefly at the Leipzig Conservatory and later with Heinrich von Herzogenberg in Berlin after which he pursued a career as a teacher at the Oslo Conservatory and as a composer. He became known as a collector of Norwegian folk music, and as Bartok did in Hungary, he traveled the length and breadth of Norway to record folk music. Elling wrote in most genres and composed 3 string quartets as well as his **Piano Quartet in g minor** which dates from 1901. It begins with a powerful, persuasive and somewhat Brahmsian *Allegro*. The second movement, *Adagio*, begins quietly with a lovely, long-lined, lyrical theme. The middle section is restless and full of drama. Next comes a hard-driving scherzo, *Presto*, full of forward motion. The finale, *Allegro*, is rich and darkly hued and tonally reminiscent of Brahms. This is a very well written work, first-class, certainly deserving of concert performance and a good choice for amateur groups as well.



Joseph Elsner (1769-1854) was born in the Silesian town of Grottkau, then part of Prussia, now in Poland. It is not known with whom he studied violin and composition, but he became proficient at both and served as second concertmaster in Lemberg and then in Warsaw served as a theater director and co-founder of what eventually became the Warsaw Conservatory. He pursued a career as a teacher and a composer. His influence on Polish music cannot be over estimated. Among his many student were Ignacy Dobrzynski, Stanislaw Moniusko and Frederic Chopin. His **Piano Quartet in B flat Major, Op.15** dates from 1799 and was dedicated to one of his student Countess Emilie Potocka. It was printed in Paris in 1805. It is three movements, *Moderato*, *Andantino* and *Rondo*. The writing shows the influence of Mozart and in many

ways the work is the equal of Mozart's piano quartets, except that Elsnér makes far better use of the cello than does Mozart. This piano quartet is full of appealing melodies and presents no technical difficulties. It is important for historical reasons showing the early development of chamber music. But it can by virtue of the fine writing and thematic material stand on its own as a work worthy of the concert hall or the stands of amateur players.



Georges Enescu (1881-1955) was a child prodigy on the violin and the piano. He entered the Vienna Conservatory at age 7, graduating at age 13. The next year he continued his studies at the Paris Conservatory. He became a violin virtuoso and famous teacher of the violin, but also devoted himself to composition, which he studied with Massenet and Fauré. He is remembered

today mostly for his 2 Romanian Rhapsodies for Orchestra, but he wrote in virtually every genre and produced a considerable amount of fine chamber music. Enescu's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in D Major, Op. 16** was begun in 1900 but was not finished until 1909. It is written on an epic scale and is, if not the longest, certainly one of the longest ever written. Like his earlier octet from 1906, one might say that the music bursts the bounds of chamber music and enters the realm of the orchestral at several points. It is a very forward-looking work, as can be appreciated by the fact that decades later, scholars and critics compared it to and found similarities with the late chamber music of Gabriel Fauré, which was composed a decade after Enescu had completed this work. In the broader sense, the music follows a traditional pattern, but the various tonal and rhythmic effects, always interesting, might be considered pioneering, if not revolutionary. It is very original in conception—there was nothing like it being written at the same time.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in d minor, Op. 30 was composed between 1943 and 1944. It was written to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Fauré's death. Unlike No. 1, which is heavily influenced by Fauré's melodic, harmonic and rhythmic language, if not so much his elegant, refined style, the later work seems to take note of Bartók in the way it draws upon Magyar folk elements in its first and last movements, and to explore a kind of post-Debussy Impressionism in its slow movement.

Neither of these works can be recommended to amateurs unless they are of the highest technical standards and experienced ensemble players. No. 1 is more immediate in its ability to be appreciated, but No. 2 is also a very fine work which ought to be performed in concert.



Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) was born in the village of Pamiers, Ariège, Midi-Pyrénées. At an early age, he was sent to study at the famous École Niedermeyer, a Parisian school which prepared church organists and choir directors. He studied with several prominent French musicians, including Charles Lefèvre and Camille Saint-Saëns. For most of his life, Fauré worked as a

church organist and teacher. Among his students were Maurice Ravel and Nadia Boulanger. He was a founder of the Société Nationale de Musique and eventually became director of the Paris Conservatory. He has come to be regarded as a transitional and unique figure in French music. His lifetime and works spanned the period of the mid-Romantic right up to the modern post-WWI developments of Stravinsky.

Fauré's **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op. 15** is perhaps his best-known chamber music work and was considered in the front rank of such pieces, being regularly performed when piano quartets were frequently heard in concert. It dates from 1879, not long after Fauré had visited Wagner and listened to his music.

Impressed though he was, unlike César Franck or d'Indy, Fauré refused to fall under Wagner's spell and set off on his own path. No better example can be found than this work. The opening movement, *Allegro molto moderato*, is bold and sweeps over a wide range; powerfully rhythmic and very original, it is clearly a challenge to Franck and the other French Wagnerians. He is deliberately seeking to expand the language of Romanticism without going in the same direction as Wagner. Fauré, unlike Brahms or Schumann, never resorted to having the strings treated as a choir against the piano. He recognized and accepted the basic difference in sound and character between the piano and string instruments, and never tried to make the piano sing long sustained melodies. He showed that it was not necessary. Using opposing arpeggios, chords and runs against the singing of a single instrument or a group, and giving the piano an equal role in a rich contrapuntal texture created a dazzling variety of tonal effects.

Fauré's **Piano Quartet No. 2 in g minor, Op. 45** was completed in 1887. It is his only major work that experiments with cyclic form, an approach that was quite popular in France, thanks to the influence of Franck and Liszt. The first movement, *Allegro molto moderato*, opens with a long and flowing unison string melody. The viola introduces the secondary theme, which is closely related to the first subject. The second movement, *Allegro molto*, begins in turbulent fashion with a breathless, syncopated theme in the piano. What appears to be a lyrical contrasting theme in the strings is another version of material from the beginning of the first movement; at the same time, it is related to the scale passage of the scherzo theme. Fauré wrote that the third movement, *Adagio non troppo*, grew out of his memories of the sounds of bells heard years before in the garden of his family's home in Cadirac. The finale, *Allegro molto*, is full of energy, passion, and turbulence. Its theme of surging triplets has a relentless forward drive. Later, contrasting ideas recall themes originally heard in the scherzo and the first movement. Both of these works are among the finest ever penned—masterworks.



Alexander Ernst Fesca (1820-1849) was born in the German city of Karlsruhe, where his father, Friedrich Ernst Fesca, also a composer, was serving as music director of the Ducal Court Orchestra of Baden. Fesca received his first lessons from his father and was considered a prodigy on the piano. He attended the Prussian Royal Conservatory in Berlin and graduated with a degree in composition at the young age of 14, after which he enjoyed a career as a pianist and music director. Though he did not live very long, he composed a considerable amount of music. His chamber music includes 6 piano trios, 2 piano quartets and 2 septets for piano, winds and strings.

Fesca's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in c minor, Op. 26** is a version of his Septet No. 1 for violin, viola, cello, bass, oboe, horn and piano which was published in 1842. It is not clear if Fesca made this version at the same time as the septet. It seems probable that it was done shortly afterwards, since it was not published until 1844. The rationale for a second version would most likely have been the fact that the septet was not likely to be played very often, since it was an unusual ensemble, while piano quartets were quite popular at that time. The opening movement, *Allegro con spirito*, begins with a powerful, unison statement of the main theme. It promises turbulence, but more lyrical passages follow. The lovely second movement, *Andante con moto*, opens with a long, dreamy theme. Next comes a fleet Scherzo, *allegro vivo*. The piano starts things off and then suddenly the rest join in. The music alternates between powerful thrusting episodes and softer, mysterious intermezzo-like passages. The treatment is quite fetching. The finale, *Allegro con fuoco*, also starts off unison with a thumping introduction which is suddenly interrupted

twice by a Baroque-sounding recitative. Finally, a very long-lined theme which is rather relaxed issues forth. But then the music turns frantic and hard driving.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in d minor, Op. 28, like No.1 is an arrangement by Fesca of his second septet. The opening movement, *Allegro con spirito*, begins with a march-like introduction presented in unison. After developing the material further, a second more lyrical subject is introduced. Toward the end is an unusual recitative for the cello. The fetching main theme to the slow movement, *Andante con moto*, is introduced by the cello in a lengthy solo over soft accompaniment. Eventually the others join in this dreamy, peaceful and pastoral idyll. The cello figures so prominently in this movement that one wonders if the commissioner was a cellist. Rather than a scherzo, as might be expected, Fesca inserts a minuet. This *Tempo di Menuetto*, is intentionally archaic, harking back not to Mozart, Haydn or the Classical era, but beyond to the time of Gossec with its formal, Baroque style. Yet Fesca inserts several very imaginative ideas into this old form, including a brief Rossini-esque episode in the trio section. In the finale, *Allegro moderato*, the piano brings forth the lilting main theme, full of chromatic digressions. When the others join to create a powerful impression, the character of the music becomes much more dramatic before Fesca retraces his steps. Both works are effective and can be recommended to amateurs and professionals alike.



If reputation could be likened to a horse race, then in the “19th-century Czech Composers Derby” Antonin Dvorák would cross the finish line several lengths ahead of his nearest rival, Bedrich Smetana, and then, after an even greater distance, would come **Zdenek Fibich (1850-1900)**, far behind in third place. But reputation must not be confused with quality. Fibich is no third-rate composer. His music is of very high quality and totally undeserving of the near obscurity into which it has fallen. Fibich, in contrast to either Dvorák or Smetana, was the product of 2 cultures, German and Czech. He had been given a true bi-cultural education. And during his formative early years, he had lived in Germany, France and Austria in addition to his native Bohemia. He was perfectly fluent in German as well as Czech. All of these factors were important in shaping his outlook and approach to composition. In his instrumental works, Fibich generally wrote in the vein of the German Romantics, first falling under the influence of Weber, Mendelssohn and Schumann, and later Wagner. It seems that, like Tchaikovsky, Fibich did not wish to write music that merely sounded nationalistic. And therein lies the reason that Fibich has never been held in the same regard by his countrymen as either Dvorák and Smetana or even Janáček. Yet Fibich was the first of any Czech composer to use native Czech folk melody in his works and these melodies, though not as pronounced as in Dvorák, nonetheless can be heard in most of his works.

Fibich's **Piano Quartet in e minor, Op. 11**, completed in 1882, shows his masterful compositional technique. Upon publication, it won critical praise. It is remarkable for its power and richness of invention as well as for the closely woven character of the ensemble, there being only 5 themes in the entire work. The first movement, *Allegro moderato*, is built on 2 lyrical themes and in some ways is quite operatic. The second movement, *Thema con variazione*, has but one theme with 8 ingenious variations that follow. The finale, *Allegro energico*, has 2 of its own, but all 5 themes are repeated toward the end of the work. An interesting work, suitable for both professionals and amateurs.

Michael Gotthard Fischer (1773-1829) was born in the German village of Alach just outside of the city of Erfurt in Thuringia. He was trained as an organist and worked as one. Prior to 1810, vir-



tually all of his composition were orchestral or for chamber music ensembles. Subsequent to that year, they were only for organ. He was virtually unknown, even to organists, until a few years ago when his arrangement for string sextet of Beethoven's Pastoral was rediscovered and performed both live and then on CD.

His **Piano Quartet in F Major, Op.6** was published by Breitkopf and Hartel in 1803 and dedicated to the Queen of Prussia. It is in three movements and opens with a substantial *Largo* introduction which leads to the main section *Allegro*. It has sounds like a cross between Mozart and early Beethoven. The middle movement, *Poco adagio*, begins with a long piano solo before the strings take over and piano retreats into the background. Again, the writing sounds of Beethoven but only with better part-writing for the strings. The finale is a rollicking *Rondo allegro* in 6/8. Given the fact there were very few piano quartets published before Fischer undertook his, one has to be surprised at his achievement.



If Arthur Foote's name is not entirely unknown, it is fair to say that his music is. This is a shame, especially as far as chamber musicians are concerned. Foote's chamber music is first-rate, deserving of regular public performance. **Arthur Foote (1853-1937)** certainly was the equal of nearly any of his European contemporaries, but the fact that he was an American, at a time when

American composers were not generally taken seriously, was without doubt an insurmountable obstacle to his gaining the reputation he deserved. Foote was born in Salem, Massachusetts and was the first important American composer trained entirely in America. His main teacher was John Knowles Paine, from whom Foote gained an admiration for and was primarily influenced by the leading central European Romantic composers of the day, such as Mendelssohn, Schumann, Dvorák and Brahms. The **Piano Quartet in C Major, Op. 23** was completed in 1890 and was, during Foote's lifetime, one of his most popular works, receiving numerous performances in both the U.S. and Europe before inexplicably disappearing from the concert stage. The celebratory opening movement, *Allegro comodo*, is sunny and full of good spirits. A vivacious and energetic Schumannesque Scherzo follows. The third movement, *Adagio, ma con moto*, is a leisurely, joyous theme of thanksgiving. The appealing finale, *Allegro non troppo*, is full of excitement, wonderful melodies and even a fugue before the satisfying coda. Here is work of the first order, fun to play and an audience pleaser. It ought to be heard in concert halls once again and will be appreciated by both amateurs and professionals alike.



Richard Franck (1858-1938) was the son of the composer, concert pianist and teacher Eduard Franck. Born in Cologne, where his father was then teaching, Richard showed an early talent for the piano. When it became clear he was going to pursue a career in music, Eduard, who had studied with Mendelssohn, saw to it that Richard received the best training available. Richard was sent to the prestigious Leipzig Conservatory to study with Carl Reinecke and Salomon Jadassohn, both of whom were among the leading composers and teachers of their day. After finishing his studies, Richard enjoyed a long career as a teacher, composer and pianist, during the course of which he held several positions in Germany and Switzerland.

Franck's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in A Major, Op. 33** was composed in 1901. The opening *Allegro* has for its main theme a lovely, lyrical melody in the strings that slowly builds in excite-

ment and forward motion. The second theme is a light-spirited march. The Adagio which follows begins with a very Romantic theme. In the middle is a fine fugue in which the theme is further developed before returning. The third movement, Allegretto, is unusual in that it is in 4 sections. The main section is slower and rather sweet, but the trio section, which is actually the scherzo, is much faster and rather exciting. The full-blooded and energetic main theme of the finale, Allegro, immediately sets the mood for what follows. With its lovely melodies and exciting musical episodes, audiences and players alike will find this piano quartet a very appealing work.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in E Major, Op. 41 was composed in 1905. Although in one movement, it has 4 subsections—Allegro, Adagio, Allegro and Allegro—so to a certain extent, it retains a relationship with classical structure. It is by turns poetical, atmospheric and fiery. The part-writing is good, and it plays well.



Carl Frühling (1868-1937) was born in what was then known as Lemberg, the capital city of the province of Galicia, a part of the Austrian Habsburg empire. (Today it is in Ukraine and known as Lviv). He studied piano and composition at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna and was awarded the Liszt Prize upon graduating in 1889. For many years he enjoyed a career as an accompanist to some of the most important instrumental soloists and vocalists then performing, including such stars as Pablo Sarasate, Bronislav Huberman and Leo Slezak. He often served as pianist to the Rosé Quartet, then Vienna's premiere string quartet. In the wake of the First World War and its catastrophic effect on Austria and Vienna, his career was virtually destroyed and, sadly, he and his music were soon forgotten. He composed in most genres and left several first rate chamber music compositions.

His **Piano Quartet in D Major, Op.35** dates from the late 1890s or possibly the first part of the first decade of the 20th century. It begins with a big, genial, sunny Allegro moderato. The second movement, Next comes a nervous almost frantic Scherzo and then out of nowhere a lovely, lyrical interludes briefly breaks forth like a flower suddenly blooming. The contrasting trio section is calm with warm feelings. The Larghetto which serves as the third movement begins quietly with only a breath of ominousness before the gorgeous main theme is presented by the strings alone. The finale has no tempo marking but is clearly an allegro. Again, this is optimistic and happy music. From start to finish, there is not a dark cloud to be heard anywhere. A first class work with fine, fetching melodic themes and excellent part-writing.



Robert Fuchs (1847-1927) was born near the Styrian capital of Graz and attended the University of Vienna Conservatory studying with Otto Dessoff and Joseph Hellmesberger. By 1875, Fuchs was teaching at the Conservatory, eventually rising to the rank of Professor of Composition. He was one of the most famous and revered teachers of his time. Mahler, Sibelius, Hugo Wolf, Franz Schmidt, Alexander Zemlinsky, Franz Schreker and Richard Heuberger were among his many students.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in g minor, Op. 15 dates from 1876 when Fuchs was establishing his own style. The first movement, Allegro moderato, begins with a dark and elegiac melody reminiscent of Schubert. Rhythm plays an important role in the development of the theme. The second subject, introduced by the violin, partially lightens the mood. A lively scherzo, Allegretto quasi allegro, comes next. The calm trio section provides excel-

lent contrast. The work's center of gravity is the chorale-like Adagio. The huge finale, Allegro molto, has several highly effective episodes of tension and technical fireworks.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in b minor, Op. 75 was composed in 1904. It is an inspired work of great merit. The first movement is reminiscent of Schubert. The beautiful second movement, a theme with variations, has many outstanding episodes, while the charming Scherzo and trio which follow are true examples of Austrian music. The energetic and buoyant finale, Allegro, makes a very strong impression and fitting close to this outstanding work. Obviously worthy of both professionals and amateurs alike.



Hans Gal (1890-1987) was born in the small village of Brunn am Gebirge, just outside of Vienna. He was trained in that metropolis at the New Vienna Conservatory, where he taught for some time. Later, with the support of such important musicians as Wilhelm Furtwängler, Richard Strauss and others, he obtained the directorship of the Mainz Conservatory. Gal composed in nearly every genre, and his operas were particularly popular during the 1920's. Upon Hitler's rise to power, Gal was forced to leave Germany and eventually emigrated to Britain, teaching at the Edinburgh Music Conservatory for many years.

His **Piano Quartet in B flat Major, Op. 13** was completed in 1915. While it shows the influence of Brahms, it would be more accurate to say it is written in a post-Brahmsian mode, much like the later works of Dohnanyi. The opening Allegro energico is edgy with much forward motion. The second subject is more lyrical and quite appealing. The second movement, Andante con moto, might be likened to a lullaby, gentle and flowing. The third movement in the form of a scherzo, Agitato, has strongly rhythmic episodes which are frequently interrupted, while the trio consists of a beautiful singing solo for the cello. The finale, Allegro vivace, is more genial, though rhythmic and quite Brahmsian. This is a first-class work, well-written for all of the instruments—a good concert hall choice and for amateurs.



Friedrich Gernsheim (1839-1916) was a piano and violin virtuoso as a child. He studied piano with Ignaz Moscheles and violin with Ferdinand David at the Leipzig Conservatory. After graduating, he continued his studies in Paris, getting to know Saint-Saëns, Lalo, Liszt and Rossini. Despite his admiration for France and the French, he returned to Germany and held academic and conducting positions in Cologne, Rotterdam and finally Berlin. Gernsheim's music was held in the highest regard by critics during his lifetime. His chamber music is poetic and of a high intellectual content. But Gernsheim had 2 misfortunes, which led to his music not obtaining the reputation it might have. The first was to be born within a decade of Brahms—a misfortune because, in what is surely an extraordinary phenomenon, virtually every composer in the German-speaking countries born close to Brahms were so eclipsed by him that their reputation and music all but disappeared when that era was over. Names such as Rheinberger, Reinecke, Kiel, Bruch, Dessoff, and Herzogenberg, among many others, come to mind. Ironically, Brahms had considerable respect and admiration for Gernsheim's work. This was no mere flattery, since Brahms only very rarely praised the works of other composers. The second misfortune was that because Gernsheim was Jewish, his music was officially banned during the Nazi era, which insured that it would fall into oblivion.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in E flat Major, Op. 6 dates from 1860. It was begun while Gernsheim was in Paris and so impressed Ferdinand Hiller, director of the Cologne Conservatory,

that he offered Gernsheim a position as a composition teacher there. Stylistically, an early work, this quartet shows the Mendelssohnian influence of Gernsheim's Leipzig training, but also the melodic influence of Rossini. The first movement, *Allegro ma non troppo*, begins with an optimistic theme full of forward drive. The second theme has a chorale-like quality. The extraordinarily fine second movement, *Allegro vivace assai*, though it starts quietly, quickly becomes a whirlwind scherzo. This is followed by an *Andante con moto*, with its sweet and lovely main theme. In the first theme of the finale, *Allegro con brio*, one hears the influence of Mendelssohn with its rhythmically driving first theme. This is followed up by a lovely second subject.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in c minor, Op. 20 appeared in 1870. There is an aura of drama and seriousness to the opening *Allegro molto moderato*. The lovely *Adagio* which follows is peaceful and calm. The finale combines main section which has elements of a folk dance with a more pastoral second section.

Piano Quartet No. 3 in F Major, Op. 47 was completed in 1883. While it shows the influence of Brahms, it is in no way imitative. More than elsewhere, the big first movement, *Allegro tranquillo*, with its rhythmic phrases and dark tone color brings Brahms to mind. But where Brahms generally has the strings play as a group against the piano, Gernsheim uses this technique only rarely. The movement begins quietly, the strings slip in gradually and only then does the tempo increase. The music, which is overflowing with wonderful melodies, is mostly genial, and the combination of the instruments is superb. The second movement, *Allegro energico e appassionato*, a blustering and exciting scherzo, is for its time quite modern sounding. From the opening notes, it begins in dramatic and exciting fashion. However, Gernsheim plays with the listener, constantly interrupting the music just when one expects a theme to receive a lengthier treatment. This creates a very impressive effect. The slow movement, *Andante cantabile*, brings relief with its long-lined soothing melody; it could almost be called a song without words. The finale, *Tema con variazione*, has for its main theme a simple, childlike tune which is first given by the piano. In the several variations which follow, Gernsheim demonstrates his mastery of form and instrumental technique, and finishes it off with an exciting conclusion. All 3 of these works are first-rate and belong in the front rank of such compositions. It goes without saying that they belong in the concert hall and should not be missed by amateur players.



Felice Giardini (1716-1796) was born in Turin. When it became clear that he was a child prodigy, his father sent him to Milan. There he studied singing, harpsichord and violin but it was on the latter that he became a famous virtuoso. By the age of 12, he was already playing in theater orchestras. During the 1750s, Giardini toured Europe as a violinist, scoring successes in Paris, Berlin, and especially in England where he eventually settled. For many years, he served as the concertmaster and director of the Italian Opera in London and gave solo concerts under the auspices of J.C. Bach with whom he was a close friend. He was widely regarded as the greatest musical performing artist before the public. (1755-1770). In 1784, he returned to Naples to run a theater, however, there he encountered financial setbacks. In 1793, he returned to England to try his luck. But times had changed and he was no longer remembered. He then went to Russia, but again had little luck, dying in Moscow in 1796.

Giardini's **Piano Quartet in B flat Major, Op.21 No.2** was part of a collection of six quartets for keyboard and strings published in 1779, while he was residing in London. Three of the quartets are for Violin, Viola, Cello and Piano, the other three for

2 Violins, Cello and Piano. All are in three movements. This quartet has an *Allegro*, followed by a *Grazioso* and then an *Allegro assai*. His chamber music combines the so-called "Style Gallant" with the mid 18th classicism of J.C. Bach and the Mannheim school. In the "Style Gallant", the writing emphasizes the soloistic qualities of the instruments, rather than the integrated writing of all the parts. The keyboard is no longer merely an accompanying voice as was typical in baroque works but now is given a role equal to that of the strings.



Hermann Goetz (1840-1876) studied theology and mathematics in Königsberg, where he was born. Eventually he switched to music and attended the Stern Conservatory in Berlin, and studied with the founder Julius Stern, as well as Hans von Bülow and Hugo Ulrich. In 1862, he succeeded Theodor Kirchner as organist at the church in Winterthur.

Goetz's **Piano Quartet in E Major, Op. 6** dates from 1867. Although it is dedicated to Johannes Brahms, none of that composer's influence is to be found therein. This piano quartet was Goetz's most admired and popular work, and not without reason, as it shows mastery of style throughout. The wonderful opening movement, *Rasch und feurig* (quick and fiery) has moments of both inspiring energy and profound sadness. The huge second movement *Langsam* (slow) is a theme and set of 4 large variations. The writing recalls Schubert at his best. Next is a somewhat brusque Scherzo, *sehr lebhaft* (very lively) with a Schumannesque quality. There is much sawing in the strings but some interesting chromatic effects. The rather lengthy, foreboding introduction to the finale, *Sehr langsam, Frisch und lebendig* (very slow, fresh and lively) though it is dark, funereal and depressing, makes a great impression, it must be admitted. It would not be out of place in a funeral home. To my mind, the quicker main section is somewhat out of place. It lacks the depth and drama that the introduction leads one to expect and one guesses that perhaps Goetz was running out of first-rate thematic ideas. Still, this is a very worthwhile piece—it's just a pity that this lapse could not have occurred somewhere in the middle rather than at the end of the work.



Reynaldo Hahn (1875-1947) today is primarily remembered as a composer of the operetta *Ciboulette*, but he did devote a fair amount of attention to composing chamber music. Born in Venezuela, Hahn moved with his family to Paris when he was 3. He studied at the Conservatory under Massenet, who considered him a genius. Handsome and worldly, Hahn drew his friends from a much wider circle—for example, Marcel Proust and Sarah Bernhardt—than other musicians, and was greatly interested in the literary scene as well as the theater. Having a gifted voice and being an excellent pianist, Hahn needed no assistant for vocal concert evenings. He was also a deft conductor who eventually directed the Paris Opera.

Hahn's **Piano Quartet in G Major** dates from 1946, the year before his death. The opening *Allegro moderato* is genial and sunny. The second movement, *Allegro assai*, is a cross between an intermezzo and a scherzo, essentially gentle and dance-like. The *Andante* which follows is autumnal. The finale, *Allegro assai*, is upbeat and full of good feelings. This is a charming work, which could have been written in 1890 during the height of the French Impressionist movement. It can be recommended both for concert and amateur players.

Prince Heinrich XXIV Reuss of Köstritz (1855-1910), was born in the Prussian town of Trebschen. The Reusses were a large old



German noble family with several branches and literally dozens of princes called Heinrich. There was another Prince Heinrich XXIV, but he was "of Greiz," hence the need for the lengthy name. Our Prince Reuss, after initially studying music with his father, who had been a student of Carl Reissiger, took a law degree.

Subsequently he devoted himself to music, studying composition privately with Heinrich von Herzogenberg, who introduced him to Brahms. Although Brahms never formally gave lessons to Reuss, according to the Prince, he gave the young composer numerous suggestions and considerable help which, as far as Reuss was concerned, almost amounted to the same thing. Though not a prolific composer, Reuss did pen 6 symphonies as well as a considerable amount of chamber music, including 5 string quartets, a string quintet, 2 string sextets, a piano trio, a piano quartet, and several instrumental sonatas. His style can be an amalgam of Brahms, Herzogenberg and, to some extent, Dvořák and Mendelssohn. His works were premiered to critical acclaim and were held in high regard for many years before disappearing from the repertoire after the First World War.

Reuss's **Piano Quartet in f minor, Op. 6** dates from 1895. Like many works from this period, it was influenced by Brahms, but it is not imitative. It is well written for all the instruments, grateful to play and to hear. Amateurs will take especial pleasure in this work, since it presents no great technical difficulties while sounding magnificent. The first subject of the opening movement, *Allegro non troppo*, is powerful and energetic, then a contrasting second theme is graceful. A ghostly but spirited scherzo, *Allegro molto*, follows with a contrasting trio section. The *Adagio* which comes next approaches a song without words. A dramatic finale brings to an end what is a very appealing work.



Louise Heritte-Viardot (1841-1918) was born in Paris into a musical family. Both her mother Pauline Viardot (née Garcia) and her aunt Maria Malibran were world-famous vocalists. She, too, became a singer, having been taught by her mother. However, her health prevented her from having the same type of career that her mother had. While she continued to sing on

occasion, she mostly devoted herself to composing and teaching. Whereas her mother and aunt also composed, but only French art songs with piano accompaniment, Louise wrote in virtually every genre. Among her works are some 4 string quartets, 3 piano quartets, 2 piano trios and several instrumental sonatas.

Unfortunately, much of her oeuvre is now lost. Of her chamber music, only the 3 piano quartets have survived. **Piano Quartet in d minor** bears no opus number, but is the first that she wrote, dating from the mid-1870's. The first movement, *Allegro*, is powerful but heavy, almost ponderous. The following *Andante* begins with the strings bringing forth an arresting melody over the hushed tremolo accompaniment of the piano. The striking *Scherzo con moto* which comes next has a Halloween-like subject for its main theme. Its syncopated rhythm gives the impression of ogres dancing. The whole thing is extraordinarily effective. The rousing finale, *Allegro con brio*, is better yet, full of verve and élan.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in A Major (actually No. 2 but it has traveled under No.1) dates from 1883. It is clearly programmatic music, since Heritte-Viardot not only titled the work *Im Sommer* (In Summer), but gave each of the movements a subtitle. The first movement, *Allegro un poco animato*, subtitled *Des Morgens im Walde* (Mornings in the Forest), evokes the awakening dawn of the forest and is lyrical, but also incorporates a hunting motif. The second movement, a scherzo, is subtitled *Fliegen und Schmetterlinge* (Flies and Butterflies). The music alternates

between quick presto sections and slower moderatos. The third movement, *Die Schwüle* (Sultry Weather) is a *lento*. Slow and ponderous but at the same time lyrical, it is meant to convey the stifling heat of a hot summer's day. The finale, *Vivo allegretto*, is subtitled *Abends unter die Eiche* (Evenings under the Oak). The composer further notes that it is a *Bauerntanz*, a peasant dance, and the music aptly conveys the rustic, yet graceful quality of such a dance. This is a great choice for a concert program which audiences are sure to enjoy. And amateurs as well should not miss the chance to play it. The part-writing is very fine and highly effective, and the ideas are perfectly suited for its purpose.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in D Major, Op. 11—"The Spanish"—also dates from 1883. It enjoyed a successful premiere and was one of the few works from the more than 300 Heritte-Viardot wrote which was published in her lifetime. It is considered program music, but in the very best sense of the word. "The Spanish" The opening movement, *Allegretto*, is a *Paseo*, a classical Spanish dance characterized by a walking step. This sparkling music is brisk, but not overly fast. This is followed by an *Andantino* entitled *Caña*. It is a sad song, first given by the viola and then taken up by the violin, as the cello and piano provide a strumming background. A livelier *Allegretto con moto* follows. The title, *Serenada*, gives away the mood of the music, a romantic and lovely melody. The finale, *Allegro giocoso*, entitled *Divertimento*, is a kind of upbeat traveling music which takes the listener on exciting, bumptious tour. This will surely please in the concert hall and amateurs will greatly enjoy it.



The Austrian composer **Heinrich von Herzogenberg (1843-1900)** has sometimes been attacked as nothing more than a pale imitation of Brahms, of whom he was a great admirer. There is no denying that his music often shows the influence of Brahms, however, listeners and players alike have discovered that it is original and fresh. Most of Herzogenberg's chamber is first-rate and Brahms might well have wished he had written some of it. Toward the end of his life, Brahms, who was not in the habit of praising other composers publicly, wrote of Herzogenberg, whom he had often harshly criticized in the past, "Herzogenberg is able to do more than any of the others."

Herzogenberg's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in e minor, Op. 75** dates from 1892 during his wife's final illness. While it is not a tragic work, it is full of many different emotions and exudes a spiritual quality. The first movement, *Allegro*, opens in a dramatic, serious mood as storm clouds threaten. There is an undeniably Brahmsian aura to it. Although the second theme, based on a folk melody, is more lyrical, the quiet air of desperation still hovers over the music. The following *Andante quasi allegretto* can be likened to a song without words. It is calm and reflective but when the cello enters, it becomes a solemn declaration of love. Although the *Vivace* is lively, it is a grotesque and macabre liveliness. Only in the trio, a Bach-like fugue, does the mood lighten. The finale, *Moderato*, consists of several episodes, each of a different mood, representing a kind of biographical summing up of their life together. It begins with a dignified, church-like anthem of resignation, but also of thanksgiving. This gives way to a romantic and turbulent section which is followed by a measured dance of joy. Herzogenberg himself wrote of the finale that it was a declaration of love to his dead Lisl. Toward the end, main theme from the second movement briefly reappears, perhaps to indicate that there is, after all, heavenly peace. A powerful work.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in B flat, Op. 95 was Herzogenberg's last chamber music work. It was begun in 1895 and finished a few months before Brahms' death in 1897. Herzogenberg, who knew that Brahms was seriously ill, dedicated the piece to him and this certainly explains the almost overt influence of

Brahms in this music. It was undoubtedly intended as a tribute to his erstwhile and unresponsive friend. For many years prior, Herzogenberg had studiously gone his own way and, though he admired Brahms greatly, had long since stopped imitating him. The opening *Allegro* begins with a series of sharp chords which are subsequently developed and serve as the core material of the entire movement. The superb second movement, a big, emotive *Adagio*, is titled *Notturmo* and the music, though very Romantic, is also quite dream-like. A powerful and thrusting *Scherzo* follows. Its middle section surprises with music which could very well be styled a *Shepherd's Idyll*. The rousing finale, *Allegro vivace*, is tinged with Hungarian melody, but also reprises the 3 main themes of the prior movements and melds them into a rousing conclusion. Both of these piano quartets are absolutely first-rate. They belong in the concert hall and are not beyond amateurs who are experienced ensemble players.



Wilhelm Hill (1838-1902) was born in the German city of Fulda. He studied piano and violin locally before moving to Frankfurt, where he studied with Heinrich Henkel and Johann Christian Hauppff. Except for a few short intervals, Hill remained in Frankfurt for the rest of his life and gained a reputation both as a piano teacher and composer. He was on friendly terms with many

of the important composers of his day, including Brahms, Anton Rubinstein and Louis Spohr. Hill wrote in most genres and, as far as chamber music goes, composed 2 piano trios, a string quartet, several instrumental sonatas as well as a piano quartet.

His **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 44**, completed in 1879. It shows the influence of Robert Schumann. The first movement begins with a powerful and energetic theme which is in strong contrast to the pleasing and delicate subject in the violin and cello. In the *Poco Adagio* which follows, one hears echoes of Wagner's *Lohengrin* which offers a nice change of pace, rhythmically speaking. This is followed by a waltz-like *Allegro animato* which takes the place of a scherzo. The main subject of the finale, *Allegro con brio*, succeeds because of its clarity. The quartet is well put together and a good, though not a great, work. But amateurs will certainly take pleasure from it.



Ferdinand Hiller (1811-1885) first studied piano and violin in his native Frankfurt. His talent was such that he was taken to study with Johann Nepomuk Hummel, then the greatest living pianist. Hiller eventually became one of the leading pianists of his time and for a while devoted himself to a concert career before deciding to concentrate on composing and conducting. For more than 2 decades he was one of Mendelssohn's closest friends, succeeding him as conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. He served as a Professor and Director of the Cologne Conservatory for several decades. Among his many students was Max Bruch. Hiller was a prolific composer who wrote works in virtually every genre, and it is fair to say that he wrote too much (more than 200 works with opus number and nearly as many without) and certainly not everything was worthwhile. Today virtually all of it is forgotten, despite the fact that there are some fine works which deserve to be revived.

Hiller wrote 3 piano quartets. The first 2, **Opp.1 and 3** are among his earliest published works which appeared in the 1830's. I am not familiar with them, however, judging from the various historical sources I have consulted, they are not worthy of discussion.

The **Piano Quartet No. 3 in A Major, Op. 133** is his final work for this combination. It was completed in 1868 and was written on a large scale. The massive opening movement,

Allegro appassionato, begins rather abruptly, almost as if in mid-phrase, with an unsettling, ascending chromatic passage. The treatment of the restless and brooding main theme is extremely plastic, which allows the thrusting rhythm to dominate until finally the strings, in unison, state the theme in a much more emphatic fashion. A lovely *Adagio* comes next. It opens with the cello alone bringing forth the very lyrical, somewhat sad first subject in its entirety, before the rest of the strings join in. A Mendelssohnian episode, with the strings playing *pizzicato*, follows and provides a fine contrast. Hiller subtitles the third movement, marked *Allegretto grazioso*, an *intermezzo*. It is a quite interesting blend—it begins with the piano in the lead and sounds like a sad Mendelssohnian song without words, but when the strings join in, the music is transformed into just the kind of *intermezzo* for which Mendelssohn was famous. In the finale, *Allegro con fuoco*, the music once again begins rather abruptly; this time it is a short, boisterous, martial introduction. Although the music is fiery, it is also characterized by good spirits. An occasional concert performance would not be amiss.



Heinrich Hofmann (1842-1902) was born in Berlin and studied there at the Neue Akademie der Tonkunst with Theodor Kullak and Siegfried Dehn. At first, he embarked upon a career as a pianist and teacher. However, by the late 1860's, his operas and his choral and orchestral works began to achieve great success, and for the next 2 decades, Hofmann was one of the most often performed composers in Germany and much of Europe. Success came at a price. Although hailed by some critics, such as Hermann Mendel, as a real talent and one of the most important emerging composers of his time, many others, jealous of his rocketing success or determined to protect their favorites (such as Eduard Hanslick was of Brahms), derided Hofmann for his "fashionable eclecticism." While his works broke no new ground, on the other hand, they were masterfully conceived, beautiful and well executed. This is especially true of his chamber music. Besides this piano quartet, he composed a piano trio, a string sextet, an octet and several smaller works.

The **Piano Quartet in d minor, Op. 50** dates from 1880, composed at a time when Hofmann was at the height of his powers and success. The quartet begins with a massive *Vivace ma non troppo*. The brooding opening theme immediately captures the listener's attention. It is both attractive and full of drama. The integration of the strings with the piano is truly first-rate. All the instruments are handled marvelously. After a masterly development, the second theme brings with it a lovely lyricism. The highly Romantic second movement, *Andante poco sostenuto*, begins with a gorgeous violin solo soon followed by the cello and the other voices. After reaching a powerful climax, another sweet and Romantic melody is brought forth by the cello. A robust and hard-driving scherzo, *Vivace*, full of forward motion, comes next. A slower and gentle trio section completes the picture. The finale, an *Animato* in D Major, bursts out of the gate from its opening notes full of energy. The music is triumphant and jovial. A spacious and more relaxed second subject provides fine contrast. This piano quartet is a superb work and for many years enjoyed great popularity. It is not hard to see why once you have heard the music. As there are so few piano quartets performing before the public today, it is no mystery why it disappeared. All but a few works from this genre are known to the public now. Certainly, here is one that is as good as any and which belongs in the front ranks. We recommend it without reservation to both professionals and amateurs alike.

Joseph Holbrooke (1878-1958) was born near London in the town of Croydon. Both his parents were musicians, and his early



lessons were with his father. He was sent to the Royal Academy of Music in London and after graduating worked as a pianist and conductor, all the while composing. Eventually Holbrooke's big works for orchestra and chorus and his operas brought him considerable fame, however, after the First World War, he and his works fell into obscurity. He composed a considerable amount of chamber music, most of which is of a high quality and awaits rediscovery.

Holbrooke's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in g minor, Op. 21** started off life as a piano trio. He revised it and it was published in 1905. He titled it "Symphonic Quartet No. 2," telegraphing that it was a piece which might burst the boundaries of chamber music. It is a grandiose affair. The first movement, *Allegro moderato, ma non troppo*, opens ominously. One can almost hear an orchestra performing it. The middle movement, *Lament, largo e molto espressione*, is just that, a lament, clearly based on English folk melody. This is extremely well done. The finale, *Maestoso, allegro*, again begins in ominous fashion with the strings trumpeting an alert, interspersed by lightning-bolt chords from the piano. Finally, the music takes off. It is by turns highly energetic, bordering on the frenetic, but there are also several appealing lyrical sections which provide a fine contrast. This is without doubt one of the very best English piano quartets from the period and deserves to be performed in concert.



Herbert Howells (1892-1983) was born in Gloucester. In 1912, he won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music and studied composition with Stanford and Parry. Howells was one of the most brilliant and gifted pupils there, and Stanford considered him "my son in music." From 1936 to 1962 Howells taught at St. Paul's Girls School in Hammersmith, where he succeeded

Gustav Holst, and he later became a professor at London University. Stanford persuaded young Howells to enter the first Carnegie Trust composition competition in 1916.

His **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op. 21** won an award. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato tranquillo*, combines elements of English folk tunes with a kind of French Impressionist Ravel-like approach. The middle movement, *Lento*, begins gently, but builds to an impassioned climax in which the folk theme of the first movement is recalled. The finale, *Allegro molto energico*, is lighter in mood and full of high spirits. This is a good work which is interesting, not particularly easy to play, but it might do well in concert.



Hans Huber (1852-1921) was born in the Swiss town of Eppenberg. Between 1870 and 1874, he studied at the Leipzig Conservatory with Carl Reinecke and Ernst Richter. After graduating, he held a number of positions before being appointed a professor at the Basel Conservatory, where he served as director between 1889 and 1917.

Huber's music was firmly rooted in the Romantic movement, inspired at first by Schumann and Brahms, then by Liszt and Richard Strauss. Huber was widely considered Switzerland's leading composer during the last quarter of the 19th and first decade of the 20th century. He composed in virtually every genre and many of his works entered the standard repertoire for some decades, the only works by a Swiss composer regularly performed outside of Switzerland.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in B flat Major, Op. 110 dates from 1893. The main theme to the first movement, *Allegro moderato*, shows the influence of Brahms, but is quite impressive; the development section is superbly done and engrossing. The se-

cond movement, *Adagio con molto sentimento*, appeals by virtue of its lovely, noble melody which serves as the main theme. Next comes an exciting scherzo, *Presto*, with a contrasting *tranquillo* trio section which is elegant and even delicate. The very effective finale, *Allegro vivace*, is marked "alla svizzera" and is clearly based on Swiss folk melodies.

Huber's **Piano Quartet No. 2 in E Major, Op. 117** dates from 1901. It became known as the *Waldlied* (Forest Song) Piano Quartet because lines from a poem by the important Swiss poet Gottfried Keller appeared on the title page of the first edition: "The branches and the treetops of the oak forest are standing intertwined / Today it sang to me its old song in a happy voice." A Swiss music critic wrote of this piano quartet, "the music breathes the joy of the holidays and the wanderer's happiness, depicting with graphic clarity, as does Keller's poem, the forest in calm and in storm." The opening movement, *Andante con moto*, begins with an air of contemplation, tenderly creating a sound picture of nature's magical moments. However, as the music progresses, we hear winds rushing through the trees, creating a sense of drama. The second movement, *Allegro con fuoco*, characterized by an ever-present restlessness and downward-plunging chromaticism, is a furious scherzo in which a storm bursts. The next movement, *Adagio molto*, begins where the scherzo has left off. One can hear the forest after the storm, the raindrops dripping from the branches, which are hanging low from the damaging winds. But in the finale, *Allegro ma non troppo*, the sun has come out and is glistening upon the leaves. There is a joyous return of normality in a hymn of thanksgiving. Both of these works are absolutely first-rate and can be unconditionally recommended to both professional and amateur players.



Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837) was not only considered one of the most important composers of his time but was also widely regarded as the greatest piano virtuoso of his era. We owe the transmission of Mozart's pianistic style and technique to him. From early on, Hummel was recognized as a prodigy and not just on the piano. Brought to Vienna from his native

Pressburg (today Bratislava) at the age of 4, Hummel auditioned to study with Mozart. While Mozart accepted the occasional day student for the odd hour or half-hour lesson, he refused to take on full-time students because he was too busy. In Hummel's case, immediately recognizing the extraordinary talent, Mozart not only made an exception, but insisted that Hummel live with him so that he could supervise every aspect of his musical education. In fact, Hummel was the only full-time student Mozart ever had. It appears that Hummel wrote 2 piano quartets.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in D Major, S. 3 dates from 1790. Considering how old Hummel was at the time (12 years), it should come as no surprise that it sounds rather like the music of his only teacher, Mozart. It is pleasant and the piano is treated as an equal to the strings, not given a virtuoso part, but it is not a great work and certainly not on a par with that of the master. Outside of any historical interest it might hold for Hummel fans, it is probably not worth reviving.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in G Major, Op. Post. was discovered in 1839 along with many other manuscripts. I would guess that it was composed about the same time as No. 1 and sounds much like it. Both of these works could have been homework assignments given to him by Mozart, in which case, the young Hummel deserved an "A" for composition, effective part-writing and decent melodies. But they cannot be considered strong enough to revive.

William Yeates Hurlstone (1876-1906) was born in London. At an early age, he showed great interest in music and soon played



the piano brilliantly. Unfortunately, his activities were hampered by bronchial asthma, from which he suffered all his life. Hurlstone won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music when he was 18 and studied piano and composition, the latter with Sir Charles Stanford, who among considered Hurlstone the most talented of his many brilliant students. Virtually all Hurlstone's contemporaries

recognized his tremendous ability and the excellence of his compositions. In 1905 at the age of 28, he was appointed Professor of Harmony and Counterpoint at the Royal College, but less than a year later, he died.

The **Piano Quartet in e minor, Op. 43** was finished shortly before his death. The first movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins with a highly striking main theme in octaves. The slow movement, *Andante cantabile*, is simple and flows with a charming principal melody, while the second theme receives a masterly treatment. A scherzo, *Vivace, ma non troppo*, moves along with fine swing, and the trio has a Scottish flavor. The finale, *Lento, ma non troppo—Allegro giocoso*, begins with an introduction founded on the opening theme of the first movement. The cheerful main section has a tinge of Brahmsian color to it. This is a solid work which deserves to be heard and is suitable to both professionals and amateurs.



Vincent d'Indy (1851-1931) was born of aristocratic stock. His musical talent was recognized by his grandmother who raised him and saw that he received piano lessons from famous teachers. Despite this, he was sent to law school in Paris. D'Indy, who was intent on becoming a composer, joined a Parisian orchestra as a timpanist to learn music "from the ground up." Both Massenet and

Bizet were impressed by his early compositions and encouraged him to show his work to César Franck. Franck did not share their enthusiasm and was reputed to have told D'Indy, "you have ideas, but you cannot do anything." Apparently, those ideas were enough, however, to convince Franck to show D'Indy how to do things, since he took the latter on as a pupil. Though D'Indy was to assimilate and be influenced by many different sources, including Liszt and Wagner, Franck and his music left the most telling mark on him. D'Indy's reputation during his lifetime was considerable, since he had founded in 1900 what was to become the most important music school in France after the Paris Conservatory—The Schola Cantorum.

His **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op. 7** dates from 1878, shortly after d'Indy completed his studies with Franck, and it shows Franck's influence. The opening movement, *Allegro non troppo*, begins with a dark melody presented first by the cello over a quiet, but rushing accompaniment in the piano. After a full statement of the theme, d'Indy introduces some very original chromatics in very fast downward passages and repeats modulation chords which create a feeling of uncertainty. The second movement, *Andante moderato*, subtitled *Ballade*, opens with a mellow theme played by the viola. One can well imagine a ballad singer. The second theme, which consists of the various strings echoing each other, is quite romantic. The very French finale, *Allegro vivo*, begins in jovial fashion with the rhythm playing as important a role as the melody. Here is a very fine work which should interest those looking for a French piano quartet from the mid-Romantic period. It is one of d'Indy's more appealing works and suitable for both amateurs and professionals

Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859-1935) was born in the town of Gatchina, near St. Petersburg. He studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. After graduating, Ippolitov-Ivanov obtained the position of Director of the



Tiflis (Tbilisi) Music Academy and became the conductor of the city's orchestra. He spent the next 7 years in the Georgian capital, where he developed his life-long interest in the music of the Georgian region. Many of his compositions reflect this, the most famous being his "Caucasian Sketches." In 1893, Ippolitov-Ivanov became a professor at the Moscow Conservatory and later served as its director for 2 decades. He composed in all genres.

He completed his **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 9** in 1895. It was published 3 years later. Because of its rhythms, harmonies, polytonalities and especially its homotonalities, it is unmistakably Russian sounding. The big, opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, is quite energetic and perhaps overly long for the material at hand. The short middle movement, *Andante comodo*, is a lovely, romantic affair with conversations between the cello and violin, and later the piano and viola. The finale, *Allegro risoluto*, is energetic with much forward motion. Overall, a decent work which can especially be recommended to amateurs, since it is not at all difficult technically.



Gordon Jacob (1895-1984) was born in London and educated at Dulwich College. After serving in the First World War and briefly studying journalism, he entered the Royal College of Music, where he studied composition with Stanford and where he later taught (1924-66). Jacobs composed in virtually every genre except opera. He refused to adopt atonality and serialism, and his works remained tonal because he believed that music was meant to communicate with the listener. When Schoenberg and Stockhausen became the rage, his music was slowly elbowed aside.

Jacob's **Piano Quartet** was the result of a commission from the Bernard Richards Piano Quartet, one of the few such permanent performing ensembles at the time. The work was composed in 1969. The opening movement, *Andante maestoso—Allegro*, begins in dramatic fashion. The main part of the movement, the *Allegro*, alternates between 2 themes, the first playful and second calmer. The middle movement, marked *Scherzo*, has an angular main theme full of fast forward motion, while the contrasting middle section is slower. The finale, *Variations and Epilogue*, begins with the viola giving the theme upon which the variations are based. Most are light in mood and upbeat, however, the somber *Epilogue* revisits the dramatic opening *Andante* before dying away softly. This is a very fine work. It deserves to be heard and played.



John Jacobsson (1835-1909) was born in the Swedish capital Stockholm. He received his basic music education from his mother who was a singer. At the age of 14 it became necessary for him to find a job and he was employed at music and piano store. Because he was forced to work, Jacobsson was unable to study at the Royal Conservatory, however, he studied piano, harmony and composition privately with one of Sweden's leading composers Ludvig Norman, who had studied with famous teachers at the Leipzig Conservatory. Jacobsson was also able to study with Franz Berwald. He pursued a career as a composer, while running his own music shop, and also served as chief organist at the Great Synagogue of Stockholm. He and his music were recognized and he was awarded the Swedish Royal Medal for Literature and Art, and was inducted into the Royal Swedish Academy of Music.

His **Piano Quartet in d minor** dates from the 1870s and is in four movements. It begins with an *Allegro moderato*, followed by an *Intermezzo poco lento*, then comes a *Scherzo risoluto* and the

finale Allegro con brio. This is a solid work in the Mendelssohn-Schumann tradition which Jacobsson imbibed from Norman. There is nothing in this work which show any influence by Berwald.

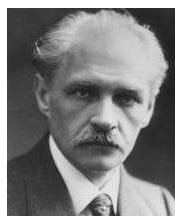


Salomon Jadassohn (1831-1902) was one of the most famous and respected teachers of composition during the last half of the 19th century. He was born in Breslau, the capital of the Prussian province of Silesia. First educated locally, Jadassohn enrolled at the Leipzig Conservatory in 1848, just a few years after it had been founded by Mendelssohn. There he studied composition with Moritz Hauptmann, Ernst Richter and Julius Rietz, as well as piano with Ignaz Moscheles. At the same time, he studied privately with Franz Liszt in Weimar. Being Jewish, Jadassohn was unable to qualify for the many church jobs which were usually available to graduates of a conservatory such as Leipzig. Instead, he worked for a Leipzig synagogue and a few local choral societies as well as teaching privately. Eventually, he was able to qualify for a position at the Leipzig Conservatory, teaching piano and composition. Among his many students were Grieg, Busoni, Dellius, Karg-Elert, Reznicek and Weingartner. Jadassohn wrote in virtually every genre, including symphonies, concertos, lieder, opera and chamber music, the latter being among his finest compositions. Considered a master of counterpoint and harmony, he was also a gifted melodist, following in the tradition of Mendelssohn. But one also hears the influence of Wagner and Liszt, whose music deeply impressed him. That Jadassohn and his music were not better known can be attributed to 2 reasons: Carl Reinecke and the rising tide of Anti-Semitism in late 19th-century Wilhemine Germany. Reinecke was a very close contemporary of Jadassohn and something of a super-star. Not only was he a world-famous piano virtuoso, but he was also an important professor at the Leipzig Conservatory and later its director. If this were not enough, he served as the conductor of the renowned Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. Under these circumstances, it was hard for a colleague to get the public's attention. And then, toward the end of the 19th century, Anti-Semitic critics attacked Jadassohn's music, labeling it academic and dry, an epithet which has stuck with it since, without anyone ever investigating. However, even a brief hearing of any of his chamber music reveals how ludicrous this assessment is. Salomon Jadassohn was a first-rate composer, who unfortunately was never really given a chance to promote his music.

Jadassohn's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in c minor, Op. 77** dates from 1884 when he was at the height of his powers. The opening movement, Mesto-Allegro agitato, begins with a slow, brooding and somewhat sad introduction, which quickly builds excitement and tension, and then gives way to the Allegro. Tonally rich, written for all the voices in their middle and low registers, it achieves a satisfying fullness. The second movement is an updated and brilliant Mendelssohnian Scherzo, allegro vivace. It is light and airy, and goblins can be heard dancing. The quartet's center of gravity is clearly its slow movement, Adagio. The lovely opening theme has a valedictory quality to it. Painted on a broad tonal canvas, the music proceeds along in a quite leisurely fashion, taking its time to slowly build to a dramatic climax in its middle section. The part writing is clearly outstanding and surely the equal of anything else of its type written. The finale, Allegro con brio, might well serve as a textbook example of how to bring a work to a successful conclusion. Warm and big-shouldered, the genial melody and tonal writing are all that one could ask for. Of its kind, this is a masterwork. It goes without saying that it should be performed in concert. It presents no particular technical difficulties to amateurs and cannot be too highly recommended.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 86 dates from 1887. It opens with a genial Allegro tranquillo, ma non troppo. A big Mendelssohnian Scherzo, molto vivace, follows—a real showpiece. There is a finely contrasting trio section. The broad Adagio sostenuto, which comes next, begins with an extended, lovely solo in the piano and sets the mood for the rest of the movement. An ebullient, march-like Allegro risoluto concludes this very good work.

Piano Quartet No. 3 in a minor, Op. 109 was commissioned by the Polish-American pianist Alexander Lambert. It dates from 1890. The work explosively opens with a series of unison triple stops and 16th notes, before the searching and thrusting main theme is brought forth. This big opening Allegro energico, ma non troppo vivace, makes a very strong impression. The Adagio sostenuto which follows is a cross between a song without words and a lullaby. Next is a substantial Scherzo, allegro moderato, which despite its moderate tempo instruction, resembles a moto perpetuo. The Allegro moderato, which concludes the quartet, is in the major and relieves the ominous sense of gloom which pervaded the earlier movements. Here, too, is a first-class work. It is grateful to play and to hear. Along with the other 2, it can be warmly recommended to amateurs, since it plays quite easily, making no extraordinary technical demands. Much pleasure is to be gained by making the acquaintance of these works.



Gustav Jenner (1865-1920) was Brahms' only full-time composition student. Jenner, who was born in the town of Keitum on the German island of Sylt, was the son of a doctor who was of Scottish ancestry and a descendant of the famous physician Edward Jenner, pioneer of the vaccination for smallpox. On his mother's side, he descended from Sylt fishermen. Jenner began to teach himself music and attracted the attention of his teachers in Kiel who sent him to study in Hamburg with Brahms' own teacher, Eduard Marxsen. Eventually, Jenner's friends and mentors in Kiel arranged for the penniless young man to study with Brahms in Vienna, which he did from 1888 to 1895. Jenner in his biography of Brahms (*Brahms, The Man, The Teacher and The Artist*) writes that although Brahms harshly criticized Jenner's efforts at composition, he worked hard on his pupil's behalf and recommended him for the position of Music Director at the University of Marburg. Jenner held this post from 1895 until his death. Jenner, no doubt due in part to the training he had under the ultra-critical Brahms, was highly critical of his own works and took care to see that only a few were published during his lifetime. These were mostly songs and his Trio for Piano, Clarinet and Horn (1900). Since few German composers of Brahms' time, none of whom were his students, escaped the great man's influence, it would be unreasonable to expect that someone who studied with Brahms for as long as Jenner did could have done so. Although Jenner writes with great originality, and one finds many ideas which Brahms would never have thought of, nonetheless, Brahms' influence is often felt in Jenner's music.

The opening movement of the **Piano Quartet in f Major**, a massive Allegro, begins with a spacious, optimistic theme. A more deliberate march-like rhythm quickly follows and leads to a lyrical development. The gorgeous second theme is gentler and redolent of fin de siècle Viennese melody. The careful listener will realize that the dreamy, somewhat languid main theme to the second movement, Adagio, is a quote from Schubert's First Piano Trio. Here it is worth remembering Brahms' famous retort to a concertgoer who complained that he had stolen a theme from Mendelssohn: "Any fool can hear that, but look what I did with it!" Certainly, Jenner could have said the same of his ingenious treatment of this lovely melody. Next comes an energetic, muscu-

lar Scherzo. Its heavy accents in the base line of the piano and cello create an unusual effect. The soft and gentle trio strikes an altogether different note. The finale, *Vivace non troppo*, is brimming with ideas. It may well have been a tribute to Brahms. The opening theme is happy and buoyant, characterized by a tricky rhythm. A second subject strongly suggests Brahms' own First Piano Quartet. A third theme blends lovely Viennese melody, while yet another has a snappy dance-like quality. As one prominent critic wrote, "This is what Brahms would have written had he lived 10 years longer."



Joseph Jongen (1873-1953) was truly born to be a musician. On the strength of an amazing precocity for music, he was admitted to the Liège Conservatory (in Belgium) where he spent 16 years. It came as no surprise when he won the First Prize for Fugue in 1891, an honors diploma in piano the next year and another for organ in 1896. In 1897, he won the prestigious Grande Prix de Rome which allowed him to travel to Italy, Germany and France. Jongen began composing at the age of 13 and immediately exhibited extraordinary talent. By the time he published his Opus 1, he already had dozens of works to his credit.

Jongen's **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 23** dates from 1902. The work was premiered in Paris to great success and hailed as a masterpiece. It established his reputation as a composer of chamber music of the first rank. It shows the influence of Franck in that it is a cyclical work, but in all other respects, it is highly original. The vast opening movement, *Large-Animé*, begins with a lengthy introduction. Here the piano is made to sound like a harp as the strings very slowly build tension, increasing the tempo as they do so. This eventually leads to the presentation of the warm, Romantic main theme in the cello. The second movement, *Assez vite*, takes the form of a scherzo. It is a lively dance begun by the piano. In the trio section, the second theme from the first movement unexpectedly reappears. In the slow movement, *Pas trop lent*, the viola gives the lead into the main theme which is a transformation of the scherzo melody. Later, we hear the 2 themes of the first movement, but in varied form. When the main theme returns in the finale, *Assez animé*, Jongen demonstrates his mastery of technique by ingeniously altering it time and again, always maintaining our interest. This work certainly can be placed among the front rank of piano quartets.



Paul Juon (1872-1940) was the son of Swiss parents who emigrated to Moscow, where he was born. Educated at the Moscow German High School, he entered the Moscow Conservatory; there he studied violin with Jan Hřimalý and composition with Anton Arensky and Sergei Taneyev. After graduating, Juon went to Berlin for further composition instruction from Woldemar Bargiel.

In 1906, after holding various posts in Russia, Juon was invited by Joseph Joachim, head of the prestigious Berlin Hochschule für Musik, to become Professor of Composition, a post which he held until 1934, when he returned to Switzerland, where he lived for the rest of his life. Juon was widely regarded as a first-rate composer and his works were given frequent performance throughout Europe during his lifetime. Chamber music plays a large part of his output which numbers more than 100 works.

The **Rhapsody for Piano Quartet**, sometimes referred to as his **Piano Quartet No. 1, Op. 37**, dates from 1907-8, just after he had taken up his professorship in Berlin. Juon had recently read the popular novel *Gosta Berling's Saga* and was deeply impressed by it when he sat down to write the Rhapsody. Many commentators believe Juon attempted to express the feelings he had experienced in reading the novel. *Gosta Berling's Saga*, by

the Swedish Nobel Literature Prize winner Selma Lagerlöf, is about a fallen pastor who is forced out of his ministry and must make a new life for himself. Set in the Sweden of the 1830's, it is both highly romantic and mystical. The atmosphere is a cross between Henrik Ibsen and Jack London, combining the eccentric upper-class nobility of Sweden with magical snow scenes involving wolves. While the Rhapsody is not really programmatic music, it is at least worth knowing the source of the romantic outpouring which has made the Rhapsody one of Juon's most personal and emotional works. One thing the music is not, is Nordic-sounding. If anything, it is tinged with Slavic, and in particular Russian folk-dance melodies, no doubt the result of Juon's having lived the greater part of his life there. The opening *Moderato* begins with an emotionally charged and dramatic statement in the cello which the others soon take up. Surprisingly, as the piano enters with a jazz-like interlude, we hear what sounds like Gershwin (who was only 10 at the time!). The second theme is a kind of tense and nervous music of forward motion with a sense of impending disaster. Written on a large scale, this movement boldly travels across a huge emotional canvas, perhaps in this sense like a Norse saga. The main theme to the second movement, *Allegretto*, introduced by the piano, is clearly a Russian folk-dance melody. It sounds vaguely Hebraic. Yet when the strings enter, we briefly hear a traditional, even Schubertian, German Romanticism. The second theme is a very romantic song of love. Next comes a scherzo-like interlude which features a dance from the Caucasus. (Juon taught there in Baku for a year.) The huge finale, *Sostenuto-Allegretto*, as the movement marking suggests, alternates between slow and fast sections. The mood is constantly changing from the reflective *sostenuto* to a gay, almost carefree Viennese-sounding dance, then a more dramatic and serious element is welded onto the dance. This is a superb and powerful work—a must for concert and within the range of technically assured amateurs.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 50 dates from 1912. It was dedicated to Juon's first wife who had recently died and is clearly meant to be autobiographical. The opening movement, *Moderato*, is tender and dreamy, a statement of his initial infatuation. The second movement, *Scherzo*, bears the subtitle "Trembling Hearts" and expertly encapsulates that feeling which expectant lovers experience. The following *Adagio lamentoso* begins in a melancholy mood and slowly rises to the fever pitch of a lament. The riveting finale, *Allegro non troppo*, with its chromaticism recalls the mysticism of Juon's Russian homeland. A highly romantic dance of doom, dark and foreboding comes next. Then a second theme, more tender, but by no means happy, appears. It, in turn, is followed by an inexorable march of destiny and an incredible, hair-raising ride. A very fine work, not to be missed.



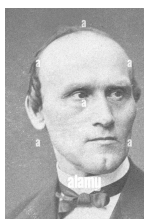
Robert Kahn (1865-1951) was born in Mannheim of a well-to-do banking family. He began his studies at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin. There, he became friends with Joseph Joachim who was the director. Through both Joachim and his own family Kahn got to know Brahms, who was so impressed with Kahn that he offered to give him composition lessons. However, Kahn was too overawed to accept. Nevertheless, Brahms did help Kahn informally, and while Kahn's work does, to some extent, show Brahms' influence, he is an eclectic and independent composer whose music has its own originality. After finishing his studies in Berlin, Kahn, at Brahms' suggestion, went to Munich to study with Joseph Rheinberger. When he completed his own studies, Kahn worked for a while as a freelance composer, then obtained a position at the Hochschule in Berlin, where he eventually became a professor of piano and composition.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in b minor, Op. 14 dates from 1891. The opening *Allegro ma non troppo* starts dramatically with a sense of urgency and much forward motion. The development is dark with a sense of striving and struggle. The lyrical and rather Romantic second theme provides superb contrast. The lovely string writing evokes a sense of longing for things past. A marvelous slow movement, *Andante*, begins with a sense of calm and peace. One hears faint echoes of Schubert. Gradually the tempo picks up and the mood changes, and we find that the music has turned into an *intermezzo*. The fiery finale, *Allegro molto*, wastes no time in grabbing the listener's attention with its frantic, restless, and highly rhythmic main theme. A second theme is softer but there is still an undercurrent of unrest.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in a minor, Op. 30 dates from 1899. The opening movement, *Allegro energico*, opens with a splendid first subject which makes an instant appeal, while the heroic second theme has a Brahmsian tinge. The second movement begins with a gorgeous *Larghetto* in which the principal melody is given at first by the strings alone. Kahn ingeniously intersperses a bright and lively scherzo which appears twice between the *Larghetto* sections. Next comes an *Allegretto grazioso* which for all intents and purposes is an *intermezzo*. However, the lighter second subject projects an energy lacking in the first. The finale, *Vivace ma non troppo*, instantly attracts attention by virtue of its bright and unusual rhythm. It is followed by a charming and mellower second theme.

Piano Quartet No. 3 in c minor, Op. 41 was completed in 1904. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, is powerful and dramatic. The main theme almost breaks the bounds of chamber music, while the second subject is calmer and more lyrical, providing a respite from the orchestral main section. Next comes a scherzo, *Vivace con brio*, with a bumptious hunting theme; the slower trio section has Hungarian colors. The finale, *Allegro molto*, is fleet and dance-like.

These works belong in the repertoire and need not fear being worsted by those of Brahms, since they are every bit as good. Not only are they within the range of amateurs, but they can also be put together more easily than the Brahms quartets.



Friedrich Kiel (1821-1885) was born in the Rhenish town of Puderbach. Kiel was taught the rudiments of music and received his first piano lessons from his father, but was in large part self-taught. Something of a prodigy, he played the piano almost without instruction at the age of 6, and by his 13th year he had composed a lot of music. Kiel eventually won a scholarship to study in Berlin with the renowned theorist and teacher Siegfried Dehn. By 1866, Kiel obtained a teaching position at the prestigious Stern Conservatory and was elevated to a professorship 3 years later. In 1870, he joined the faculty of the newly founded Hochschule für Musik which was shortly thereafter considered one of the finest music schools in Germany. Among his many students were Noskowski, Paderewski and Stanford. Kiel's exceptional works never received the recognition they deserved, largely because his modesty kept him from promoting them and because Joseph Joachim, director of the conservatory at which he taught, chose to promote the works of his friend Brahms and to ignore those of Kiel. But Kiel produced a number of chamber works which need fear comparison with those by any of his contemporaries.

Kiel's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in a minor, Op. 43**, along with his 2 others, is among the best and the most important works for this ensemble. It dates from 1867. The magnificent first movement, *Allegro moderato ma con spirito*, begins with a lengthy, diffident and leisurely introduction, which takes its time building tension and interest before the heroic main theme, sung high in the violin, appears. The other strings join in while the

piano plays a jaunty rhythmic accompaniment. An exotic development in the piano intervenes, but then quickly leads to the triumphal march-like second theme. The second movement, *Adagio con moto*, is in the form of a simple, somewhat religious, song and provides excellent contrast with the preceding *Allegro*. Though mostly quiet, it is not without drama. The Scherzo, *allegro con spirito*, which follows has a Beethovenian feel, especially its rhythm. The superb finale, *Vivace*, is brimming with appealing melodies and clever ideas. The rhythm of the main theme recalls the last movement of Mozart's K. 515 C Major viola quintet, but Kiel gives it a Hungarian treatment! Next comes a melody which is the half-sister to a theme from Schubert's D. 956 cello quintet, but after a few seconds, Kiel turns it inside out, twists it and sends it galloping off at breathless speed. The sure touch of a master composer is everywhere in evidence.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in E Major, Op. 44 was composed immediately after Kiel's first and also published in 1867. The big, spacious, *Allegro moderato ma con spirito* which begins the work starts quietly and in a calm fashion. It is only after much searching that we are presented with the heroic main theme. The lovely string writing recalls Schubert. The second movement, *Intermezzo, allegro*, is a very interesting kind of scherzo in which the tempo is hard to pin down, at times slow and almost lumbering, at others nimble. The trio section is a lovely waltz. The slow movement, *Largo ma non troppo*, begins with the piano alone, playing a very solemn theme. When the strings diffidently enter, we hear echoes of late Beethoven. In a way, this short, ominous movement is nothing but a long introduction to the finale, *Rondo, allegro grazioso*. The charming main theme has a fleet elegance. There is much excitement with lovely melodies throughout.

Unlike the other 2, **Piano Quartet No. 3 in G Major, Op. 50**, which dates from 1868, is in 3 and not 4 movements. It begins with a somewhat solemn *Adagio con espressione* introduction before the entrance of the more buoyant *Allegro*. The lovely middle movement, *Andante quasi allegretto*, has the quality of a lied or song. A faster trio section in the minor provides a fine contrast. An exciting finale, *Presto assai*, caps this superb work. In the best Schubertian tradition, it races along in 6/8 with barely a moment's rest until the appearance of the second theme.



Theodor Kirchner (1823-1903) was born in the town of Neukirchen near Chemnitz in the German province of Saxony. He showed a prodigious musical talent at an early age, however, his father was reluctant to let him study music. It was only after hearing both Schumann and Mendelssohn highly praise his son's talent that he permitted Theodor to attend the Leipzig Conservatory, where he studied with Mendelssohn, among others. It was upon Mendelssohn's recommendation that Kirchner in 1843 obtained his first position as organist of the main church in Winterthur in Switzerland. He was a friend of both Robert and Clara Schumann as well as Brahms. Kirchner's compositional talent was widely respected and held in the highest regard by Schumann, Brahms, Liszt, Wagner and many others. Kirchner found that he was especially good at writing miniatures. He would often write several at a time and then publish them together, each with a different mood and feel, and each perfect in its own way. Hence, he generally did not devote himself to writing longer works.

However, his **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op. 84** is one. Although it is a late work, from 1888 when Kirchner was 65, there is great vitality and freshness about it. The opening movement, *Maestoso, Allegro molto*, begins with a heavy fanfare-like introduction and then leads to the dramatic main section. The second movement, *Poco adagio* is a highly expressive song without words. This is followed by a highly rhythmic and accented Alle-

gro which serves as a scherzo. The lovely and lyrical trio section is entrusted to the strings over a flowing piano accompaniment. The finale, *Animato*, begins in a subdued fashion and has a mazurka-like quality, reminiscent of Chopin. But quickly things change as pounding scale passages create a sense of urgency. This is a decent work, not unpleasant to play or to hear, but by comparison to his miniatures and smaller works, it lacks inspiration and seems rather ordinary.



Uuno Klami (1900-1961), Virolahti) was a Finnish composer born in the Finnish town of Virolahti. He is widely recognized as one of the most significant Finnish composers to emerge from the generation that followed Sibelius. Many of his works are related to the epic poem *Kalevala* which tells the story of creation.. He was influenced by French and Spanish music, and especially by Maurice Ravel. He studied music in Helsinki with Erkki Melartin and later in Paris with Florent Schmitt and then in Vienna with Hans Gal.

His **Piano Quartet in D Major** dates from 1922. In three movements, the opening *Tempo giusto*, sound like it was written by a Frenchman. It is lively, at times turbulent but not much of Finnish influence here. The middle movement, *Molto andante* is calm and sad. The finale is a nervous *Prestissimo*, e *molto energico*. This is an interesting work but sounds rather derivative.



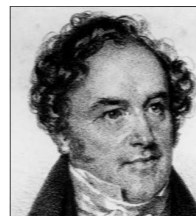
Iwan Knorr (1853-1916) was born in the village of Mewe near the town of Marienwerder in what was then West Prussia. His first lessons were on the piano from his mother. He attended the Leipzig Conservatory where he studied with Ignaz Moscheles, Carl Reinecke and Ernst Richter. After graduating, Knorr obtained a teaching position at the Russian Imperial Conservatory in Kharkiv, in what is now Ukraine. Brahms thought highly of Knorr's compositions and recommended him for a position at Frankfurt's prestigious Hoch Conservatory, then directed by Clara Schumann. Eventually, Knorr became its director. He was an important teacher; among his many students were Ernest Bloch, Hans Pfitzner, Ernst Toch, Hermann Zilcher, Walter Braunfels, Bernhard Sekles and Roger Quilter.

Knorr's **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 3**, in 4 movements, was published in 1887, but was composed a decade earlier. It shows the influence of Knorr's friend Brahms who is said to have performed it, as did Clara Schumann, with Joachim. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins in a leisurely fashion with a broad and stately theme. The tonalities are rich and full-blooded, and one can hear why Brahms was impressed. The second movement is a lively Scherzo. Its continuously accented third beat creates considerable interest, while the trills and springing intervals recall Brahms' horn trio. Next comes a calm and peaceful *Andante*, however, its middle section is quite passionate. The high-spirited, sparkling finale, *Allegro*, also brings Brahms at his best to mind. It races along to a satisfying conclusion.



Egon Kornauth (1891-1959) was born in Olmütz, Moravia. A cellist and pianist from his youth, he went in 1909 to Vienna, where he studied with Robert Fuchs, Guido Adler, Franz Schreker and Franz Schmidt. Kornauth briefly taught at Vienna University before embarked on an international career as pianist, accompanist and conductor that took him to Indonesia and South America, after which he taught in Vienna and Salzburg, serving as director of the Mozarteum. Kornauth composed extensively and won a number of prizes.

His **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op. 18** was completed in 1922. Though tonal, it is tonal in the way that Reger's music is tonal. It is not an easy work to play and probably beyond all but the most accomplished amateur players. This is especially true of the piano part. The opening movement, *Sehr energetisch*, is a powerful and stormy affair. A slow movement, *Ruhig und innig*, is quite romantic and atmospheric. The finale, *Im Marschzeitmass*, sports several first-rate and appealing themes. It is original and can be warmly recommended to professional ensembles seeking a post-Brahms tonal work.



Conradin Kreutzer (1780-1849) is another one of those men writing in the early Romantic period whose charming music has been neglected. He was born in the town of Messkirch in Baden. He moved to Vienna around 1800, where he completed his studies with Albrechtsberger and got to know both Haydn and Beethoven. Kreutzer's music shows a clear gift for melody, and his instrumental writing shows knowledge of the instruments. I would not call any of his works shoddy or second-rate. His style shows similarities to other better-known early Romantic composers such as Hummel, Weber and middle Schubert.

His **Piano Quartet in e minor** was published in Vienna in 1834 as *Grand Quatuor Concertante*, but scholars believe it was composed in 1817. As the title implies, the writing is concertante style with piano and the violin getting most, but by no means all the melodic episodes. The approach here is similar to that of Moscheles and perhaps to a lesser extent to that of Hummel. The opening *Allegro risoluto* is dramatic, full of energy and captivating melody. Though lengthy, it holds one's interest entirely. In the *Andante grazioso*, the strings take over as the piano weaves a beautiful filigree obbligato. This is a superb movement full of lovely writing for all! In the finale, also *Allegro Risoluto*, Kreutzer uses the instruments much as Schumann does, pitting the piano against the strings led by the violin. For its kind, it is quite appealing and would be successful in concert.



Franz Krommer (1759-1831) was one of the most successful composers in Vienna at the turn of the 18th century. His life spanned the Mannheim, Vienna Classical and early Romantic periods, and his music evolved over time. His reputation was attested to by the fact that his works were frequently republished throughout Germany, England, France, Italy, Scandinavia and the U.S. According to contemporaries, he was regarded along with Haydn as the leading composer of string quartets and as a serious rival of Beethoven. Krommer was a Czech violinist of considerable ability who came to Vienna around 1785. For the following 10 years he held appointments at various aristocratic courts in Hungary. He returned to Vienna in 1795, where he remained until his death, holding various positions including that of Court Composer (*Hofmusiker*) to the Emperor, Franz I. There are more than 300 published compositions, many of which are chamber music.

In his **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 95**, which dates from 1815, the piano is given so much of the thematic material that the work qualifies as a quatuor brillant. Of its kind, it's okay, however, the thematic material is only average. Krommer wrote a great deal of really fine works more deserving of revival than this one.

Arnold Krug (1849-1904) was born in Hamburg. He began his music studies with piano lessons from his father, who was a music teacher. Later, he was sent to the Leipzig Conservatory where



he studied with Carl Reinecke and then went on to Berlin, where continued with Friedrich Kiel and Eduard Franck. After completing his studies, he taught in Berlin before returning to Hamburg where he remained for the rest of his life.

His Piano Quartet in c minor, Op.16

dates from 1879. The big opening movement, Allegro moderato, begins with a piano introduction before the strings join. It might well be said that Brahms was the godfather of this movement. The same could be said for the other worldly Adagio which comes next. The third movement is a hard driving scherzo marked Nächtlicher Ritt (Night Ride) Allegro molto feroce e vivace and indeed there is a sense of urgency to the music which provides a musical picture of such a trip. The trio section, though contrasting is less arresting. The music of the finale, marked Carneval, Allegro carnevalesco e molto animato is in the major and aptly fits this description, jovial and upbeat and yet, so my mind, a let down from what has come before. One expects something more exciting rather than celebratory. As such, it seems out of place.



Friedrich Kuhlau (1786-1832), often called the “Beethoven of the Flute,” is well-known to flute players, if few others, for the many fine pieces that he composed for that instrument. Though it is generally assumed, by those who have heard of him, that he was a flute virtuoso, ironically, he never played the instrument. Born in the Saxon town of Luneberg, after being blinded in a freak street accident, he studied piano in Hamburg. In 1810, Kuhlau fled to Copenhagen to avoid conscription in the Napoleonic Army, which overwhelmed the many small principalities and duchies of northern Germany, and in 1813 he became a Danish citizen. Other than several lengthy trips which he took, he resided there until his death. During his lifetime, Kuhlau was known primarily as a concert pianist and composer of Danish opera, but was responsible for introducing many of Beethoven’s works, which he greatly admired, to Copenhagen audiences. His house burned down, destroying all of his unpublished manuscripts, but Kuhlau was a prolific composer, leaving more than 200 published works in most genres. Beethoven, whom Kuhlau knew personally, exerted the greatest influence upon his music. Few, if any, of Beethoven’s contemporaries showed greater understanding or ability to assimilate what the great man was doing than Kuhlau. Certainly with regard to form, Kuhlau was clearly able to make sense of and use what Beethoven was doing in something as advanced as his Middle Period. Thus, for those encountering Kuhlau’s chamber music for the first time, there is always surprise at how fine the music is structurally and also how well he handles the instruments. Beyond this, he definitely had, like Mozart, Schubert or Hummel, a gift for wonderful melodies which bubble forth from his music effortlessly.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in C Major, Op. 32 dates from 1820. The opening Allegro to this 3-movement work, is on a grand scale and is probably longer than the 2 movements which follow. The writing is certainly as advanced as Beethoven’s in *The Geistertrio*, Op. 70. As Spohr, in his music, was fond of chromatic runs, Kuhlau is said to have been partial to scale passages. Here they are prominently featured. The Adagio, whose first theme is a simple folk melody, is extraordinarily beautiful and full of lyricism. The concluding Allegro is a rondo which begins in c minor and is full of dramatic and rhythmic drive leading to a very original and bright finish. Though the piano is given some bravura passages and even a cadenza in the first movement, it must be emphasized that the writing for the strings is good and extremely effective for the whole ensemble.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in A Major, Op. 50 was complet-

ed in 1822, 2 years after the first and at the conclusion of 4 months’ study in Vienna. It seems that, both in form and style, this quartet shows the marked influence of the Vienna classics, especially Schubert. In 4 movements, it begins with an Allegro which showcases the piano rather more than the earlier work, although the writing is still quite good for the strings. The movement starts off sounding rather Classical, but quickly switches into a dramatic, Romantic idiom. The Adagio is strikingly beautiful, filled with Schubertian perfume. The rhythmically driving Scherzo, it must be said, anticipates what Schubert did in his piano trios. The short and contrasting trio section with its use of a Ländler also foreshadows what the Viennese master was later to do in his most mature works. The finale, Allegro di molto, flits along lightly at a very good clip; again scale passages are featured prominently. It is a strong, concise and effective last movement.

I am unfamiliar with his Piano Quartet No.3 in g minor, Op.108. Both Opp. 32 and 50 are first-rate works.



Josef Labor (1842-1924), who was born in the Bohemian town of Horowitz and blinded by smallpox at the age of 3, was sent to Vienna to study at the Institute for the Blind. His precocious musical talent resulted in his attending the Conservatory of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde. For several years he had a career as a concert pianist and then later studied organ, and today is mostly remembered for his compositions for that instrument. Labor knew and was on friendly terms with virtually every musician of importance in Vienna, as well as many others living elsewhere, including Brahms, Richard Strauss, Bruckner, Clara Schumann, Gustav Mahler and Bruno Walter.

Although his **Piano Quartet in C Major, Op. 6** dates from 1893, it harks back to the era of the Vienna Classics, but is written in the idiom of the late Romantic. It is a highly appealing work which can be warmly recommended not only for the concert hall but also to amateurs. The first movement, Allegro, is a shining example of Labor’s outstanding compositional ability and technique. It is full of lovely, flowing melodies. A warm-blooded Adagio ma non troppo serves as the second movement. A beautiful, sentimental intermezzo, Quasi allegretto, follows and has within it a scherzando section. The finale, Allegro, ma non troppo, begins with a strongly rhythmic march-like theme. It is full of power and forward motion.



Vinzenz Lachner (1811-1893) was born in the Bavarian town of Rain am Lech. He was the third of the famous Lachner brothers, Franz and Ignaz being older and better known. Unlike his two brothers, he was essentially self taught. He worked as the music director and conductor in Mannheim for most of his career although he traveled widely. He composed in most genres and was especially valued as an arranger of exceptional talent.

His **Piano Quartet in g minor, Op.10** dates from 1846. It opens with a lovely Schubertian Allegro non troppo. This is followed a lively Scherzo vivace. In third place is an stately and somewhat valedictory Adagio ma non troppo. The finale is an energetic Allegro. This is a solid work, not at all hard to play and can be warmly recommended to amateurs but I would not bring it into the concert hall.

Paul Lacombe (1837-1927) was born in the town of Carcassonne in the southern French province of Occitan. He began to study piano with his mother and then entered the local conservatory. Subsequently, Lacombe studied composition with Bizet for 2 years by means of correspondence. Through the efforts of Bizet



and Lalo, both of whom admired his music, his compositions were performed in Paris. Though Lacombe's music was much appreciated among fellow composers and musicians, it never gained a widespread popularity, since he was not willing to leave his hometown for Paris. He was a prolific composer with more than 150 works, including a fair amount of chamber

music, which was composed during 2 distinct periods. The first from the late 1860's into the mid-1870's reflects the influence of Mendelssohn and Schumann. The second period from the late 1890's through the first decade of the 20th century shows him to be au courant with the recent developments of the Impressionist movement. In 1887 he was awarded Prix Chartier for his chamber music by the Académie des Beaux-Arts, of which he subsequently became a member. He was made a Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur in 1902.

Lacombe's **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op. 101** is a work on cyclic lines, but free from any pedantic complexity. It gives an exact idea both of the creative power and of the strong, yet refined technique of the composer. It dates from 1904 and was dedicated to his friend Vincent d'Indy. The opening movement is an engaging Allegro, full of yearning and a sense of striving. It is written on a large scale. Next comes a reflective and somewhat introspective Lentement which is then followed by a charming Allegretto. The finale, Allegro decisio, has an upbeat, heroic quality to it and brings this very worthwhile piano quartet to a satisfying close.



Luise Adolpha Le Beau (1850-1927) was born in the German town of Rastatt. She began to study the piano with her father. Subsequently she studied composition with Johann Kalliwoda and piano with Clara Schumann after which she began a career as a piano soloist. She broke off her performing career to further her composition studies with Josef Rheinberger and Franz Lachner. She composed in most genres with chamber music playing an important part of her oeuvre. In addition to this piano trio, she has a piano quartet, a string quartet and string quintet as well as several instrumental sonatas to her credit. Her works won several prizes and were well regarded by such luminaries as Liszt, Berlioz, Bargiel, Joachim and several others.

Her fine **Piano Quartet in f minor, Op.28** was published in 1884 the year after she completed it and was dedicated to Franz Lachner with whom she had recently finished studying composition. The first movement opens with an emotional Adagio introduction with the strings alone. The main section, Allegro con fuoco, lives up to its name, full of fire and forward motion. In the Adagio which follows, the piano states the highly romantic main theme before the strings join in intensifying the music's beauty. The third movement, Tempo de Mazurka is a playful romp, perhaps more an intermezzo than a mazurka. The finale, Allegro, is a dance-like rondo. This is a first rate work from start to finish which is certain to be hit in the concert hall and which can be warmly recommended to amateur players..



There are not very many composers who would be remembered had they lived but 24 years. This is almost certainly the main reason why the Belgian composer **Guillaume Lekeu (1870-94)** is so little known. But not so in his own time. Debussy remarked that Lekeu was, at the very least, as gifted as his teacher César Franck, who himself recognized Lekeu's extraordinary gifts. Lekeu's formal musical education did not begin until he was 18, when he began to study with Franck. When Franck died 18 months later, D'Indy,

who regarded Lekeu as a genius, took it upon himself to further the boy's musical education. In the 7 years between 1887 and his death, Lekeu composed over 50 works in virtually every genre; unfortunately, many of these have been lost. Beethoven was Lekeu's god, and the great man's music had the strongest influence upon him. But the music of Franck as well as Wagner also influenced his ideas.

Lekeu began his **Piano Quartet** at the behest of Eugene Ysaÿe, who was one of the composer's strongest admirers. He completed the first and most of the second movement. Already it was nearly 30 minutes in length. D'Indy completed the second movement only to the extent that it could be performed in concert. One immediately understands the scale upon which Lekeu was planning this work by the length of the opening movement, Très animé, d. Dans un emportement douloureux, which takes more than 16 minutes to play. The highly dramatic opening calls up the image of a ship in the midst of a terrible storm. One imagines movie music, but Gallic movie music. A fair amount of unisono writing and several other very fine effects give the music a more quality. One hears a clear relationship to the work of the French Impressionists and to some of Ysaÿe's work. The second movement, Lent et passionné, begins with a subdued and darkish theme sung in part by the viola. Again, the music has an affinity with the perfumed air of the French Impressionists. Even in its 2-movement form, it is a work of genius and makes a very deep impression.



"If he is not a composer of the Romantic era, then he must be considered the most Romantic of the Classical." So wrote Robert Schumann of **Louis Ferdinand Hohenzollern (1772-1806)**, a nephew of Frederick the Great and a Prince of Prussia. He is generally listed in encyclopedias by his first 2 names rather than by his family name, hence he appears here rather

than under "H." A professional soldier, who died during a battle fighting Napoleon's invading army, Louis Ferdinand was also trained as a musician, studying piano and composition with several different teachers. He was a gifted pianist, reckoned a virtuoso with few peers by those who heard him, and his compositions have always been regarded as the work of a professional composer. Musicologists generally consider him an early Romantic whose music anticipated Schubert and Schumann, but one can also hear the influence of Mozart as well as early Beethoven. Military and court life left him little time to compose, and he has but a few works to his credit, mostly chamber music. These include 3 piano trios, 2 piano quartets and a piano quintet. All 3 of his works for piano quartet were completed during Prussia's wars against Napoleon, during which he was killed.

The first was his **Andante and Variations, Op. 4**. It appears to have been a warm-up for his 2 full piano quartets. The piano part is quite brilliant, although the strings are given their innings. The variations are surprisingly effective and show the Prince to be a competent composer.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in E flat Major, Op. 5, published during the prince's lifetime, was completed around 1804. The piano, as one might expect from a virtuoso pianist, has a brilliant part, much the sort that Mendelssohn wrote for himself in his piano quartets. The opening movement, Allegro espressivo, is Classical in structure: 2 themes are presented and the development of each is given extensive treatment. The highly Romantic Adagio which follows begins mildly, but becomes tinged with gloom as the movement progresses. The main theme of the Tempo di menuetto, which serves as the third movement, has echoes of Beethoven's Eroica Symphony, while the mood anticipates that of a Schubert scherzo. The finale is a large-scale Rondo, moderato. Despite the brilliance of the piano part, the strings are shown

to good advantage, both alone and as an ensemble and treated as equal partners, and it is this treatment which lifts this work into the first rank of such works from this period.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in f minor, Op. 6 was composed immediately after his first. It is dedicated to the French violin virtuoso Pierre Rode. Since the dedicatee was a string player, the writing for strings is better and that of the piano, while still brilliant, less pronounced. Particularly impressive is the main theme of the opening movement, *Allegro moderato*. It is elegiac and dark. One wonders if Louis Ferdinand knew that he was soon to die on the battlefield. The second movement is a Beethovenian minuet, *Agitato*. It is highly doubtful that the Prince was familiar with Beethoven's early work, which makes this all the more impressive. Since he was an almost exact contemporary of Beethoven, one wonders if he too was moving, independently, in the same direction as the great Ludwig. In the contrasting trio section, there is a lovely *Ländler*. The third movement, *Adagio lento e amoroso*, shows a great depth of feeling, unusual in the normally sunny composer. The oppressively painful mood of the first movement reappears in the finale, *Allegro ma moderato espressivo*, and although the music lurches into the more upbeat major, it lapses back into the minor at its end. From this period, there is little that is better for piano quartet.



Herman Severin Løvenskiold (1815--1870) was born in the Norwegian town of Holden. With his family he moved to Copenhagen, where he is thought to have studied with Christoph Weyse and Friedrich Kuhlau, among others. Of independent means, he was able to travel and visited Vienna, Leipzig and St. Petersburg, taking composition lessons privately from various famous composers, including Mendelssohn. Most of Løvenskiold's music was for the theater, but he composed a piano trio as well as this piano quartet. His music shows the influence of Schumann and to some extent Mendelssohn, but is in many respects quite original sounding. Løvenskiold's **Piano Quartet in f minor, Op. 26** dates from 1862 and is in 3 movements. The tuneful opening sounds effortless, full of lovely melodies and fine part-writing. A lyrical and romantic middle movement follows. The exciting finale, *molto vivace*, is hard-driving and full of forward energy. Each instrument is nicely treated and, while the piano is given a lot of notes, it never dominates, but remains an equal part of the ensemble.



Alexander MacKenzie (1847-1935), along with Charles Villiers Stanford and Hubert Parry, was responsible for restoring the reputation of British music in the 19th century and is one of the most important figures from this period. Born in Edinburgh, MacKenzie first studied the violin with his father, who was a professional violinist. MacKenzie then went to Germany, where he spent 5 years continuing his studies. He got to know Liszt with whom he remained close until the latter's death. Upon his return to Britain, MacKenzie enjoyed a long career not only as a teacher but also as director of the Royal Academy of Music. In addition to these responsibilities, he also served as the conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra for several years. His **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 11** was finished in 1872 and published the following year. The amiable first movement, *Allegro moderato e tranquillo*, opens with the piano stating the theme and the strings joining in one by one. The music becomes more energetic as the entire ensemble finally plays together. In the rustic *Scherzo* which follows one feels the influence of Schumann. The third movement, *Canzonetta and Variations*, uses a folk tune for its theme. The rhythmic variety of the variations is striking and well

done. The finale, *Allegro molto e con brio*, has 2 subjects: the first is bright and lively, while the second is dreamy with an improvisational aura. The development is ingenious and an exciting coda caps off this first-rate work.



Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) is, of course, famous as a symphonist, conductor and important musical personality of the late-19th and early-20th century. What is little known, however, is that Mahler wrote chamber music when he was young. While at the Vienna Conservatory, as a student of Robert Fuchs, he twice won prizes for movements for piano quintet. Unfortunately for posterity, Mahler destroyed these works along with others he had written. The only piece of chamber music of his which is known to have survived is a movement from a **Piano Quartet in a minor**, composed while he was at the Conservatory in 1876. It shows the influence of Schubert and to a lesser degree Brahms, without actually sounding a great deal like either. It is an interesting and important work because it is virtually the only example of Mahler's early writing which provides us with a view of his early compositional technique, which, as one can hear, was quite developed at this early date. It remained unpublished until the late 1970's.



Otto Malling (1848-1915) was born in Copenhagen and studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Music with Niels Gade and Johan (J. P. E.) Hartmann. He worked as a teacher and composer, and eventually became a professor and then director at the Royal Danish Academy. Among his many students was the composer Knudåge Riisager. Most of Malling's compositions were for voice and or organ—he also served as chief organist of the Copenhagen Cathedral for many years. However, he also composed orchestral and instrumental music, including a piano trio, piano quartet, piano quintet and a string octet.

His **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op. 80** dates from 1904. Squarely in the German Romantic tradition, to a certain extent, it shows the influence of Friedrich Kiel. Malling had a gift for melody and this work is full of appealing tunes in all 4 of the movements, the opening *Allegro*, the *Scherzo allegro* and contrasting trio which follow, a particularly fine *Andante* and a exciting finale, *Allegro con fuoco*, full of forward motion. This quartet can be recommended for concert performance and should not be missed by amateurs, since it is a work which presents no technical hurdles and allows experienced groups to sound like pros.

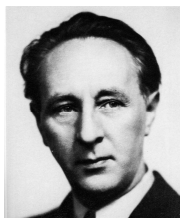


Today, **Heinrich Marschner (1795-1861)**, rival of Weber and friend of Beethoven and Mendelssohn, is remembered mainly for his many Romantic operas. He was widely regarded as one of the most important composers in Europe from about 1830 until the end of the 19th century and is still generally acknowledged as the leading composer of German opera between Weber's death and Wagner. Though he considered himself primarily a composer of opera, he did write 7 piano trios and 2 piano quartets. The piano trios did not escape the notice of Schumann who praised them lavishly and for good reason. Marschner did not just toss off these works as an afterthought, but clearly devoted considerable time and effort writing them. It seems he had somewhat more trouble when it came to piano quartets.

Marschner's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in B flat Major, Op. 36** was completed in 1826. Here, the piano plays a rather bigger role than one might expect, sort of a throwback to the time of Mozart. Better use could be made of the strings, which are often

asked to play the same line in octaves. A Largo introduction, which builds suspense, leads to the main section, Allegro. The charming second movement, Andante con espressione, has a striking pizzicato accompaniment section for the strings. An entertaining Scherzo, allegro ma non troppo with contrasting trio follows. In the finale, we find the piano given so prominent a part, at times Marschner almost dispenses with the strings, a la Weber. This is not a candidate for the concert hall, but amateurs with a good pianist may still enjoy it.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 158 was completed nearly 30 years later in 1853. The work begins with a Mendelssohnian Allegro risoluto. The lyrical second subject is particularly appealing. A deeply felt, but perhaps somewhat cloying Andante follows. But the Scherzo, allegro molto, with a contrasting, lyrical trio is superbly done. In the finale, while the thematic material is fetching, once again we find a very demanding piano part which overshadows the material given to the strings.



Bohuslav Martinů (1891-1959) was born in the town of Polička in the Austrian kingdom of Bohemia. In 1906, he entered the Prague Conservatory to study violin, but was soon sent down for lack of attention and effort. He continued his studies on his own and subsequently became a violinist in the Czech Philharmonic. In 1923, Martinů left Czechoslovakia for Paris, and deliberately withdrew from the Romantic style in which he had been trained. In the 1930's he experimented with expressionism and, like Stravinsky and Milhaud, also added jazz idioms to his music. Considered by many to be a neo-Classicist, he nonetheless continued to use Czech folk melodies throughout his life. In 1941, he left Paris for New York to avoid the invading Germans. Although he enjoyed success in America, he missed the European outlook on life. Unable to return to Czechoslovakia, which was at that time Communist, Martinů lived in Switzerland until his death.

His **Piano Quartet** was composed in 1942, the result of an invitation by the League of American Composers. The opening Poco adagio begins with a spiky rhythm, and the whole melody might be something out of one of Astor Piazzola's nuevo tangos. It is nervous, full of forward motion, and makes superb use of chromaticism in riveting long runs in each of the parts. The middle movement, Adagio, has for its main theme a bitter and reflective melody. The second theme is more lyrical, in which the cello leads the other strings. The silence of the piano, after having been in the forefront of things in the first movement, heightens the contrast. It does not enter until mid-movement. In the finale, Allegretto poco moderato, the piano introduces the cheerful and mostly affirmative main theme. Its development does have some hectic and rather frantic moments, but it all ends joyfully. A very fine work, recommended for concert performance and within the range of good amateur players.



Joseph Marx (1882-1964) was born in Austrian provincial capital of Graz. He studied violin, cello and piano at Buwa's Music School of Graz and then attended Graz University, where he took degrees in philosophy and art history, all the while composing music. Marx was largely self-taught as a composer. Most of his compositions at this time were art songs, or lieder, and gained him a wide audience, so much so, that he was hailed the successor to Schubert, and Hugo Wolf as a song composer. On the strength of these works, he obtained the position of professor of theory at the Vienna Music Academy (Hochschule für Musik) and later served as its rector. He also was an adviser to the Turkish government

for laying the foundations of a conservatory in Ankara. Marx's music drew from many sources. He could be called a late Romantic Impressionist. Although one can hear certain affinities with the music of Debussy, Scriabin, Delius, Ravel, Respighi, Jongen, Richard Strauss, Reger, Korngold, Brahms, Mahler and Bruckner, Marx's sound is nonetheless his own. In 1911, at the age of 29, just about the time he finished writing most of his lieder, Marx composed 3 substantial works for piano quartet: **Rhapsodie, Scherzo and Ballade**. Although one might conclude from the titles that these works would be on a modest scale, this is not the case. They are full blown and equal in length to any so-called standard 3- or 4-movement work. Some critics have called the Rhapsodie and Scherzo symphonic works pared down to the size of a piano quartet.

The largest of these works is the **Rhapsodie in A Major** which draws together 4 inextricably bonded movements to create a magnificent edifice that flows organically from one movement to the next. There are seemingly never-ending lyrical episodes that constantly strain at the boundaries of chamber music and threaten to become symphonic.

The **Scherzo in d minor** is also written on a large scale, comparable in length and breadth to a symphonic scherzo by Bruckner or Mahler, and in many ways related to those. Almost from the opening measures, the music strains at the boundaries of chamber music and sports a very symphonic quality. This a highly original and imaginative work with powerful contrasts and moving dramatic episodes.

While the Rhapsodie and Scherzo approach the symphonic, the **Ballade in a minor** is more intimate and does not push at the limits of chamber music. The main theme is derived from Marx's studies of Bachian counterpoint, but the thematic material shows all of the longing of post-Romantic tonalities.

All 3 piano quartets are magnificent works of the first order. The Rhapsodie can serve as a full-length program work, while the Scherzo and Ballade can appear where shorter works are needed. These are really works for professionals and perhaps amateurs of the very highest accomplishments.



Emilie Mayer (1812-1883) was born in the German town of Friedland. Although she received piano and organ lessons as a child, she did not pursue a musical career as her widowed father needed her to help keep house for him. It was only upon his death at the age of 28 that she pursued formal studies moving to the city of Stettin (since 1945 Szczecin in Poland) where she took composition lessons from Carl Loewe, the City Music Director. Loewe considered her extraordinarily talented and as a result she worked extremely hard, dedicating herself to composition. On Loewe's recommendation she went to Berlin where she studied with Adolph Marx, then a leading teacher in theory and composition and a family friend of the Mendelssohns. It is through him that he introduced her to them and their circle of musical friends. She was a fairly prolific composer, especially in view of the fact that she started to compose rather late. Among her many works number eight symphonies, six piano trios, two piano quartets, seven string quartets, two string quintets, seven violin sonatas, and twelve cello sonatas. She composed at least two piano quartets.

Piano Quartet No.1 in G Major was composed some time in the early 1850s. It opens with a quite imposing Adagio introduction in the minor key, before breaking into the major for the light and cheerful Allegro. The second subject is like a hymn. The second movement an Adagio begins in Beethovenian fashion but with the appearance of a more turbulent section full of tremolos and arpeggios, this is dispelled. Her frequent unexpected modulations and shifts from major to minor recalls Schubert.

Next comes a demonic Scherzo which is made even more exciting by an accelerando just before the end. The closing Allegro is full of writing at the start before more lyrical, song-like themes are introduced. This is a good work.

Piano Quartet No.2 in E flat Major was composed a couple of years after her first. The introduction to the Allegro con moto is rather ordinary. This is a big movement, perhaps overly long for the material presented. A turbulent Scherzo comes second and is dominated by its rhythm rather than any melody. However, the trio section provides a nice contrast. A deeply felt Un poco Adagio serves as the slow movement. The finale, Allegro is full of forward drive and excitement. Also a good work but not, in my opinion as strong as No.1



Joseph Mayseder (1789-1863) was born in Vienna. He began to study the violin at an early age and was quickly recognized as a child prodigy and was therefore turned over to the most famous violinists and teachers then in Vienna, Paul and Anton Wranitzky and Ignaz Schuppanzigh. He also studied composition with Emanuel Aloys Förster. At the age of 21, he was appointed concertmaster of the Vienna Court Opera and subsequently was appointed soloist of the K. und K. (Royal and Imperial) orchestra, which he later conducted. He was not only considered one of the finest violin soloists of his day, but also chaired Vienna's leading string quartet. In addition to this, he was a respected composer, mainly of chamber music, whose works achieved great popularity not only in his lifetime but right up until the First World War. He was a sought after teacher and the famous soloist Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst numbered among his students. While he never wrote a work entitled Piano Quartet, he did write several works for a piano quartet.

Variations Concertantes In D Major for Piano Quartet, Op.57 was completed in 1840 and published in 1842. It was dedicated to Franz von Heintl an Imperial Financial Official in whose home Mayseder often played chamber music. It is of a genre which was quite popular throughout most of the 19th century and while not intended to be of a serious nature, is nonetheless important historically as it gives an accurate picture of what audiences of the day demanded and enjoyed. As the subtitle, Variations Concertantes, suggests, it is a theme and set of six variations designed to showcase the instrumental abilities of the individual players. A short Allegro vivace introduction opens the work. The first variation is given over to the cello who is taken to its very highest register. The following variations given each instrument a chance while the sixth is a virtuosic tour d'force which leads to the dramatic finale.

Mayseder's **Souvenir á Baden in E Major, Op.63** dates from 1849 and as such is one of his later works. It is of a genre which was quite popular throughout most of the 19th century and while not intended to be of a serious nature, is nonetheless important historically as it gives an accurate picture of what audiences of the day demanded and enjoyed. As the subtitle, Variations Concertantes, suggests, it is a theme and set of six variations designed to showcase the instrumental abilities of the individual players. The introduction consists of a violin cadenza after which the piano introduces the theme after which each variation is introduced. The reference to Baden is most likely to a suburb of Vienna, to which the Viennese frequently made day trips for pleasure, rather than to the German town of that name.

Unfortunately, when it comes to hearing piano quartets in concert or on the radio, one is likely to hear only those of 4 composers: Mozart, Schumann, Mendelssohn and Brahms. There is no question that these are among the very best works for this ensemble. There are many other works which are their equal, but which do

not get a hearing because their authors are no longer famous. As it not the purpose of this guide to discuss or make the reader aware of famous works, they will not be treated except to note they exist. Much has been written about them, and I can only say that if the readers are unaware of these works, they can find out all they need to know in the many books and articles which have been written about them. **Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)** wrote 3 piano quartets which are not heard as often as those of Schumann and Brahms. They are entertaining and full of fine melodies, but the division of material between the piano and strings could often be better and, needless to say, the piano part often approaches the virtuosic.



Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805-1847) was Felix's older sister, the family's first-born child. She enjoyed the same musical education and upbringing as her brother, studying with such teachers as Ignaz Moscheles. Like Felix, Fanny showed prodigious musical ability as a child, both as a pianist and as a composer. However, the prevailing attitudes of the time toward women limited her opportunities. Her father warned her that while Felix could become a professional musician if he chose, she could not do so herself. Except for Felix, her entire family opposed her dreams of a career as a concert pianist or even as a composer. Ironically, Felix, and many others, considered her an even better pianist than he. In 1829, after a courtship of several years, Fanny married the painter Wilhelm Hensel who, unlike her parents, encouraged her to compose. A few of her songs and small piano pieces began to receive public performances. Some believe that she composed as many as 450 works.

Her **Piano Quartet in A flat Major** is an early work, composed in 1822. It remained in manuscript form at the Prussian State Library in Berlin until the end of the 20th century, hence few, if any, knew of it. It opens with a buoyant, lively Allegro. The piano part clearly shows that it was intended for a virtuoso pianist, which from all accounts the 16-year-old Fanny was. It is pleasant and sounds much like Carl Maria von Weber. The middle movement begins in dainty fashion, but suddenly the piano loses several stormy outbursts which could only be handled by a professional concert pianist and which are totally unsuited to chamber music. It might as well be a concerto. Again, in the charming finale, the strings are kept in the background and the whole thing resembles a piano concerto with small orchestral accompaniment. This work is, in my opinion, only of historical interest in that it shows what Fanny was doing at this time. It is not up to the standard of her trio written in 1846, the year before she died.

Wolfgang Mozart (1756-91) wrote 2 piano quartets which are often heard in concert. He has been called the creator of the piano quartet, but there are, in fact, several earlier examples. Suffice it to say that everything that can or needs to be said has been and can be found elsewhere.



Eduard Nápravník (1839-1916) was born in Bohemian town of Beisch (now Býšť), in what was then the Habsburg Empire. He learned to play the organ at his local church and entered the Prague Organ School after which he obtained an appointment to serve as conductor of the famous private orchestra of Prince Yusupov in St. Petersburg. Thereafter Nápravník served as conductor of the Mariinsky Theater and later several Imperial Theaters. He became an influential figure in Russian musical life and was even mentioned in Dostoyevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov* as a

famous conductor. He premiered several of Tchaikovsky's works and assisted the composer in tightening up certain scores. He wrote in most genres but today is remembered for his most successful opera, *Dubrovsky*. He did not neglect chamber music, writing 3 string quartets, a string quintet, a piano quartet and several instrumental works.

Nápravník's 1883 **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op. 42** consists of 4 big movements of true musical spirit, the outer movements being somewhat orchestral in style, in which the composer sometimes groups the strings together against the piano playing unisono. The powerful main theme of the first movement, *Allegro con spirito*, is quite Russian. The second subject is more lyrical—Nápravník knows how to cleverly build up to a transition. The *Scherzo presto*, which comes next, features an unusual rhythm which gives the music piquancy, while the trio section has a very Russian flavor, created in part by the use of repetitive passages. The very fine third movement, *Molto moderato quasi Marcia funebre*, brings an original-sounding funeral march, both themes making a strong impression. The quartet concludes with an *Allegro risoluto* characterized by bright Russian dance rhythms. This work can be warmly recommended to experienced players who will always get considerable pleasure from playing it.



Ludvig Norman (1831-1885) was born in Stockholm. He studied at the Leipzig Conservatory shortly after it was founded by Mendelssohn. His composition teachers were Julius Rietz and Moritz Hauptmann, his piano professor was Ignaz Moscheles. A prolific composer, he also enjoyed a career as a pianist, conductor and teacher. Among his many pupils was the prominent composer Elfrida André. Norman composed in a wide variety of genres, and chamber music was an important part of his oeuvre, among which there are two piano trios, a piano quartet, a piano sextet, five string quartets, a string quintet, a string sextet and a string octet

Norman's *Piano Quartet in e minor, Op.10* was completed in 1857 and published in 1862. It is dedicated to his friend and mentor the Swedish composer Adolf Lindblad. It is in three movements and begins with a spacious and dramatic *Allegro ma non troppo*. The second movement, *Andantino con moto*, which begins somewhat slowly eventually picks up speed and is a kind of intermezzo. The finale is actually two movements in one. It begins with a somber *Andante sostenuto*, too long to be an introduction, its ominous mood builds tension which then leads to the powerful main section, *Allegro molto e con fuoco*. This fine work deserves concert performance and can also be recommended to amateur players.



Zygmunt Noskowski (1846-1909) was born in Warsaw and studied violin and composition at the Warsaw Conservatory. A scholarship enabled him to travel to Berlin where he studied with Friedrich Kiel, one of Europe's leading teachers of composition, from 1864 to 1867. After holding several positions abroad, Noskowski returned to Warsaw in 1880. There, he worked not only as a composer, but also became a prominent conductor and a journalist, and served as the head of the Warsaw Music Society, 1880-1902. He taught virtually all of the important Polish composers of the next generation and today is regarded as the first Polish symphonic composer. Noskowski's ***Piano Quartet in d minor, Op. 8*** dates from 1879 and clearly shows that he had assimilated all of the recent developments in central European music. It was clearly written during the Romantic period by a central European composer, but the piano quartet owes nothing, by way of influence, to

any of the major composers, such as Brahms or Liszt, who were then dominating the scene. It has a special freshness, despite the familiar tonal territory it covers. The opening *Allegro con brio* begins with a powerful, full-blooded theme that conveys a mood of struggle. The second movement, *Molto andante cantabile*, has for its main theme an extraordinarily beautiful song-like melody. The very striking third movement, *Moderato assai energico*, begins with a straightforward, thrusting main theme which then gives way to a sparkling and quicker middle section of great originality and freshness. The finale, *Adagio quasi recitativo-Allegro*, as the movement's marking indicates, begins with a lengthy, dramatic and moody recitative played by the violin and piano. But the main part of the movement, *Allegro*, features a joyous and rambunctious first subject followed by a lyrical and yearning second subject. This work is of the first rank and unquestionably belongs in the concert-hall repertoire and yet, it is in no way beyond the ability of competent amateurs whom we feel will derive immense enjoyment from it.



It seemed unlikely that **Vitezslav Novák (1870-1949)** would become a musician having begun by hating music because he was brutally forced to study the violin and the piano as a young child. But a fascination for composition, which he discovered in his teens, led to his decision to enter the Prague Conservatory, where he studied with Dvorák, among others. Dvorák's use of Czech folk melody in his music to foster the nationalist cause at a time when the Czech and Slovak peoples were seeking statehood from Austria encouraged the young composer to follow this path. After graduating from the Conservatory in 1896, Novák traveled to eastern Moravia and Slovakia where the local folk melodies he found served as a source of inspiration for him. He was to become a leading proponent of the Czech nationalism in music in the generation after Dvorák and Smetana.

Novák's ***Piano Quartet in c minor, Op. 7*** originally dates from 1894. However, although it won a state prize with a stipendium upon its premiere, Novák was dissatisfied with it and reworked it extensively, only finishing his revisions in 1899. In fact, only the middle movement remains from the original work. The opening *Andante* has a very melancholy quality to it. The first theme stated by the piano recalls the mediaeval plainsong, "Dies irae." The second theme, first heard in the cello, is gentler. The rest of the movement involves a struggle between the 2 themes with their different moods. The second movement, *Scherzino, allegretto comodo*, is the only part of the original quartet that survives. Charming, bright and cheerful, it removes the aura of gloom from the preceding movement. The finale, *Allegro*, is a rondo. After a very short high-spirited introduction, reference is made to the solemn opening theme of the first movement and signals a dramatic competition between dark drama and stirring affirmation. This is an important work, sitting as it does, on the edge of modernism, but still rooted in Romanticism. An obvious candidate concert hall, it presents no unusual difficulties for amateurs, who will enjoy it.



Max d'Ollone (1875-1959) was born in the French town of Besançon and studied composition at the Paris Conservatory with Jules Massenet, winning the prestigious *Prix d'Rome*. He then pursued a career as a composer, conductor and teacher and eventually served as a professor at the Paris Conservatory. Most of his works are for the stage although he did not entirely ignore chamber music, composing this piano trio, a string quartet and some instrumental works

His ***Piano Quartet in e minor*** was composed in 1949,

however, it sounds rather like it was composed in 1910. It is totally tonal, however, perhaps in an attempt to sound more modern, the thematic material is very difficult to absorb, and with the exception of the last movement, the rest of the work gives the impression of a composer who really had nothing much to say. The opening movement, *Appassionato e largemente*, is mostly turbulent with some lyrical interludes. The thematic material wanders quite a lot and is not that easy to follow. The *Andante* which comes next is a kind of impressionist funeral music. This is followed by a nervous *Scherzo*, unpleasant and annoying. The finale, *Allegro*, opens in promising fashion with a lyrical theme which can actually be followed. A second more upbeat subject comes next. This is the most attractive movement of the work. If the others were more like it, I could recommend it. However, I do not think it will hold an audience's interest.



Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918)

was born in Bournemouth, England. He received some lessons on the piano as a youth, but did not formally study music. He was educated at Eton and Oxford, and though he showed an extraordinary aptitude for music, he took a degree in law and modern history, since his father wanted him to have a career in commerce. From 1870 to

1877 Parry worked in the insurance industry, but at the same time studied with William Sterndale Bennett, and later with the pianist Edward Dannreuther, when Brahms proved to be unavailable. After leaving the insurance industry, Parry became a full-time musician and during the last decades of the 19th century was widely regarded as one of England's finest composers. In the 1890's he became director of the Royal College of Music and was appointed Professor of Music at Oxford. Among his many students were Gustav Holst, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Frank Bridge and John Ireland.

Parry, in his fine **Piano Quartet in a minor** of 1879, anticipated the cyclical use of thematic material for which César Franck was later given credit. Parry's piano quartet must be considered one of the best and most important written by a 19th-century English composer. And it certainly would have received more attention outside of Britain had Parry been German rather than English. The opening movement, *Lento ma non troppo-Allegro molto*, begins with an imposing, slow introduction which hints that this is to be a work of epic proportions. And, indeed, it is. The main theme has a decisive march rhythm which quickly leads to a dramatic climax. The development is handled with a real sense of exuberance. Comes called the *Presto* which follows one of the most original scherzos written since the time of Beethoven. The following *Andante* showcases Parry's instinctive gift for melody, which he is able to develop in a leisurely manner until he is ready to meticulously create an impassioned climax. The finale, *Allegro*, begins with a theme full of élan, while the secondary subject, first heard in the strings, has a choral quality sometimes used by Wagner. It is here, that we find references to all of the preceding themes in a manner which superbly sums up the entire work. This first-class work is a real candidate for the concert hall, though amateurs will certainly enjoy it as well.



Dora Pejačević (1885-1923)—until recently spelled Pejacsevich—was born in Budapest, the daughter of an important Croatian aristocrat. Her mother had been a pianist. She studied piano and violin locally before attending various conservatories. At the Munich Conservatory, she studied composition with Walter Courvoisier and violin with Henri Petri, although it has been said that she was mostly self-taught. Today, Pejačević is considered one Croatia's most important 20th-century

composers, and many of her works enjoyed considerable success during her lifetime and were performed throughout Germany, Austria, Hungary and the rest of the Habsburg Empire.

The **Piano Quartet in d minor, Op. 25** was completed in 1908. Though she was only 23, the quartet is clearly the work of a mature composer. It is primarily written in the late Romantic style, but there are a few adventurous tonal episodes. The quartet begins with a very appealing *Allegro*, at times quite chromatic. It is followed by a lyrical *Adagio*, the main theme to which, though simple, is quite warm and winning. The third movement is marked *Menuetto, allegretto*, and is an interesting blend of the Romantic and Classic, a cross between a Romantic intermezzo and a playful modern, updated minuet. The finale, *Rondo*, is a spirited, carefree dance with highly effective use of *pizzicato*. This is a rather good late Romantic work which is certain to be a success in the concert hall, but can also be recommended to amateurs.

Richard von Perger (1854-1911) was born in the Austrian city of Graz. He studied composition in Vienna with several teachers, including Brahms, whose influence can often be felt in his music. Perger's career was divided between composing, conducting and teaching. He served as director of the Rotterdam Conservatory and later the Vienna Conservatory as well as the Wiener Singverein (Vienna Choral Society) and the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde. He wrote in most genres and his chamber music, in particular, was held in high regard.



Perger's **Piano Quartet in A Major, Op. 14** was composed in 1883. The work has more than a few tinges of Schumann and Brahms, while in no way sounding imitative. The work begins with a pregnant and atmospheric *Andante sostenuto* introduction which leads to the main section, *Poco con moto*. Perger re-uses the introduction to great effect as the coda. A *Scherzo, Vivace non troppo*, with a clever original rhythm follows. The lovely trio section provides excellent contrast. A highly Romantic and superb *Largo* is deeply felt and full of attractive melodic writing. An energetic, march-like *Allegro moderato* concludes what is a noteworthy and excellent written work. Like Brahms' works, it does not automatically play itself, but requires a bit of ensemble work to bring it off; however, it is not to be missed.

Ebenezer Prout (1839-1909) was born in the English town of Oundle. He studied piano under Charles Salaman, but was otherwise self-taught. He attended the University of London, intended for a career as a scholar, but chose to follow one in music through his love of it. Prout worked as an organist, music critic and composer, and eventually became a Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London and elsewhere. Several of his works on music theory became classics and were translated into many languages. Among Prout's many students were Eugen d'Albert and Edward German. After his death, Prout was criticized for lack of originality, because his works showed the heavy influence of Mendelssohn, Schumann and several other mid-19th century German composers. While this is true, it would not have harmed his reputation had he been German.



Several of Prout's chamber music works, including his early **Piano Quartet No. 1 in C Major, Op. 2** (1865) were awarded first prizes by the Society of British Musicians. I am not, however, familiar with this work, but given Prout's gift for melody, it may well be worth investigating.

Prout's **Piano Quartet No. 2 in F Major, Op. 18**, which dates from 1883, is very attractive, fun to play and good to hear. While I am not advocating that this is a work which should

be presented in the concert hall by professional ensembles, nonetheless, it has many fine qualities—appealing melodies, technical ease of performance and good writing—which should win it friends in amateur circles. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, easily captures the listener's attention. The second movement, *Andante con moto*, has a warm folk-like theme followed by 4 short variations, the last which is a well-executed fugue. A genial *Tempo di Menuetto* with a charming, contrasting trio comes next. The fleet finale, *Allegro vivace*, is highly effective and makes for an entirely satisfying conclusion.



Wilhelm Maria Puchter (1848-1881) was born in the lower Franconia village of Remlingen and studied composition with Immanuel Feisst at the Royal Badisch Conservatory of Stuttgart. He worked as a music teacher in Göttingen. Puchter's **Notturmo for Piano Quartet in f minor, Op. 9** dates from 1876. It is in one lengthy movement of 3 sections: *Lento*, *Più lent* and *lento*.

As you can tell from the section *tempi* indications, it is not an exciting barnburner. On the contrary, it is a leisurely, gorgeous and highly Romantic odyssey, with tinges of Bruckner and Wagner, which makes superb use of all of the instruments. This is high art of extraordinary beauty which would make a very deep impression upon all of those who are fortunate enough to hear or play it. It is not at all difficult to play and can be handled with ease by amateurs.



Walter Rabl (1873-1940) was born in Vienna. After giving up the study of law, he set out to be a composer, but his composing career turned out to be rather short and most of what he wrote was either for voice or the opera. He made his name as a conductor and has only 2 chamber works to his credit, a set of fantasy pieces for piano trio and this quartet for piano, clarinet, violin and cello.

Normally, I would not discuss a work which was not originally for piano quartet here, however, read on. Rabl entered the work in the 1896 competition held by the *Wiener Tonkünstlerverein* (Vienna Musicians Association). Brahms, who was the head judge, selected the work for the first prize and recommended it to his publisher Simrock, who published it the following year in 2 versions. Simrock, always with an eye for sales, insisted that Rabl also write a version for standard piano quartet, which he did, substituting the viola for the clarinet. And, it must be said, that it works and is every bit as effective, albeit with a slightly different feeling, since a viola is not a clarinet. Rabl dedicated the quartet to Brahms and any listener will hear that composer's influence upon the music, but it would be very wrong to regard it as a mere imitation. If it were, Brahms would never have selected it. Beginning composers do not spring forth fully formed and are almost always influenced by someone who has come before them, be it their teacher or a famous composer. Brahms, when he was beginning, was influenced greatly by Mendelssohn and Schumann.

The **Piano Quartet in E flat Major** is labeled *Op. 1*. But do not let this mislead you, because this is an extraordinarily mature work which could well have come from the pen of someone who had been practicing their art for 25 years rather than 2 or 3. The opening *Allegro moderato* begins with a rather languid, melody, reminiscent of Brahms' *Op. 114* trio for piano, clarinet and cello. Slowly the music builds to a joyous climax. The second subject, evocative of forest murmurs, is not at all Brahmsian. The second movement, *Adagio molto*, is a theme and set of variations. The theme is a somber, funereal march. The variations are superb in the way they change the mood and tonal color. The following *Andantino un poco mosso* begins in a re-

laxed Brahmsian fashion, but changes mood in a rather original fashion. The buoyant finale, *Allegro con brio*, brings this excellent piece to a satisfying close.



During the last 10 years of his life and for the following 3 decades, **Joachim Raff (1822-1882)** was regularly mentioned in the same breath as Wagner, Liszt and Brahms as one of Germany's leading composers. The experts and the public judged him to be the equal to such masters as Mendelssohn, Schumann and Tchaikovsky. Incredibly, by the 1920's Raff's music had all but

disappeared from the concert stage. It seems virtually unimaginable that a composer whose talent was recognized and whose music was admired by Mendelssohn and Liszt could become a mere footnote, yet this is what became of Raff and his music for most of the 20th century. In part, this can be explained by the fact that for several years, Raff lived on the verge of starvation and was forced to crank out compositions for the commercial market, works that would sell but were of little intrinsic or artistic merit, one after another as fast as he could. Sadly, this was later to tarnish his legacy. After his reputation had faded, Raff was regarded merely as a composer of parlor pieces, despite the magnificent symphonic and chamber works he left behind. Anyone who has had the time to hear these great works quickly realizes that Raff could be an impeccable craftsman when he had the luxury of time and was not forced to write for the home music-making marketplace.

Raff's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in G Major Op. 202** dates from 1876 and is Raff's penultimate piece of chamber music. It is a substantial work in 4 movements. The huge opening *Allegro* has for its main subject a joyous, rhythmic dance full of energy. It is followed by a gentler and more lyrical second melody, full of yearning. Raff places a scherzo, *Allegro molto*, next. It begins with the piano growling through a rushing theme in its lower registers. The strings join in and take part in an extended *moto perpetuo* section. It is sometime before a longer-lined melody finally is introduced by the lower strings. This serves as the trio section, though it is hardly distinguishable from the main section, so seamlessly is it woven together. The slow movement, *Andante quasi adagio*, arguably is the quartet's center of gravity. Though not so marked, it is in essence a theme and set of variations. It begins with a very lengthy piano solo in which the dignified main theme is stated in full and developed. When the strings enter, many measures later, the piano falls silent. After the strings elaborate on the theme in a highly Romantic setting, the piano rejoins them as the music slowly builds to a dramatic climax. The celebratory finale, a triumphant *Allegro*, is full of good spirits. This is a solid work.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in c minor Op. 202 dates from 1877 and is Raff's last major piece of chamber music. It is a substantial work in 4 movements. The huge opening *Allegro* begins somberly with an ominous short motif on the piano. The mood is one of foreboding, which is hardly relieved by a second and more lyrical, but no less anxious, melody which has little time to establish itself before a final forceful and more confident idea, a series of stepwise descending jumps, asserts itself. The hard-driving second movement, also an *Allegro*, is much shorter than the preceding one. Raff squeezes 5 delightful melodies into this tiny gem, which is strongly rhythmic. Next comes a slow movement, *Larghetto*, the emotional center of the work. The piano begins it with a haunting melody played straightforwardly. Later the violin takes up this melody, which is now revealed in all its wistful beauty. The pace speeds up as the piano introduces a second subject. The finale, a third *Allegro*, is a happy affair beginning in C Major. The piano starts in a declamatory fashion, answered by violin and cello before they launch straight into the first of 3 joy-

ous themes upon which the movement is based. Here is a piano quartet which must be considered a major addition to the standard literature for the combination. That it has fallen into oblivion is truly a shame.



Max Reger (1873-1916) was born in the small Bavarian town of Brand. He began his musical studies at a young age, and his talent for composition became clear early on. His family expected him to become a schoolteacher like his father, and so he passed the necessary examinations for certification. However, before Reger landed his first teaching job, he met the eminent musicologist Hugo Riemann, who was so impressed by Reger's talent that he urged him to devote himself entirely to music. Reger studied with him for nearly 5 years. By 1907 Reger was appointed to the prestigious position of Professor of Composition at the Leipzig Conservatory. In addition to this, he was widely regarded as one of the best living conductors and organists. In a career that lasted only 20 years, Reger wrote a prodigious amount of music in virtually every genre except opera and symphony. Chamber music figures prominently within his oeuvre.

The **Piano Quartet in d minor, Op. 113** dates from 1910. Reger called the work his own solution to finding new paths and a thorough adherence to an expanded tonality. The massive *Allegro moderato ma con passione* which opens the work is rugged, yet at times gentle and filled with yearning. The ideas are spread upon a huge tonal canvas and are extraordinarily effective. The second movement, *Vivace-Adagio-Vivace*, is what Reger himself described as a "crazy scherzo." At once forceful and ponderous, this ingenious movement has some very clever, surprising and original ideas. To say that the slow trio section provides a fine contrast is a big understatement. A substantial *Larghetto* follows and is clearly closely related to the slow section of the scherzo. The finale, *Allegro energico*, is a theme with an ever-shifting, restless tonality. Again, there are many fine ideas along the way to the powerful coda. This is an important work deserving concert performance.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in a minor, Op. 133 came 4 years later in 1914. It is somewhat easier to navigate this quartet than the first, which is best left to the professionals. Like much of Reger's work from this period, it is highly chromatic. Somewhat disappointingly, he often bundles the 3 strings into a homogeneous group, doubling up in pairs or playing in unison. The opening *Allegro con passione* is melancholic and muted in effect. A light-weight Scherzo comes next with a mysterious trio section. The third movement, *Largo con gran espressione*, has a solemn, religious feel to it. The finale, though sprinkled with a few lighter episodes, mostly conveys a mood of resignation and an uneasy sense of impending unhappiness. Again, an important work, in which Reger attempts to follow a path he thinks Brahms might have traveled if he had lived longer.



Carl Reinecke (182410-191024) was born near Hamburg in the town of Altona, then in the possession of Denmark. Most of his musical training was obtained from his father, a respected teacher and author. Mendelssohn, Schumann and Liszt all were favorably impressed by him. Unlike many of his contemporaries, or even some of those composers who were younger, such as Bruch, Reinecke was able to move beyond the music of Mendelssohn and Schumann, the musical idols of the mid-19th century. Nowadays, Reinecke has been all but forgotten, an unjust fate for a man who excelled in virtually every musical field with which he was involved. Widely considered one of the finest

concert pianists before the public for more than 30 years, he was also held in high regard as a composer by his contemporaries. If this were not enough, Reinecke was a stellar conductor, who turned the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra into the leading orchestra of its day. Director of the famed Leipzig Conservatory, as a teacher of composition and of piano, he was considered to have few if any equals. Among Reinecke's many students were Grieg, Bruch, Janáček, Albeniz, Sinding, Svendsen, Reznicek, Delius, Arthur Sullivan, George Chadwick, Ethel Smyth, Felix Weingartner, Karl Muck and Hugo Riemann. In his time, Reinecke and his music were unquestionably regarded as first rate.

Reinecke's **Piano Quartet No. 1 in E flat Major** dates from 1853. The outer movements are especially pleasing. The opening movement, *Allegro molto e con brio*, is fresh and by virtue of its rhythm quite effective. It is followed by a warmer and more lyrical second subject. Next comes an impressive *Andante*, full of excellent touches; it paints poignant, atmospheric pictures. Then there is a very charming and piquant *Intermezzo*, *Allegretto grazioso*. The finale, *Molto vivace*, is also quite appealing, with its original syncopated episodes. The overall excellence of the quartet, its appealing melodies and ease of performance, allow it to be recommended for the concert hall; it will also be warmly welcomed by amateur players.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in D Major, Op. 272 dates from 1904. Much of Reinecke's late chamber music, written while he was in his 80's, is truly extraordinary in its power and vision, not to mention the energy and buoyancy of youth one hears. Reinecke, who was 80 years old when he penned his Op. 272 set himself a specific goal, titling the work "in the lighter style." His goal was to produce a concise work which did not require virtuoso players and could be handled comfortably by amateurs, but which above all would hold its own as music. The full-blooded and romantic opening *Allegro* harks back to a post-Schumann style that nonetheless predates late Brahms. The following *Scherzo moderato* with its very lyrical trio is quite original. A gorgeous, reflective and pastoral *Adagio* comes next. The genial finale, *Rondo allegretto*, is charming and effective. Reinecke succeeds entirely in achieving his goal—it is a perfect little gem. And though it is "in the lighter style," nonetheless it can be recommended for concert, and, of course, for the stands of home music-makers.



Carl Gottlieb Reissiger (1798-1859) was born in the Prussian town of Belzig. He originally attended the famous Thomasschule in Leipzig, since his father intended him to be a priest, however, his extraordinary musical talent was recognized and he was encouraged to pursue a musical career. His initial studies were with Johann Schlicht, Bach's fifth successor as Cantor of the Thomasschule.

Subsequently, Reissiger went to Vienna and studied with Salieri. An early opera attracted Carl Maria von Weber's attention and Reissiger went to Dresden, eventually succeeding Weber as Music Director of the Dresden Court Orchestra, a post he held until his death. Wagner worked under Reissiger for nearly a decade, and Reissiger premiered Wagner's first opera. A prolific composer, as most composers of that time were, Reissiger penned works in virtually every genre. His works show the influence of the Viennese masters, in particular Schubert and Beethoven. His piano trios were extraordinarily popular during his lifetime, so much so that he composed no less than 25. And his fecundity made many of his contemporaries jealous and critical. They often would unfairly call him names such as "the poor man's Schubert." However, the public adored his music for its appealing melodies, excitement and drama. Amateur chamber music players never ceased to enjoy playing his works and professionals performed them in concert, often to great success. It is a pity that the jeers of

those who could not produce such ingratiating works and who were especially peeved that Reissiger could seemingly without effort produce one after another, led to his music falling into oblivion. He wrote 7 piano quartets. Opp. 29, 70, 108, 138, 141, 173 and 199. They, too, became quite popular, but perhaps not to the level of his piano trios. I am only familiar with his

Piano Quartet No. 3 in D Major, Op. 108, which was completed in 1834. It is, like all of his trios with which I am familiar, entertaining, graceful, full of very appealing melodies and easy to perform. The opening movement is by turns exciting and poetic, at times recalling Mozart's Jupiter Symphony. There is a fleet-footed Scherzo with a lovely trio reminiscent of Reissiger's mentor Weber. A lyrical Andante follows, and the finale is a bright and light-hearted Rondo which dances along effortlessly. Reissiger was not one to plumb the depths of sorrow, nor did he try to climb the heights of profundity. Yet I find it hard to understand how the lovely, uplifting jewels he created cannot be considered just as valuable. It would be different if the music were poorly written or trivial, but it is not. On the contrary, his works with piano are invariably well put together and overflowing with memorable and highly appealing themes.



Josef Rheinberger (1839-1901) was born in Vaduz, the capital of Liechtenstein. His talent for music was immediately discovered and was of such a substantial nature that with the help of a scholarship he was sent to the Royal Conservatory in Munich, where he studied with Franz Lachner, one of Schubert's close friends and an important composer in his own right. Rheinberger, who remained in Munich for the rest of his life, eventually became conductor of the Munich Choral Society and served as voice coach at the Royal Opera, where he got to know Wagner. He also taught at the Royal Conservatory and held the position of Professor of Composition for nearly 40 years. Furthermore, he was also widely regarded, along with Carl Reinecke and Friedrich Kiel, as one of the best teachers of composition in the world. Many students who later became famous composers studied with him, including Humperdinck, Wolf-Ferrari, George Chadwick and Robert Kahn. During his lifetime, Rheinberger was generally ranked after Brahms and Wagner as the most important German composer.

His **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 38**, which was completed in 1870, is one of his earliest published chamber works and was certainly one of the most popular piano quartets from the time of its publication until the start of the First World War, after which, like many other fine compositions, it inexplicably disappeared from the concert stage. The big, marvelous opening *Allegro non troppo* begins with a brooding theme in the strings. Tension builds and it seems a storm is on the way, but instead a joyful melody, which makes you want to kick up your heels, breaks forth. The third theme is altogether different, gentler and more lyrical. The second movement, a beautiful *Adagio*, is at once both highly Romantic and profound. Rheinberger calls the third movement a *Menuetto*, but this is a mid-Romantic version, not the Classical type. With its swinging rhythm and tuneful main theme, it makes an indelible impression. The opening theme of the *Allegro* finale is a carefree, almost capricious tune that is full of surprises. The contrasting second subject is darker and leads to a marvelous fugue by the composer who was universally acknowledged as the finest fugue writer after Bach. Here is a work that truly deserves to be brought back and heard on the concert stage. And amateurs will wish they had known about this piano quartet sooner.

Today, **Ferdinand Ries (1784-1838)** is primarily remembered as a friend and student of Beethoven, as well as his first biographer.



However, during his lifetime and for much of the 19th century, Ries was known as a fine composer and virtuoso pianist. He showed musical promise from an early age, studying both violin and piano with his father, and the cello with Bernhard Romberg. In 1801, he went to Vienna to study piano and composition with Beethoven for nearly 5 years. Thereafter, Ries concertized throughout Europe before settling in London, then finally retiring in Frankfurt. He wrote a considerable amount of music, including several piano concertos and a large quantity of chamber music, which was often performed and well thought of for many years. Ries composed 3 piano quartets.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in f minor, Op. 13 was completed in 1808. It begins with an *Adagio* introduction in which several loud chords punctuate the proceedings. The main section, *Allegro*, has the aura of early Beethoven, with effective string writing, but a rather virtuosic piano part. The middle movement, *Andantino*, begins with a long solo in the piano, then the strings as a choir repeat the main subject—again we hear early Beethoven. The finale, *Rondo, allegretto moderato*, has the most compelling and memorable thematic material of the 3 movements. If someone told you that Beethoven had written this work in 1801, you would believe them.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in E flat Major, Op. 17 dates from 1809, and once again, Ries invokes the spirit of his famous teacher without actually quoting him. One might conclude that Ries was familiar with and influenced by Beethoven's *Archduke Piano Trio* and *Triple Concerto*. The *Triple Concerto*, composed in 1803, could have been an influence on Ries, but not the *Archduke Trio*, because Beethoven did not finish it until 1811. Perhaps Beethoven could have been influenced by Ries, who may well have shown him his second piano quartet. The opening movement, *Allegro*, begins calmly enough with a lovely lyrical theme but soon the music is ratcheted up to a bravura temperature, almost reaching that of a concerto. The piano introduces the second movement, *Adagio mesto*, with a Bach-like prelude, which introduces a rather sad reflective melody brought forth by the strings individually. The quartet concludes with an exuberant, lively *Rondeau, allegro moderato*. Here is a piano quartet which combines the styles of the late Vienna Classics with the newly emerging early Romantic. An occasional airing in the concert hall would not be amiss, and amateurs, as long as they have a first-rate pianist, should give it a try.

Piano Quartet No. 3 in e minor, Op. 129 dates from 1820. The opening *Allegro* begins with a short introduction promising much, and several stormy sections follow. We find better use of the strings, and the piano, though still requiring a pianist with nimble fingers, does not require a virtuoso. The thematic material is lyrical and dramatic, but is not much further advanced than the earlier quartets. The middle movement, a stately *Andante*, is very fine. The part writing stands out. The third movement, *Scherzo allegro vivace*, dances along merrily and is only interrupted by a lovely, slow trio section. A dramatic and exciting *Presto* concludes the quartet. Of the 3, this to my mind is the finest and most deserving of concert performance. Amateurs will find it ingratiating.



Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894) was one of the great piano virtuosos of the 19th century with a technique said to rival that of Liszt. He also gained renown as a composer and conductor. Rubinstein was one of those rare concert virtuosos whose contribution to music went far beyond performing. In 1862, he founded the St. Petersburg Conservatory and served as its first director. His efforts in developing Russian musical talent were perhaps

the greatest of any single individual. Not only did he introduce European educational methods to Russia, but he also established standards that were as rigorous as any conservatory in Europe. While Rubinstein's compositions were extremely popular during his lifetime, after his death, they were criticized because they showed "no Russian influence" and were viewed as derivatives of prominent European contemporaries, especially Mendelssohn. Although commentator after commentator has repeated this assertion, almost as if it were a litany, it is nonetheless not entirely accurate. Rubinstein was not part of the so-called emergent Russian national school as led by Rimsky-Korsakov, however, it is not true that there is no Russian influence to be found in his music. This influence is just not as pronounced as in the works of Borodin, Mussorgsky or of Korsakov himself. Rubinstein was a prolific composer writing in nearly every genre. Chamber music figures prominently amongst his works. He wrote 10 string quartets, at least 5 piano trios, 2 piano quartets, a string quintet and a string sextet, as well as several other chamber works. But, it must be admitted that many of these works do not rise above the commonplace. Rubinstein was simply too fluent a writer for his own good and lacked the patience to take pencil and eraser to the manuscript page to improve what he had just dashed off. Few composers could have produced anything at all of merit doing this, but Rubinstein, by the sheer prodigious quality of his talent, was, on occasion, able to create works of astonishing beauty and quite good style.

While the date of composition cannot be ascertained with any certainty, **Piano Quartet No. 1 in F Major, Op. 55 bis** was published in 1860. Rubinstein made 2 versions of it: the Op. 55 is a quintet for piano and winds (Beethoven did the same thing with his Op. 16), but the piece works equally well for piano and strings. The first movement, *Allegro non troppo* begins as if it were a concerto for the instruments. Yet as the fine melodies are developed, the ensemble writing improves tremendously and by the time the coda appears, there is no doubt one is hearing a first-class piece of chamber music. In the following Scherzo, *allegro assai*, the piano is given a somewhat virtuosic role, but once past the opening measures, one can see that it is an integral part of the ensemble. There are several original touches, including an excellent contrasting trio. The third movement, *Andante con moto*, is a theme and set of variations given a Schumannesque treatment. In the engaging finale, *Allegro appassionato*, Rubinstein shows he has taken the measure of the instruments for which he is writing, and the integration of the parts is excellent.

Rubinstein dedicated his **Piano Quartet No. 2 in C Major, Op. 66**, which dates from 1864, to the famous Spanish singer Pauline Viardot-Garcia, whom he was introduced to by her lover, the writer Ivan Turgenev. The work was premiered with Rubinstein at the piano and Ferdinand David as violinist. It was a huge success and was published 2 years later. Despite its considerable popularity until the First World War, it was never reprinted. The big, spacious opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, has an attractive main theme which is developed in a highly original and interesting way. The second movement, *Allegro vivace*, is nothing less than a jolly Russian folk dance with several surprising twists and turns. A dark-hued *Andante assai* comes next. Here there are dramatic climaxes in phrases Rubinstein alternately marks "pathetico" and "appassionato," and indeed, the music veers from the funereal to the passionate, full of pathos. The pleasing finale, *Allegro non troppo*, is at times pastoral in mood and at others lively and full of vigor.

Both of these piano quartets must be numbered among Rubinstein's best compositions. They are first rate. Op. 66 particularly deserves concert performance. Both are suitable for amateurs who have an excellent pianist at their disposal.



Johann Rufinatscha (1812-1893) was born in the Austrian town of Mals in the South Tirol, which since the First World War has been part of Italy. He studied in Innsbruck with Martin Goller and Johann Gäsbacher. At the age of 16, he moved to Vienna where he furthered his studies with the famous composition teacher Simon Sechter. For several decades, Rufinatscha was one of Vienna's leading piano and harmony teachers. While contemporaries predicted that he would become a major composer of his day, this did not happen, perhaps because Rufinatscha did not push hard to promote his compositions. He knew most of the prominent musical personalities of his time who resided in Vienna, including Brahms with whom he was on friendly terms and to whom he dedicated his second piano quartet, although he was not influenced by him. Musically, Rufinatscha can be seen a bridge between Schubert and Bruckner.

Piano Quartet No. 1 in c minor dates from 1836, by which time the 24-year-old Rufinatscha had completed his studies with Sechter and had taken up permanent residence in Vienna. It is a powerful and compelling work, which in many ways was considerably ahead of its time. It is very hard to understand how a work of this quality did not become part of the repertoire. The opening movement, *Allegro con fuoco*, is just that, full of fire, drama and youthful energy from start to finish. The lyrical second movement, a big *Adagio*, is full of warm feelings and beautifully written. A riveting Scherzo comes next—absolutely first-rate. A clever, playful trio section provides fine contrast. In the finale, *Allegro vivace*, we find the same power and drive that we heard in the opening movement. If there were awards for the best unknown piano quartet from the first part of the 19th century, this work would win: it is as fine as anything composed by anyone from this period. Finely written for all 4 instruments. Especially commendable is Rufinatscha's integration of the piano into the entire ensemble. Any professional group which brings this work to the concert hall will enjoy a real triumph. Amateurs should not miss the chance to play it as well.

In 1844 came Rufinatscha's **Piano Quartet No. 2 in A flat Major**. The fury and unremitting power of the first quartet is not to be found in the genial opening movement, *Allegro energico*, which has a certain dignity and stateliness. The writing is very fine. One might say, "Hey, this sounds like Brahms." Yes, it does, but keep in mind the 11-year-old Brahms was living in Hamburg playing the piano in a bordello and had written nothing. If anything, he may well have been influenced by Rufinatscha. A gorgeous *Adagio molto* follows and approaches in style a song without words. There is much yearning and beauty within. The third movement, Scherzo, *allegro vivace*, is a heavy scherzo, again the kind of thing that Brahms himself would pen many years later. There follows a magnificent, rich trio section, the height of beauty. The finale, a big-shouldered *Allegro moderato*, begins in laid-back fashion and, while it does reach some climaxes, and despite the very fine writing, lacks a certain excitement one expects from a finale.

Make no mistake—both of these works are superb, but very different. The first has a sense of urgency which is palpable, while the second is deeper and richer, perhaps more mature.



Louis Saar (1888-1937) was born in Rotterdam, but his education was entirely in Germany. After taking a liberal arts degree at Strasbourg University, at that time part of Germany, Saar went to the Royal Bavarian Conservatory in Munich and studied composition with Josef Rheinberger. From there he went on to Vienna, where he spent several months studying with Brahms. Saar's compositions earned him the Mendelssohn prize in Berlin and the

Tonkünstlerpreis in Vienna. In 1894, he emigrated to the United States, where he worked as an accompanist at the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York. Dvorák, who was Director of the National Conservatory (which became Juilliard), engaged Saar. Subsequently, Saar taught at many music conservatories in the States. His **Piano Quartet in E Major, Op. 39** dates from 1904. It is firmly in the German Romantic tradition, showing the influence of Schumann and, not surprisingly, of Brahms. The mostly serious opening movement, *Allegro non troppo*, is full-blooded and well written. The agitated middle section is particularly striking. A warm and tonally pretty *Adagio* follows. The third movement is a *Scherzo, allegro vivace* with trio. The effective, fiery finale, *Allegro con brio*, has a gypsy flavor. The main themes from the preceding movements are briefly reprised before the rousing coda. A candidate for the concert hall and not beyond good amateur players.



Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921), who is known today only as an orchestral composer, devoted a great deal of time and effort to writing chamber music, including 2 piano quartets.

The **Piano Quartet No. 1 in E Major** (without opus number) was composed in 1853, but it was not published until 1992. It is not clear why Saint-Saëns chose never to have it

published, although the fact that Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann served as inspiration may well explain it. As Bizet noted, in France in order to get one's music played, the composer had either to be German or dead. French composers simply could not get their chamber music works published in France. For a long time, George Onslow, a chamber music composer par excellence, though famous in England and Germany, was virtually unknown in France. Later, when Saint-Saëns had become better known, French musical taste had changed and tended to abhor anything German or German-sounding. Saint-Saëns' first piano quartet opens with a brief introduction, *Poco andante*, which sounds like early Beethoven. It leads to an *Allegro vivace* which is quite attractive and lyrical. In no way does the piano dominate the music. Excellent use is made of the singing qualities of the strings, particularly the viola and cello. In the Schumannesque *Andante*, the balance between piano and strings is again masterful. At one point, each instrument is given a brief *minisonata* with the piano, while the second theme features a string duet with the voices changing and replacing one another. A *pizzicato* episode toward the end tonally brings to mind Beethoven's Op. 74, *The Harp*. The finale to this 3-movement work, *Allegro con fuoco*, opens with a unison passage, which then leads to a fiery theme full of furious scale passages and broken chords reminiscent again of Schumann. This is a good work, certainly strong enough for the concert hall, yet it makes no undue demands on the players and could be played with little difficulty by capable amateurs.

Piano Quartet No. 2 in B flat, Op. 41 was composed in 1875 and performed with great acclaim at its premiere with Sarasate on violin and Saint-Saëns on piano. It is, in my opinion, a masterwork for piano quartet. The opening *Allegretto* shows that Saint-Saëns had assimilated the progress Brahms had made, but one also hears a dreamy French lyricism. The *Andante Maestoso, ma con moto* is a tour de force. It begins as a powerful march, more *allegretto* than *andante* in tempo. A marvelous fugal development follows in which every aspect of the theme is explored, Bach-like in conception and feel. In the next movement marked *Poco Allegro piu tosto moderato*, Saint-Saëns changes the mood with a whirlwind *scherzo*. The syncopated rhythm to the first subject gives the music its macabre atmosphere. In the finale, *Allegro*, one does not hear the influence of any of the better-known German composers, yet there is an undeniable

relationship with German Romantic music of that time. The movement does all that a finale should do and its rousing ending suitably brings this fine work to a close. Saint-Saëns demonstrates an excellent understanding of the balance problem between piano and strings, in many ways far better than Brahms ever did. The writing is such that the strings never have to be slung together and pitted against the piano to offset the larger instrument's volume. Upon playing this music, I ask myself how it could be that the Fauré quartets, which are wonderful, could be so much better known than this fine music. It goes without saying that this work belongs in the concert hall and can be played by good amateurs.



Xaver Scharwenka (1850-1924) was born in the small town of Samter near what is now the Polish city of Poznan (German Posen) in what was then part of Prussia. He learned to play the piano at an early age, and his extraordinary talent was clear to all. At 15, Scharwenka moved with his family to Berlin, where he studied with Theodore Kullak, one of the most renowned piano

teachers of his day. He also received instruction in composition. Subsequently, Scharwenka began touring as a concert pianist and was widely regarded as one of the best then performing. He founded 2 conservatories, one in Berlin and another in New York. He composed in nearly every genre; his 4 piano concertos were regarded by him as well as nearly everyone else as his most important works. It has been reported that Scharwenka regarded his own chamber music of lesser importance, however, this seems difficult to confirm, since he often performed his piano trios and quartet in concert. While all of Scharwenka's chamber music includes the piano, the parts given to the strings are in no way of lesser importance.

A good example of this is his **Piano Quartet in F Major, Op. 37** in 4 movements, which dates from 1876. It was premiered with great success in Berlin and then in London a few months later. The opening theme to the dramatic, powerful and big *Allegro moderato* is one of great promise and destiny. The following *Adagio* begins in a somber, almost funereal mood and retains the aura of an elegy throughout. Next comes a wild, frenetic *scherzo, Allegro vivace*—truly superb. The robust finale, *Allegro con fuoco*, is a fiery bacchanal, suffused with catchy melodies and driving energy. The quartet is first-rate and deserves to be heard in concert.



Paul Scheinpflug (1875-1937) was born in the town of Loschwitz, not far from the German city of Dresden. He studied composition at the Dresden Conservatory with Felix Draeseke and thereafter pursued a career as a conductor, holding positions in Bremen, Königsberg and finally Dresden. He was not a prolific composer, but his works were highly praised and respected, especially his chamber music. His style was that of the late Romantic movement.

Scheinpflug's **Piano Quartet in E Major, Op. 4** dates from 1903. The work resembles a mini-symphonic tone poem in its power and scope, chafing at the boundaries of chamber music. In the introduction, the composer quotes from the German poet Richard Dehmel, beginning: "Room, room, breaking bounds in my wild breast." In a way, the opening movement, *Allegro con fuoco und passione*, recalls Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben*. One can almost hear the life of the hero portrayed. The development is particularly clever, and the coda is magnificent. The second movement, *Andante quasi adagio*, is gloomy, but after a bit the mood lightens somewhat and becomes more hopeful, even enthusiastic. This leads to a section where one hears a kind of internal

struggle going on between hope and despair. A wild and angular Scherzo fantastique, Presto comes next. This is a very original movement. The finale, Allegro, begins with a dark introduction. It leads to a monumental struggle between the gloomy dark and the brighter joy of life. This is an impressive and amazing work—a real stunner, but it requires experienced professional players to bring it off in the concert hall. Amateurs of the very highest technical accomplishments should also be able to get pleasure from it.



Leander Schlegel (1844-1913) was born in the Dutch town Oegstgeest near Leiden, where he began his music studies. He showed an early talent, especially on the violin, and drew the interest of the virtuoso Ferdinand Laub. Eventually, however, he concentrated on piano and composition, and continued his studies at the Leipzig Conservatory, where he studied piano with Ignaz

Moscheles and composition with Ernst Richter. For several years thereafter, Schlegel pursued a career as a solo pianist before settling in Haarlem where he taught and then served as director of the music school there for the rest of his life.

His **Piano Quartet in C Major, Op. 14** dates from 1909. It is written on a large scale and, it must be said, is not going to play itself without considerable study. It is a work requiring professionals or amateur players of a high standard. Brahms served as Schlegel's ideal, and one can hear the influence. The big opening movement, Allegro moderato, is surprisingly calm and contemplative for an opening movement. The second movement, Allegro piacevole con moto, is a cross between an intermezzo and a scherzo. The Andante, ma molto sostenuto is subtitled Sarabande. It is introverted, with deep feelings. The finale, Allegro brioso, più tosto moderato, ma risoluto, is the liveliest of the 4 movements. Although there is much that is admirable in this quartet, it must be acknowledged that it is not going to be an immediate crowd pleaser, since it really requires more than one hearing to make an impact and, because it is unknown, is not a great candidate for the concert hall.



Florent Schmitt (1870-1958) was born in the French town of Meurthe-et-Moselle. He studied with Gabriel Fauré, Jules Massenet and Théodore Dubois at the Paris Conservatory, and in 1900 won the prestigious Prix de Rome. He worked as a composer and as a music critic.

His **Hasards, Op. 96** is a suite for piano quartet, composed around 1940 and dedicated to the French composer Guy Ropartz. The title of this 4-movement suite, which Schmitt described as a "petit concert" for piano, violin, viola and cello, translates roughly to mean "Chances." And the "chances" Schmitt takes are in his use of rhythm and tonal color. The movements bear highly descriptive titles. The first, Exorde—D'une allure rapide, is quick with an upbeat rhythm. Next is Zélie-au-pied-leger in 6/8 time without a key signature. The third movement, Demi-soupir—Un peu lent, is slow and mysterious with a clear stylistic debt to Schmitt's teacher Fauré. The finale, Bourrée-bourrasque, Impétueux, a brusque bourrée, has rhythms punctuated by hard chords on the piano. It is an engaging modern work, interesting for both the audience and players.



Not a great deal about **Johann Schobert** (circa 1720-1767) is known. He was born somewhere in Silesia, then part of the Austrian Habsburg Empire sometime around 1720. He pursued a career as a pianist and composer, primarily in Paris where he spent most of his life and died

after eating some poisonous mushrooms. Contemporaries considered his compositions the equal to those of C.P.E. Bach. He came to the attention of music historians because of his intersection with the six year old Wolfgang Mozart whom he met while Wolfgang and his father Leopold were residing in that city. Schobert's music influenced the young Mozart to a considerable extent, so much so, that Mozart borrowed several movements from Schobert's piano sonatas for use in his own concertos.

The **Quartet for 2 Violins, Cello and Piano in E flat Major, Op.7 No.1** is the first of a set of three which were published in Paris in the early 1760's. They are rather interesting not only because they are a definite link between the older baroque sonata form and the emerging modern piano quartet but also because Schobert's handling of the parts was rather advanced for the time. The work is in three movements. It begins with a heart felt Andante indicative of its minor key. The middle movement is a Menuetto, more in the then current French style rather than that of the Mannheim school. The work closes with a lively Allegro

The second of the set is the **Quartet in f minor for 2 Violins, Cello and Piano, Op.7 No.2** is the second of a set. It begins with a genial Allegro moderato, calm and flowing. The middle movement is a Menuetto, more in the then current French style rather than that of the Mannheim school. The work closes with an exciting Allegro assai. I am not familiar with Op.7 No.3

The **Quartet for 2 Violins, Cello and Piano in E flat Major Op.14 No.1** also dating from the 1760's. The work is in three movements. It begins with an Allegro assai in which the strings are muted, giving the music a rather dense quality. The middle movement is a Polonaise which is dominated more by its rhythm than melody. The work ends typically in the French style for the time with a Menuetto. Fun for amateurs who have this type of ensemble but no reason to bring them into the concert hall unless for historical purposes.



Bernhard Scholz (1835-1916) was born in the German city of Mainz. He studied piano with Ernst Pauer in Mainz and counterpoint with Siegfried Dehn in Berlin. He enjoyed a peripatetic career as a teacher, conductor and composer in Munich, Zurich, Hanover, Nuremberg, Florence, Breslau and Berlin. In Frankfurt, he served as director of the conservatory. With Brahms and Joachim, Scholz was one of the signatories to a manifesto published in the *Berliner Musik-Zeitung Echo* on May 6, 1860, opposing the so-called New School of German Music championed by Liszt and Wagner. Although Scholz was widely respected as a music critic and scholar, his own compositions never gained any traction, condemned as dry and dull.

His **Piano Quartet in f minor, Op. 79**, published in 1899, does not deserve that description. Schumann and Brahms are the godfathers to this quartet. However, though influenced by them, it is not imitative. It is well constructed and without any padding. Scholz's rhythmic ideas are often quite original and striking. And this is not a work in which the piano dominates. The strings are particularly well handled. The opening movement, in the minor, creates a somber, elegiac mood. The main theme is quite compelling. The second movement, Allegretto molto moderato e cantabile, though lively, has the feel more of an intermezzo than a scherzo. This is followed by a warm and lyrical Andante con moto ed appassionato with a powerful and passionate middle section as an excellent contrast. The finale, Vivace assai, achieves its effect by virtue of its rhythm, but the thematic material is also quite appealing. This piece did not receive the attention it deserved because of the rather ordinary quality of much of this composer's other works. It is suitable both for the concert hall and for amateurs.

The only work that **Franz Schubert (1797-1828)** wrote for piano quartet was his **Adagio and Rondo Concertant** which dates from 1816. Unlike the efforts of Mozart, Mendelssohn or Schumann, it is a relatively unknown work so I will briefly discuss it. The piece was published with the notation “For piano with violin, viola and cello accompaniment.” Hence, the strings are not given a lot to do. Both movements are charming and filled with Schubert’s usual melodic gifts. The piano part is not difficult, and the work can be recommended to amateurs.



Georg Schumann (1866-1952) was born in the German town of Königstein into a musical family. His father was the town Music Director and the boy initially studied piano and violin with his father. Schumann then studied organ in Dresden and entered the Leipzig Conservatory, where he studied piano with Reinecke and composition with Salomon Jadassohn. Schumann became a brilliant pianist and started off on a solo career, but later branched off and enjoyed a conducting career in Bremen, then Berlin where he also taught. He composed throughout his life and was especially fond of chamber music; he composed 2 piano trios, 2 piano quintets, a piano quartet and some instrumental sonatas.

Schumann’s superb **Piano Quartet in f minor, Op. 29** dates from 1901. It can be recommended for the concert hall, but it can also be played by experienced amateur players of good ability. It is a work which is grateful to play for both the piano and the strings. As the composer himself said, although the structure is in sonata form, this form must on occasion be abandoned in a large-scale work such as this where the music so requires it. There is a sense of impending destiny with which the music is infused. The 2 main subjects of the opening *Allegro molto espressivo* are filled with defiance and lament. They reappear in altered form in the second movement, *Molto Andante con espressione*, where a sense of peace is finally achieved. But then, in the very original *Quasi presto con fuoco* which comes next, there is a stormy return to defiance and unrest, although it is not without happier interludes. In the finale, *Allegro con passione*, the main theme is characterized by a sense of determination to overcome the despair which permeates the preceding movements.

The **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 47** of **Robert Schumann (1810-56)** is probably the most frequently performed quartet today, although piano quartets are no longer heard much in concert. In any event, everything that can be said about it has been many times elsewhere.

There is a little-known earlier work, a **Piano Quartet in c minor**, from 1829. Schumann was 19 when he finished it and there are some obvious flaws. However, there are also some very fine moments within.



Eduard Schütt (1856-1933) was born in St. Petersburg, Russia. A talented pianist, Schütt graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory, having studied piano with Theodor Stein and Anton Rubinstein. He then continued his studies at the Leipzig Conservatory, where he studied piano with Carl Reinecke and composition with Salomon Jadassohn and Ernst Richter.

Schütt moved to Vienna and took additional lessons from Theodor Leschetizky after which he pursued a career as a concert pianist for a few years, then devoted himself to composing and conducting. Most of Schütt’s works involve the piano; there are 2 piano trios, several instrumental sonatas and this piano quartet.

Schütt’s **Piano Quartet in F Major, Op. 12** dates from 1882. It is full of elegant, gracious music which pleases. It plays

well and is pleasant to hear. In the opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, both themes are particularly appealing. The main subject of the Scherzo which comes next shows considerable character and a charming middle section. One can also say that both themes of the following *Andantino* are quite pleasing. Especially effective is a Hungarian dance-like episode in the middle of the movement. The finale, *Allegro vivo, à la Russe*, features a brisk dance rhythm coupled with a sweeping, lyrical melody. This is a very effective work, which is not only very appealing, but also does not present any unusual technical difficulties, so it is just as suitable for the stands of amateur players as for the concert hall.



Cyril Scott (1879-1970) was born in Oxton, England, not far from Liverpool. He showed a talent for music from an early age and was sent to the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt, where he studied with Ivan Knorr. He worked primarily as a pianist and composer, and was regarded as a late-Romantic composer, whose style was at the same time strongly influenced by Impressionism—

some have called him the English Debussy. Scott wrote around 400 works and kept composing until 3 weeks before his death at age 91. Though he was considered one of England’s leading composers during the first 2 decades of the 20th century, by the 1930’s Scott was all but forgotten. At his death, he was only remembered for a few popular pieces that he had composed over 60 years before.

Scott’s **Piano Quartet in e minor, Op. 16** dates from 1903. It is a relatively short work, consisting of 4 concise movements. There is little or no evidence of his infatuation with Impressionism, but rather he is still under the influence of the German Romantics. One feature of the work is the doubling and even tripling of the melodic line, especially in the strings, so that there are several unisono episodes. The first movement, *Allegro maestoso e con spirito*, is fresh and lilting. An expressive *Andante molto espressivo* makes a good impression. The third movement, *Allegro amabile*, muted in the strings, is an updated, quite striking intermezzo, though not so marked. The lively finale, *Allegro non troppo*, brings the quartet to an end. It is pleasant both to hear and to play since it presents nothing out of the ordinary as to technical problems.



August Söderman (1832-1876) was born in Stockholm and studied composition, violin and oboe at the conservatory there. After graduation, a scholarship enabled him to study at the Leipzig Conservatory with Hans Richter. The teachers at the Leipzig Conservatory during this period were heavily influenced by its founder Felix Mendelssohn and Robert Schumann, and Söderman’s music shows this influence. He is generally regarded as one of Sweden’s leading composers from the Romantic period. He pursued a career as an opera conductor and composer in his home town. Virtually all of his music is either for orchestra or for voice in one form or another.

His **Piano Quartet in e minor**, written in 1856 while he was at Leipzig, is his only chamber work. It is a highly accomplished work, the equal of the best of other piano quartets from this era. The writing for and integration of the instruments is masterly and the melodies quite fetching. The opening *Allegro moderato* begins with an evocative piano solo. When the strings join, the mood changes with a series of lovely themes full of charm—Söderman subtitled it “fantasy.” The second movement, *Scherzo vivo*, starts off not at all like a scherzo and does not in the least sound *vivo*. But then almost imperceptibly the music gradually gains tempo and liveliness, and becomes just that. The third movement is a very romantic *Andante*. The work concludes with

a vibrant Allegro. It is a highly effective work, suitable both for the concert hall and the stands of amateurs.



Hans Sommer (1837-1922) was born in the German city of Braunschweig (Brunswick). He studied mathematics at university and taught that subject before becoming the director of the Braunschweig University of Technology. But with regard to music, he never entered a conservatory and studied composition with several composers including Franz Liszt. What success he enjoyed was as a composer of operas and lieder. He only wrote three chamber music works, 2 piano trios and a piano quartet.

His **Piano Quartet in g minor** was composed in 1870. It is in three movements, the superb first movement is marked *Langsam, in gedrückter Stimmung - Ziemlich rasch, entschlossen* (slow and depressed, then quick and determined). The second movement *Nicht zu langsam, getragen* (not too slow but sad or depressed) is very beautiful. The finale *Leidenschaftlich bewegt* (appassionato) is turbulent, stormy and very exciting. This is very attractive work, first rate start to finish. It belongs in the concert hall but can also be recommended to amateurs.



Hugo Staehle (1826-1848) was born in the German city of Fulda. He studied violin with Wilhelm Deichert, a student of the famous violinist Louis Spohr. Eventually, he studied with Spohr himself before entering the Leipzig Conservatory as one of its first students where he studied composition with Moritz Hauptman. During his short lifetime, he was regarded by all who became familiar with his music as a highly talented and gifted composer. Certainly, his piano quartet is ample proof of this.

Staehle did not live to see the publication of his **Piano Quartet in A Major, Op.1**, which came out in 1849, the year after his death. It was dedicated to his teacher Louis Spohr. Judging from this work, it is clear that he was highly gifted. The first movement, an Allegro opens with a lively, appealing, warm subject. More deeply felt is the lyrical second theme. The Andante which comes next is a true pearl with its warm and noble melodies and beautiful tonalities, especially to be found in the string parts. A spirited and piquant Scherzo, *allegro moderato* follows. Contrast is provided by a lovely trio with its ingratiating melody. The lively and bustling finale, *Allegro vivace*, is in the form of a tarantella. Here is a work to be treasured, especially by amateurs.



Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) was born in Dublin. He had a good general education, not only studying music but also classics at Cambridge University. Following this, Stanford went to Germany, where he studied composition with Carl Reinecke in Leipzig and then with Friedrich Kiel in Berlin. While abroad, Stanford met Brahms and became an admirer. A prolific composer who worked in nearly every genre, Stanford was knighted in 1901 for the tremendous contribution he made to British music. The once high reputation that he enjoyed all but disappeared by the end of his life, with critics writing him off as nothing more than a German “copycat” and yet another Brahms imitator. This criticism is both unfair and wide of the mark. While it is to some extent true his works show a German influence (Mendelssohn, Schumann or Brahms), this should really come as no surprise for 2 reasons. First, during the last part of the 19th century, the British, unlike the French and the Russians, had yet to develop anything that could be called a national style. Second, one must not

forget that in the 1870's, Stanford studied with 2 world-famous German teachers and composers. Since the time of Mozart, the leading composers of Austria and Germany were held up as the models to follow: Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Schumann showed the way. Later, men like Reinecke and Kiel (who were admirers of Beethoven, Schubert and Mendelssohn) transmitted this influence to their many students, a prodigious amount of whom, like Stanford, became famous in their own right. It should be noted that very few who studied in Germany escaped or wanted to escape this German influence. Men from such disparate backgrounds as Borodin, Busoni, Respighi, Grieg and George Chadwick, to name but a few, are examples. It seems particularly unjust to Stanford to complain that some of his early works show German influence, especially since he went on to help found an English style and contributed to the renaissance of British music. This was particularly true in the realm of chamber music, where Stanford almost singlehandedly jumpstarted British repertoire. Among his many students were Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, Herbert Howells, Frank Bridge, Ernst Moeran, Arthur Bliss and Percy Grainger.

One only has to listen to the opening measures of his **Piano Quartet No. 1 in F Major, Op. 15** to immediately realize that Stanford was a gifted composer capable of writing compositions of the first rank. Dating from 1879, it is a youthful work, written only a few years after his return from Germany, yet it is unquestionably superb. The buoyant opening theme of the first movement, *Allegro con brio*, is truly full of brio. The rich scoring and masterful part-writing show that the lessons Stanford received from Kiel and Reinecke were well absorbed. One can hear their influence, but not that of Brahms. This is a powerful movement, full of luxuriant melodies and excitement. Next there is a Scherzo. It is not so lively as one might expect—the mood is more of a relaxed but rhythmic intermezzo. The trio section is a soft chorale for the strings alone. The *Poco adagio* which follows, once it gets going, sports some very lovely string writing. Perhaps there is a trace of Brahms, here and there. The finale, also *Allegro con brio*, begins in a triumphal style, its main theme harking back to Schubert and Schumann. A brisk pace is kept up from the start to the exciting finish. If the composer of this work had been German, no one would have hesitated, even today, to proclaim it a masterpiece every bit as good as the best piano quartets of the day. That a Briton had written it led to a different result. It belongs in the concert hall and will be a joy to amateurs.

Stanford completed his **Piano Quartet No. 2 in c minor, Op. 133** in 1913. It received one public performance and was not published until 2010. One has to wonder why, for it is a superb work. The opening *Andante-Allegro moderato* is full of appealing melodies, excellent writing and rich tonal effects. The piano is blended in perfectly. There is the aura of Brahms hovering over it. The *Adagio* which comes next is quiet and deeply felt. A frenetic and restless Scherzo *allegro* serves as the third movement. The finale, *Allegro molto moderato*, starts off rather subdued and devoid of any excitement; it takes rather a long time for the whole thing to get up and get going. To be honest, it really never does get going, but is punctuated by frequent halting phrases. It has a Brahmsian heaviness, in part because of the density of the writing. In what is otherwise a magnificent work, this finale, though not a bad movement, is a letdown.

Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871-1927) was born in Stockholm and studied locally. He took piano lessons from Richard Anderson, a student of Clara Schumann, and composition from Emil Sjögren, eventually becoming a virtuoso, considered the finest Swedish pianist of his time. But Stenhammar was more interested in chamber music and allied himself with the Aulin String Quartet with whom he regularly performed piano quintets in concert. This relationship gave him a deeper appreciation and understanding of



string instruments, and was no doubt responsible for the very fine works he was able to write for them. The **Allegro Brillante**, composed in 1891, was most likely intended as a performance vehicle for Stenhammar and a group of string players. It was designed as a one-movement concert piece, not as the first movement to some larger work.

Although it is an early work, already Stenhammar's mastery and sureness of touch are apparent. From the opening notes, we hear a rich Romantic theme, shared equally by all. The piano is perfectly integrated with the strings and one does not feel it is at all alien. The second theme is as lush as the first. Clearly, Stenhammar lavished considerable care on this work.



Richard Stöhr (1874-1967) was born in Vienna. His father insisted that he study medicine and Stöhr only formally studied music after receiving an M.D. He entered the Vienna Academy of Music and studied composition with Robert Fuchs, receiving a doctorate in 1903. Stöhr immediately obtained a teaching position at the Academy and was appointed Professor of Composition in 1915, a position he held until 1938. Although Stöhr steadily composed throughout these years, he was better known as an expert on music theory, having written a well-received text on the subject. In 1938, he was forced to flee Austria because of the Nazi takeover. He emigrated to the United States and obtained a similar position at the Curtis Institute of Music. Among Stöhr's many students were Leonard Bernstein, Erich Leinsdorf, Herbert von Karajan, Erich Zeisl and Samuel Barber. Stöhr's **Piano Quartet in d minor, Op. 63** dates from 1921. The opening movement, *Allegro maestoso*, is broad and majestic. Next comes an appealing Scherzo, *allegro con brio*. Both the thematic material and use of rhythm make this movement a standout. There is a short contrasting, effective trio. The *Andante sostenuto* which follows is nicely put together. In it, we hear some modern tonalities for the time. The fleet finale, *Allegro molto*, makes good use of chromaticism. This work can be recommended both to amateurs and professionals.



Petar Stojanović (1877-1957) was born in Budapest into an ethnic Serbian family. In Budapest, he studied violin with the famous virtuoso Jenő Hubay. He then attended the Vienna Conservatory, where he continued his violin studies with Jakob Grün and composition with Robert Fuchs and Richard Heuberger. In 1925, he became professor of violin in Belgrade, where he lived until his death. He composed in most genres. Stojanović's **Piano Quartet in D Major, Op. 15** was completed in 1912. It is a work full of power and energy. The thematic material of the opening *Allegro* is particularly impressive. There are unmistakable tinges of Slavic melody. A fresh and original Scherzo *allegro* comes next with a contrasting trio section. Next comes a well put-together *Adagio*. The work is topped off with a lively and dramatic *Allegro*. This is a good work, well worth playing and deserves an outing in the concert hall.



Richard Strauss (1864-1949), of course, needs no introduction. His orchestral compositions and operas have made him one of the best-known composers of the late 19th and 20th centuries. While Strauss did not, in later life, devote much time to chamber music, in his earlier years he tried his hand at several different types of chamber works, composing a string quartet, 2 piano trios, a piano quartet and several instrumental sonatas. During his

early years, Strauss took Schumann and Mendelssohn as his models.

But in the case of the **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op. 13**, there is also evidence that Brahms was influential. The piano quartet, which must count as one of Strauss' most important works from this period, was completed in 1885 and is in 4 movements. The massive opening *Allegro* begins in turbulent fashion, virtually exploding out of the gate, but the second theme is both more lyrical and reflective. It is followed by a light, playful Scherzo, *presto*, which is from time to time interrupted by powerful rhythmic bursts. The romantic and lyrical trio section presents a stark contrast. A quiet, somewhat reflective *Andante* serves as the slow movement. It creates an "after the party" mood, soft and gentle, although as the movement develops, it reaches several very romantic climaxes. The turbulence we experienced in the opening movement returns in the finale, *Vivace*. But again, a sweet, highly romantic and very lyrical second theme changes the mood altogether. Though an early work, it is nonetheless a fully formed and mature work. Concert performance would not be amiss and amateur players are sure to have fun with it.



Josef Suk (1874-1935) was born in Křečovice in southern Bohemia, then part of Austria. He studied piano, violin and organ with his father, the village choirmaster. Suk's exceptional talent led to his being enrolled at the Prague Conservatory in 1885 at the age of 11, where he studied violin, then became a composition student of Dvorák. He graduated in 1891 and kept up a friendship with Dvorák, whose daughter he married in 1898. He formed what became the world-famous Bohemian Quartet with 3 of his fellow students. Suk played second violin with the quartet for most of his life. From 1922, he taught at the Prague Conservatory. Among his many students were the composer Bohuslav Martinů and the pianist Rudolf Firkušný. Suk served as the Conservatory's director after 1924, on and off, until the end of his life.

Suk's 1891 **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op. 1** was the result of an assignment from his teacher, Dvorák, who was so taken with the finished product that he selected it for the graduation awards concert. Suk promptly numbered it his Op.1, though he had written many other works, signaling that he was now a mature composer. The work was published immediately and was for many years a staple of the repertoire. The opening movement, *Allegro appassionato*, soars forward from the powerful opening chord with its energetic and at times highly dramatic theme. When the dust finally settles and things calm down, a very lovely, lyrical second theme is brought forth. The middle movement, *Adagio*, begins quietly with a wonderful, valedictory melody which bears a slight resemblance to the lovely theme from Borodin's second string quartet. The finale, *Allegro con fuoco*, like the first movement, is exciting from the very first measure. A march-like theme starts off the proceedings. Echoes of Dvorák can be briefly heard in passing. Again, for a second theme, Suk chooses a wonderful, lyrical melody, quite Romantic and beautiful. The disappearance of this fine work from the standard repertoire can only be because it has been out of print for more than half a century. Professionals and amateurs will do well to make themselves acquainted with it.

Sergei Taneyev (1856-1915) is one of the most important Russian composers from the last half of the 19th and early 20th centuries and probably the one whose music is the least known in the West. In Russian concert halls, one always finds a bust of Taneyev alongside those of Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms and Tchaikovsky. Sadly, the fame of this outstanding composer has not spread beyond his homeland. Taneyev came from an aristocratic family that patronized the arts, and



when the 10-year-old Sergei's talent became apparent, his father sent him to the newly-opened Moscow Conservatory. His main teachers there were Nicolai Rubinstein for piano and Tchaikovsky for composition. Although he became a brilliant pianist, Taneyev opted for a career as a composer and teacher, and soon became a professor at the Conservatory. His fame both as a teacher and as a composer quickly spread. Among his many students were Glière, Rachmaninov, Gretchaninov, Scriabin and Medtner.

Taneyev's **Piano Quartet in E Major, Op. 20** dates from 1906 and is written on a huge scale. It has been frequently performed in Russia and is generally held to be the equal of any other work written for this ensemble. The opening movement, *Allegro brillante*, begins with a bold, dashing melody. One passionate theme after another is introduced as the movement proceeds, each changing the mood in its own way. It ends with a rousing coda. The second movement, *Adagio, più tosto largo*, provides an excellent example of Taneyev's melodic gifts. The middle section adds contrast with its agitation. The finale, *Allegro molto*, might be a textbook lesson in the art of counterpoint, of which Taneyev was an undisputed master. Canonic and fugal episodes are among the many treasures to be found in this mammoth and extraordinary movement. This is a massive work of great variety and emotion. It certainly belongs on the concert stage and should not be missed by professionals or amateurs.



Ernst Eduard Taubert (1838-1934) was born in the Prussian town of Regenwalde. He began his education in Bonn, where he studied with the Brahms acolyte Albert Dietrich, after which he moved to Berlin and continued his studies with Friedrich Kiel. Taubert remained in Berlin for the rest of his life, working as a music critic and a professor at the Stern Conservatory.

His **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op. 38** dates from 1882. The thematic material of the opening movement, *Allegro commodo*, though well handled, is rather ordinary and not particularly memorable. Were the other movements not of any higher quality, it would not be worth including here. However, the *Adagio cantabile*, subtitled *Romanze*, which follows, is quite appealing, full of deep feeling, and the viola, in particular, is given a big role to play. The bustling *Vivace, intermezzo* which follows holds one's attention completely with its fine lyrical melody. The only mark against the excellent finale, *Molto vivace*, is the fact that it could have been written by Robert Schumann. Nonetheless, it must be admitted, this aside, it is a very effective movement, excellently executed. It is a work good to play and, except for the first movement, good to hear.



Ferdinand Thieriot (1838-1919), 5 years younger than Brahms, was not only born in Hamburg, but also studied with the same teacher, Eduard Marxsen. The two knew each other from their Hamburg days and remained on friendly terms. After Hamburg, Thieriot continued his studies with Reissiger in Dresden, then finished in Munich with Rheinberger, after which he moved to Vienna. Brahms was instrumental in helping Thieriot obtain the position of Styrian Music Director in the provincial capital of Graz where he worked between 1870-85. Later, Thieriot held important positions in Leipzig and Hamburg, where he remained from 1902 until his death. For the most part, Thieriot, like Brahms, remained true to the Classical traditions which preceded him and took Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn and Schumann as his models. Only toward the end of his life did his work show some of the influence of the New German Music of

Wagner and Liszt. Thieriot wrote 2 piano quartets.

The **Piano Quartet No. 1 in e minor, Op. 9** dates from 1863. It seems to have disappeared shortly after its publication, and I am unfamiliar with it.

The **Piano Quartet No. 2 in E flat Major, Op. 30** is a worthwhile work, solidly put together, strong enough to be recommended for concert performance and suitable for amateurs, since it is not difficult to play. The opening movement, *Allegro*, is particularly good with its broad and powerful main theme. The lyrical second subject provides an excellent contrast. Even more impressive, by virtue of its melody, is a third theme. Next comes a Scherzo with an appealing and deeply felt trio. The third movement, a warm *Adagio*, has a particularly memorable middle section. The spirit of Schumann envelops the lively finale, an *Allegro*, but in no way is the music imitative. Of particular note is Thieriot's fine handling of the string parts.



Pedro Tintorer (1814-1891)—Pere Tintorer in Catalan—was born in Palma de Mallorca to Catalan parents, but grew up in Barcelona, where he studied with Ramon Vilanova, the music director of the cathedral. At the age of 16, Tintorer entered the Madrid Conservatory to study piano with Pedro Albeniz and composition with Ramon Canicer, after which he attended the Paris Conservatory, where he studied with Pierre Zimmerman. Tintorer remained in Paris until 1836 during which time he is thought to have studied privately with Franz Liszt. He served as a professor for many years at the Lyon Conservatory before returning to Barcelona as a professor and then director of the Conservatori del Liceu in Barcelona. Tintorer composed in most genres.

The charming **Quartetino**, which Tintorer subtitled **Un souvenir de L. van Beethoven**, was composed during his time in Lyon during the 1840's. It is in 2 movements and begins with a very Romantic *Andante mosso*, full of yearning and drama. A substantial and exciting *Allegro ma non tanto* follows. The style recalls very early Beethoven, perhaps from around 1800. While not a great work, it is nonetheless fun to play, attractive to hear and important, since it comes from a little-known but worthy Catalan composer.



Fernand de La Tombelle (1854-1928) studied piano with his mother who had been a student of Liszt and Thalberg. He also studied organ with the famous French organ virtuoso Alexandre Guilmant. At the Paris Conservatory he studied composition with Theodore Dubois and organ with Guilmant. Subsequently, he became a well-known organist in Paris. He was, along with Vincent d'Indy, Guilmant and Charles Bordes, one of the founders of the Schola Cantorum, France's other great conservatory. He taught there for many years. He wrote in most genres. In addition to this piano quartet he also composed a piano trio and a string quartet. Tombelle won prestigious Chartier Prize for an outstanding chamber music in 1896 in part for this piano trio.

Piano Quartet in e minor, Op. 24 was composed in 1893 and was awarded a prize for excellence by Société des Compositeurs de Musique. The big opening *Allegro* is stormy and full of turbulence and urgency. Here and there, one hears echoes of Cesar Franck and Schumann. The solemn *Adagio* which follows features a very expressive dialogue between the strings and the piano. The third movement, *Molto allegro*, is a playful scherzo. In the exciting and lively finale, *Allegro molto*, the cyclical nature of the movement clearly follows in the Franckian tradition. This is an outstanding work of the first order which belongs in the repertoire and on the concert stage. It is not beyond competent amateurs.



Donald Tovey (1875-1940) was born in the English town of Eton. He studied piano privately and subsequently attended Oxford and the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he studied composition with Hubert Parry. He enjoyed a career as a concert performer as well as a composer, and served as a Professor of Music for more than 25 years at Edinburgh University.

Today Tovey is best remembered for his essays on music, but he regarded himself first and foremost as a composer. Tovey wrote in most genres and his compositions were not only respected, but regularly performed in such important venues as London, Vienna and Berlin. But like the works of so many others, it has inexplicably disappeared from the concert stage. Tovey wrote several chamber music works, most dating from the last decade of the 19th century up to the First World War.

His **Piano Quartet in e minor, Op. 12** was composed in 1900, but was not published until 12 years later. It is dedicated to one of his tutors at Oxford, Henry Joachim, a nephew of the famous violinist. It is in only 2 movements, but these are of considerable size and breadth. The opening movement begins as an Allegro moderato e sostenuto, softly, then undergoes many tempo and mood changes. The finale is a theme and set of variations. Again there are wide mood swings, high drama and powerful climaxes interspersed with quiet, calmer and more reflective episodes. This is a powerful work of considerable originality deserving concert performance. Good amateurs should also enjoy it.



Joaquín Turina (1882-1949) was born in the Spanish city of Seville. At the age of 4 he was given an accordion and surprised everyone by the speed and facility with which he learned to play. In 1894, he began his formal studies of harmony, theory and counterpoint. Almost immediately Turina began to compose small pieces. In 1905, he

like most other Spanish composers of the time, went to Paris where he studied piano with Moszkowsky and composition under Vincent d'Indy in the Schola Cantorum. He became good friends with Isaac Albeniz and Manuel de Falla. Albeniz encouraged Turina to find inspiration in the popular music of Spain and Andalusia. After finishing his studies, Turina moved to Madrid, where he spent the rest of his life composing and teaching. Turina's first works were entirely influenced by the French Impressionist school, not surprisingly, since he had studied in Paris with Impressionist composers.

In his **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op. 67**, composed in 1931, Turina structurally departs from traditional classical structures. The 3 movements (Lento-Vivo-Andante) not only share a relationship to each other but also have tempo changes within each movement. The Lento opens moodily with a theme first uttered by the unison strings, followed respectively by the piano and cello. The main section, Andante mosso, is somewhat faster and impassioned, with more than hints of Spanish melody. The Scherzo is even more pronounced in its Spanish flavor. A contemplative, contrasting trio is included. The concluding Andante-Allegretto opens by briefly recalling the opening moment, with instrumental solos, but then devolves into a Spanish romance, not without Impressionist episodes with echoes of Debussy. This is certainly a candidate for concert performance, especially since few piano quartets sound anything like it. It is not beyond accomplished and experienced amateurs.

William Walton (1902-1983) was born in the English town of Oldham. Walton's parents were both singers and he was trained as chorister. Walton took a few lessons in composition while at Christ Church College, Oxford, but was largely self-taught. Mostly known for his larger works, he did write a considerable



amount of instrumental music in his early years.

Walton admitted that it was Herbert Howells winning the Carnegie Prize for his **Piano Quartet** that inspired him to write his **Piano Quartet in d minor**. He began work on it in 1918 and finished it in 1920, but revised it several times, even after it won the Carnegie Prize of 1924. The last revision took place in 1976. In 4

movements, the work begins with an Allegremente. This is dominated by the interplay between 2 themes. The music is mostly animated and at times agitated as well. Next comes a restless Scherzo which contains an energetic fugue. The third movement, Andante tranquillo, is rather like the music of Howells, who was in turn influenced by Ravel. At the same time, this gentle, pastoral music, clearly evokes the English countryside. The main theme of the closing movement, Allegro molto, is dominated more by its rhythm than by its melody, but the second subject remedies this with its lyricism.



Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) studied with Michael Haydn in Salzburg and the Abbe Vogler in Vienna, 2 of the leading teachers of their day. He pursued a career as a conductor and music director, holding posts in Breslau, Prague, Berlin and Dresden. His reputation rests almost entirely on his famous operas *Die Freischutz* and *Oberon*, and a few other works

such as his clarinet concertos. But Weber's music is otherwise unknown to present-day players and listeners, which is a pity since it is uniformly well-written, particularly for wind instruments. Chamber music, however, comprises only a very small part of his oeuvre. There are only 3 works which qualify as chamber music—his piano quartet, his clarinet quintet and a work for flute (or violin), cello and piano.

Weber's **Piano Quartet in B flat Major, Op. 8** dates from 1809 and must be considered one of the earlier works of this genre. While there were others, truly only Mozart's were of first quality, and it seems quite likely that they served as models for the young Weber. The work is unmistakably Classical, but here and there we can glimpse early Romanticism. It would be no understatement to call the beautiful opening Allegro Mozartean. In fact, from its first bars, one might well conclude that this was a work by Wolfgang. The treatment of the instruments, especially the piano, as well as the thematic material, is strongly influenced by Mozart. The Adagio ma non troppo begins with soft double stops in the violin. The theme is somewhat heavy and veiled in the ornamentation of the Classical era. The third movement is marked Minuetto, but it is closer to a scherzo. In the middle section, Weber makes excellent use of the cello. In the finale, Presto, once again the ghost of Mozart hovers over the music, which is lively and energetic. This quartet is important for historical reasons, but can by virtue of the fine writing and thematic material stand on its own as a work worthy of the concert hall or the stands of amateur players.

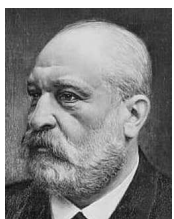


Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937) today is primarily remembered for his organ compositions and as one of the greatest organists of all time. Widor was born in Lyons and studied first studied with his father, also an organist, and then at the Brussels Conservatory. In 1870, upon the recommendation of Gounod and Saint-Saëns, he was appointed to the most important position an

organist could hold in France, as organist at Saint Sulpice Church in Paris. In 1890, he succeeded César Franck as Professor of Organ at the Paris Conservatory; many important composers, including Darius Milhaud, Louis Vierne, Marcel Dupré and Edgar

Varese, studied with him. Widor composed throughout his life in virtually every genre and left a considerable amount of chamber music, but his tremendous contributions to the organ literature have caused the neglect of Widor's chamber music and non-organ music. But Cobbett's *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music* states that his chamber music is of the first rank and as good as that of Saint-Saëns.

Widor's **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op. 66** dates from 1891. The opening *Allegro moderato* makes a strong impression by virtue of the 2 main themes and his rather original use of rhythm, especially in the piano. The second movement, *Adagio poco più mosso*, begins rather sedately with a very Romantic lyrical theme. But this is followed by several different tempo sections—*Agitato*, then *Tranquillo*, then *Più lento*, then *Poco a poco agitato*, and then *Poco più vivo*. As you can imagine from the constant tempo changes, the whole effect is rather unsettling. It is a kind of rhapsody, but a very restless one. The third movement, *Vivace*, for all intents and purposes is a bright and fleet scherzo. Again, the rhythm is very pronounced and quite effective. The finale, *Allegro ma non troppo*, bursts forth in a very dramatic fashion with the piano giving out the powerful theme over the strings' quick 16th notes. When they take up the melody, it becomes apparent that it is quite lyrical. It is a hard-driving piece, riveting most of the time—all in all, a superb work which belongs in the concert hall. Very good amateurs should also make its acquaintance.



Alexander Winkler (1865-1935) was born in the city of Kharkov in Russia (today Kharkiv in Ukraine). He studied piano and composition locally, and then in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Winkler continued his studies in Paris and in Vienna with Theodor Leschetizky before returning to Kharkov. There Winkler taught piano for a number of years and then was appointed to a professorship at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Sergei Prokofiev was among his many students. In 1924, Winkler emigrated to France and served as director of the Conservatory in Besançon.

His **Piano Quartet in g minor, Op. 8** dates from 1899. The opening movement, *Allegro appassionato*, despite its promising title, does not make as strong an impression as one might hope, the thematic material being somewhat pedestrian. However, the impressive second movement, a very Russian-sounding scherzo, makes up for this. Adding to its quality is the beautiful trio section marked *alla serenata*. Next comes a charming *Andante elegico*. The use of the strings which are given a song-like melody is very well done, and a more agitated middle section only adds to the excellence of this movement. The work is topped by an impressive *Presto*, a tarantella, which holds one's interest from start to finish. Good enough for concert, it is especially suitable for amateurs.



Georg Hendrik Witte (1843-1929) was born in the Dutch city of Utrecht. After studying piano locally, he enrolled in the Leipzig Conservatory to study piano with Ignaz Moscheles and composition with Carl Reinecke and Moritz Hauptmann. Witte held the position of Director of the Music Society of Essen, eventually becoming Music Director of that city. He helped to found the Essen Philharmonic Orchestra and was appointed a professor at the conservatory there as well. His **Piano Quartet in A Major, Op. 5** dates from 1867. No composer studying at the Leipzig Conservatory at the time Witte did in the mid-1860's could escape the influence of its founders Mendelssohn and Schumann, revered by most of the professors there as musical gods to be emulated. Witte was no exception, however, his work is nonethe-

less original and fresh sounding. The piano quartet won him a prize at a prestigious competition, and it is indeed a fine work. It opens with a *Moderato assai* introduction which leads to the very effective main section, *Allegro con fuoco*. The second movement, *Sostenuto*, has for its theme a somewhat melancholy subject on which a set of excellently contrasting variations is produced. Next comes an appealing *Vivace* which serves as a scherzo. There is a fetching trio section based on a folk melody. The satisfying finale, *Allegro giocoso*, features a magnificent fugal episode before the work is brought successful close. This is a good candidate for the concert hall and can be warmly recommended to amateurs as well.



Władysław (Ladislav) Żeleński (1837-1921) was born in Grodkowice not far from the city of Krakow. After studying piano locally with several teachers, including the well-known concert pianist Alexander Dreyschock, he went to Prague University, where he took a doctorate in philosophy. He also took composition lessons from Josef Krejčí, after which he enrolled in the Paris Conservatory and continued his composition lessons with Henri Reber. Upon his return to Poland, Żeleński enjoyed a long career as a concert pianist, teacher and composer. He held several important teaching posts, including Director of the Krakow Conservatory, which he helped to found. He wrote in most genres and left many chamber music works which have received considerable praise from the well-known critic,

His **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op. 61** was composed around 1907 and published in 1910. The big, restless opening movement, *Allegro con brio*, starts somewhat hesitantly but quickly builds to a dramatic climax which releases the lovely second theme. The movement is simply brimming with gorgeous material, crowned by exquisite part-writing. The cello brings forth the long-lined main theme to the second movement, *Romanza, andante sostenuto*. One barely notices as the other voices join in this highly Romantic song without words. The third movement, *Intermezzo allegretto*, is a dance, full of exotic perfume; first there are wafts of French and then Spanish melody. After a few powerful measures of piano introductions, the strings bring forth the main theme to the finale, *Allegro appassionato*. It is powerful and thrusting, yet full of yearning. This fine work should have entered the repertoire, although one must remember that by the beginning of the 20th century piano quartets were being eclipsed by piano quintets in public performance. It belongs in the concert hall and will interest professional groups, but at the same time, amateur groups will get a lot of pleasure from such a lovely work.



Vasily Zolotarev (1872-1964) was born in the Russian city of Taganrog. He studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory with Rimsky-Korsakov and Mily Balakirev. Zolotarev taught at the Moscow Conservatory for a number of years and then in Belarusian Academy of Music in Minsk. He composed in most genres and was especially fond of chamber music. Through Rimsky-Korsakov, Zolotarev became part of the so-called Belaiev Circle, named for those composers, mostly Korsakov's students, whose music Belaiev published. All of Zolotarev's early chamber music was published by Belaiev. Zolotarev's **Piano Quartet in D Major, Op. 13** dates from 1905. This is a very Russian-sounding work, and Zolotarev clearly made considerable use of Russian folk melody therein. The rhythms of the opening movement, *Allegro risoluto*, recall Russian folk dance. The second movement, *Andante sostenuto*, is quite atmospheric. Once again, in the third movement, *Allegretto grazioso*, which serves

as a scherzo, Russian melody and rhythm come to the fore. The finale, also an Allegro risoluto, is a stormy, dramatic affair and though perhaps somewhat long-winded, is still quite effective. All of the instruments are well handled, and the work makes a good impression. It can be recommended especially to amateur players.

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