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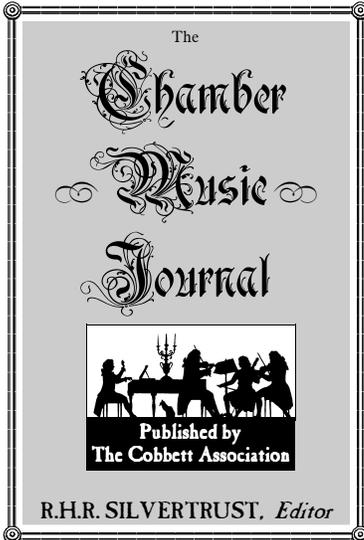
*The Essential Guide
For Players & Listeners
To The Wider World
of Chamber Music*

***The Piano Trios of Edouard Lalo
Nonets You Are Likely To Play-Part 3
By Samuel Coleridge Taylor,
Charles Villiers Stanford,
Bohuslav Martinu & Vaclav Trojan***

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The Sounding Board-Letters to the Editor



Stands Up for Dvorak's Sextet

I take exception to Mr Opolis saying that Dvorak's fine Sextet is "not good enough to be included in the must play category." (Vol. XVIII No.4, Winter 2007) I think it is one of the best ever written and I doubt that the works he mentions by Eduard Franck or Hermann Koessler can hold a candle to it.

Peter Fischer
Leysin, Switzerland

Professor Opolis replies: Several issues back I believe a correspondent took issue with Larius Ussi's assessment that such and such a piano trio was weaker than another. I rather enjoyed Mr. Ussi's response which quoted Zino Davidoff, the famous cigar merchant—who, if I rightly recall, had a shop in Switzerland, in Geneva. Davidoff wrote, "Every Gentleman has the right, indeed the duty to defend his favorite cigar. I am not going to argue about Dvorak. But I must say that I, and many with whom I frequently play, have, over the years, found the melodic material and ideas to be rather thin and not the equal of many of his quartets or his fine Opp.81 and 97 quintets. But if it will make you feel any better, you are not alone. The highly respected chamber music critic, Dr Wilhelm Altmann writes in his Handbook that friends of String Sextets will greatly enjoy playing Dvorak's Sextet.

Report from the Mazer Society of Sweden

The Mazer String Quartet Society is one of the oldest continuing chamber music organizations in Europe. It is dedicated to the performance of string quartets. Its members (as those of The Cobbett Association) are both amateurs and professionals. They happily play side by side with amateurs. Informal gatherings are held from September to May. The program committee strives after variation between string quartets, trios, duos and larger ensembles. The majority of performances are given by groups put together for the occasion. These groups are often built by individual initiative, while in some cases the music director and program council help in the organization. The purpose of these informal concerts is to perform chamber music in an intimate environment, with a limited audience and without restrictive quality demands. David William-Olsson, a Cobbett member, and president of the Mazer Society regularly sends us updates of what has recently been played. His latest report is from March 2008. Space only permits me to list some of the things, but its enough to make a many Cobbetteer envious—editor.

Valborg Aulin String Quartet No.1 in F Major
Woldemar Bargiel Octet in c-minor, Op 15a
Hermann Berens: String Quartet in G Major
Luigi Boccherini Quintets G208, G237 G362,
Frank Bridge: Novelettes for String Quartet
Max Bruch Octet Op Post.(1920)
Giovanni Cambini String Qt in : G-Maj Op 2 No.1
Peter Copley Farnham fantasi Quintet
Ernst von Dohnanyi: String Qt No.1 in A Major, Op.7
Dvorak: String Quintet (Qt & Kb) Op 77 in G Major
Niels Gade Octet Op.17
Alexander Glazunov 5 Novelettes for String Quartet
Cornelius Gurlitt Miniature Piano Trios
Gunnar Hahn Vallareflöjt Flute Quintet
Leopold Jansa String Quartet Op51 No.1
Joseph Kraus "Fugue Quartet" in g minor
Adolf Lindblad String Quartet No.1 in G Major
Ludvig Norman: String Quartet in c minor, Op.35
Per August Ölander: String Sextet
George Onslow String Qt. Opp.91 No.1 & Op.36 No.1
George Onslow String Quintets Opp.17 & 25
Hans Pfitzner: Piano Quintet in C-Major, Op. 23
Joachim Raff String Octet Op. 176
Anton Reicha Nonet Op. 96
Joseph Rheinberger String Quintet in A Major, Op.82
Andreas Romberg Flute Quintet Opp. 21 & 41
Giacomo Rossini String Sonatas Nos. 5 & 6
Carl Schubert String Octet in E Major, Op.23
J.C. Schmägel Sinfonie in D for String Quartet
Arnold Schönberg String Sextet "Verklärte Nacht"
Wilhelm Stenhammar: String Quartet No.2
Wilhelm Stenhammar Piano Quartet Allegro Brillante
Wenzel Veit String Quintets Opp.1 & 20
Johan Wikmanson String Quartet No.1 in d minor

Parts to Bache Piano Trio Available

Readers may recall the article by John France, which appeared in Vol.XVIII No.3 (Autumn 2007), about the Piano Trio in d minor, Op.25 by the little known English composer Edward Bache. When Mr France approached me, asking if I would be interested in an article about the Bache Piano Trio. I asked him if he had the parts and planned to use musical examples, which we like including with our articles when possible. He said not. I then told him that generally we do not accept articles about music which will never be available to our readers, the bulk of whom are players. He then told me he knew Jane Faulkner, the violinist of the English Piano Trio, the group which had recorded the work. He put me in touch with Ms Faulkner who graciously provided me copies of the original Kistner edition, which had no rehearsal letters or numbers and a few mistakes. After correcting the mistakes and adding rehearsal letters, Edition Silvertrust (www.editionsilvertrust.com) has reprinted this fine work, making the parts available for the first time in more than 125 years.—editor.

We welcome your letters and articles. Letters to the Editor and manuscripts should be addressed to us at 601 Timber Trail, Riverwoods, IL 60015, USA. Letters published may be edited for reasons of space, clarity and grammar.

The Piano Trios of Édouard Lalo

by Jean-Martin Lefebvre



If I were to ask you Americans and English to name a piece by **Édouard Lalo** (1823-1891), invariably I would receive the answer *Symphonie Espagnole*. Perhaps one in a hundred might name the cello concerto or the piano concerto. And, if I were to ask a Frenchman, the answer I would get would be the opera *Le roi d'Ys*. But it is unlikely that anyone would name one of his chamber works. The fact is, Lalo's oeuvre is really not all that well-known. People who know of him have heard one of the above three works, which, for all

devoted to little-known chamber music, that Lalo wrote three piano trios and a string quartet. But for most, I would think this would come as a surprise, although, in and of itself, this is not surprising since the music could not be heard in concert nor could the parts be obtained until recently. It is true, that there have been a few sporadic recordings of some of his chamber music, however, these have generally been hard to obtain.

While Lalo's family name is of Spanish origin, there are records indicating that as early as the first part of the 16th century, the family had emigrated to northern France. Lalo himself was born there in the city of Lille. Showing an early interest in playing the violin and the cello, his family allowed him to take music lessons at the local conservatory. However, when at 16, he informed his parents that he wished to make a career of music, his father opposed this idea, leaving him no option but to leave home and seek his fortune in Paris. There he entered the Paris Conservatory

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practical purposes, are the only ones ever performed in concert. A few of you may know, since this is a specialist publication

Nonets You Are Likely to Play

—Part III—
by Larius J. Ussi

In the first two parts of this article, the author discussed the history of the nonet and the nonets of Ludwig Spohr, George Onslow, Louise Farrenc, Ernst Naumann, Franz Lachner and Joseph Rheinberger.

If you have played all six of the nonets which I have discussed in the earlier parts of this article, you may consider yourself what the Germans call a "Kenner", one of the *cognoscenti*—that is, one who knows. Very few people I know can make this claim. Should you also familiarize yourself with the remaining four nonets I will discuss in this part of my article, you may consider yourself an aficionado and expert.



After Rheinberger's nonet of 1884, the next work worthy of our consideration is the Opus 2 **Nonet in f minor**, of **Samuel Coleridge-Taylor** (1875-1912). He was born in London, the product of a mixed race marriage, his father being an African from Sierra Leone and his mother a white Englishwoman. His musical talent showed itself early and he was admitted to study the violin at the Royal College of Music. He eventually concentrated on composition, studying with Charles Villiers Stanford, when his gift for it was ascertained. The nonet, which is scored for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon, Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass and Piano. None of the other nonets we have discussed have included the piano. So the questions arises as to whether any of its predecessors served as a model. Most likely, he would have been familiar with the Spohr which was very popular in English circles. Rheinberger's nonet was also

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Diskology: Sergei Lyapunov Sextet for Piano, 2 Violins, Viola, Cello & Bass



A quick check of the Index of Composers who have appeared in the pages of *The Journal* revealed that this is the first appearance of Sergei Lyapunov (1859-1924). Most likely, the reason for this is because he only composed one significant piece of

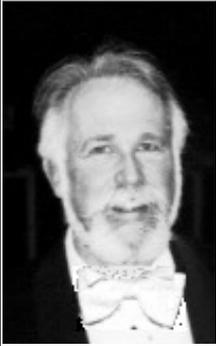
chamber music and that work was not for a common ensemble. Although relatively unknown even to Russians, nowadays, this was not always the case. Lyapunov, studied piano and composition at the Moscow Conservatory. Despite the fact that he was only three years older than Lyapunov, Sergei Taneyev was his

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At The Doublebar



It has been almost a year since our long time director, Professor Vincent Oddo has passed away. I mention this because Vince did many thankless, but necessary, time-consuming tasks which freed up time for me to devote to *The Journal* and to our website.

Now that he is gone, I have had to take these on as well. Since his death, I have been unable to devote much time to the website, particularly to updating the sound-bites. (As an aside, I would remind readers we have no paid employees, all work, including the writing of articles, is done on an entirely volunteer basis as a labor of love) I believe that having the sound-bites is a very useful adjunct to the CD reviews and to our articles. However, I have been rather surprised and disappointed at how few avail themselves of the opportunity to hear the music. Our website host provides statistics which make this fact clear. For now, I will keep the sound-bites, while eliminating the reviews and other information that appear along side the sound-bites. These take a fair amount of time to add. If, however, I continue to find that few are using this resource, I will have to revisit the question of whether it is worth the effort to keep it going.

A few issues ago, I mentioned that postal rates have increased five times since we last raised our subscription rates several years ago. Now, once again, on May 12th, postal rates are going up. Since renewal notices are enclosed with this issue, our rate increase will not begin until the first issue of 2009, a year from now.

Thanks are in order to Mr. Ussi for the final installment of his informative article on nonets and to Mr Lefebvre for his on Lalo's piano trios, which are indeed very engaging works that deserve to be heard as well as played. Fortunately, parts to these works are available.

As stated above, renewal notices are enclosed with this issue. Please send them back as soon as possible as this is our sole source of operating revenue.

—Ray Silvertrust, Editor

Nonets You Are Likely To Play

(Continued from page 3)

often played then. But neither work calls for a piano. The use of the piano, which is in no way treated as a soloist, in the scoring creates an orchestral sound. One has to wonder if Taylor had the Serenades of Brahms and or Dvorak in mind when he took to the field. It would certainly be fair to take exception with my inclusion of this work since it is not limited to winds and strings. However, it is of such a quality that I think it merits some discussion. The nonet was composed in 1894 while he was still a student at the Royal College and given a successful premiere the same year, and then promptly forgotten and never published. In 1999, the free-lance publisher, Patrick Meadows, learned of this fact and obtained copies of the manuscript from the Royal College. The work is published by Edicio de Soundpost.

Although the nonet was composed while Taylor was still a student, it would be a mistake to consider it a student work. It is of professional quality. The excellent use of the piano merits a few words. Taylor treats the piano as just another member of the nonet. It has occasional solos to play, just as do the horn, clarinet, cello, violin or any of the others, but it is primarily used to contribute its special quality, that of filling out the music through chordal accompaniment and harmony. It is this which often gives the work an orchestral sound. The opening movement, *Allegro energico* is filled with themes that are spacious and lovely. The music sounds of mid-19th century mainstream German romanticism, which should surprise no one since, at this time, it was held in the highest esteem in England, which had yet to develop its own national sound. And it should also be remembered that Stanford, who had studied with Reinecke and Kiel in Leipzig and Berlin, was the standard bearer and transmitter of German Romanticism in England, though it should not be forgotten that he did help found the English national style of composition. Although some critics, with the foreknowledge that Dvorak was Taylor's favorite composer, claim this movement is redolent of the Bohemian master, when I played it, I heard nothing that sounded like him. The gorgeous second movement, *Andante con moto*, has a few minor flourishes that remind one of Dvorak but it would be a stretch to say the movement sounded Slavic. It begins with a lazy, meandering melody which sounds like the setting for a Hollywood romance, surprisingly modern when you think of it. The winds parts create the mood and the strings are used for additional sweetness. A striking and original *Scherzo-Allegro* follows. The use of string pizzicato is particularly telling and the off-beat rhythm does remind one somewhat of Dvorak, but the melody anticipates Gershwin! It is certainly worth remembering that in 1894, Dvorak had another 10 years to live and was yet to write many of the works for which he is best remembered. The trio section is led by the horn which, despite the running passages, give the music a lethargic quality. The finale, *Allegro vivace*, has a Tchaikovsky-like introduction, but the main subject erases all vestiges of it. A second theme sounds a bit like Elgar with the horn taking the lead in a tune that sounds like a triumphant victory march. The most striking thing about this work is its scoring and the nature of the melodies. The melodies are strangely modern, way ahead of their time, while the scoring, and in particular the integration of the piano into the whole, is virtually without parallel. One is almost unaware that there is a piano, and this is not because it is never given a solo—for, as I said, it does receive solos just as other voices do. Great masters like Schumann either did not have the imagination or perhaps the talent to accomplish this, and instead resorted to the unimaginative routine of juxtaposing the piano against the other parts massed together. The part writing is really superb, so assured and deft. One can only marvel at what a prodigy the 19 year old student must have been.

Next we come to a nonet by Taylor's teacher, **Charles Villiers Stanford** (1852-1924) Stanford, studied music but also classics at Cambridge University. Following this, he went to Germany where, as previously noted, he studied composition with Carl Reinecke in Leipzig and then with Friedrich Kiel in Berlin. While abroad, Stanford met Brahms and became an admirer. He was 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 another Brahms imitator. This criticism is both unfair and wide of the mark. While it is to some extent true his early works show a German influence (sometimes Mendelssohn, sometimes Schumann, and sometimes Brahms), this should really come as no surprise for two 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 two 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 the American George Chadwick, to name but a few, are examples. As such, it seems particularly unjust to Stanford to complain that some of his early works show German influence, especially in view of the fact that he ultimately 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 single-handedly jump-started the British repertoire. Among his many students were Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, Herbert Howells, Frank Bridge, Ernst Moeran, Arthur Bliss, and Percy Grainger.

The **Nonet** (or Serenade) **in F Major**, composed in 1905, is an excellent example of how Stanford had moved away from his earlier reliance on German models. No influence of Brahms or his predecessors is to be found in this work. The fact that the nonet was also titled “Serenade” gives some indication that the composer may have been thinking along the lines of a work like Brahms’ Op.11 Serenade No.1. Serenades were, of course, popular in the last part of the 18th century and the title generally signaled a lighter weight work of five, six or seven movements. Something akin to the Divertimento. Brahms’ serenades each have several movements, but no one would call them light weight works.

Stanford would certainly have been familiar with the Spohr, Onslow and Reinberger nonets and quite likely even those of Farrenc, Lachner and Naumann, all of which we have looked at. Of these six, five follow Spohr’s scoring and use a wind quintet, a string trio (violin, viola & cello) and bass. Only the Naumann, substitutes a second violin for the clarinet and hence is for flute, oboe, horn, bassoon, a standard string quartet, and bass, Stanford, like Naumann, adds a second violin but in place of the oboe. Hence his nonet is scored for flute, clarinet, bassoon, horn, string quartet and bass. Interestingly, you may recall that Naumann also titled his nonet a “Serenade”, but he wrote only four movements

and the piece is clearly meant to be a serious concert work and not a divertimento. Stanford also constrains himself to four movements. Tantalizing though it might be to consider whether Stanford was influenced by Naumann’s 1872 effort, it must be kept in mind that the two nonets sound nothing alike. Naumann’s has echoes of Mendelssohn and Schumann while Stanford’s is already firmly in the camp of the new English sound. And though Stanford certainly intended his nonet for the concert hall, its overall mood is light and happy. No doubt this led to the titling of it as a serenade. There is no high drama, pathos or great excitement to be found here, but rather a lovely geniality and a feeling of good-natured well-being.

The opening *Allegro* has a gentle, somewhat pastoral quality, bringing to mind the English countryside on a warm May day. The second theme, though more lively, is pleasant rather than dramatic. A third theme, quite lovely, is romantic. Virtually all traces of Brahms and German romanticism, a fixture in his earlier works, are gone. Of the four movements, the second, *Allegro molto*, is the most different in mood from the others. It is not quite a scherzo. Certainly modern-sounding for 1905, the music is hard to describe. The rhythm is syncopated and has a jazz-like feel. There is an exotic aura of mystery to it. If you can imagine a sedate combination of *Til Eulenspiegel* and *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice* you will get some idea of what the music sounds like. The *Andante*, which serves as the slow movement, restores the earlier pastoral quality established by the opening movement, although it is far gentler. A lengthy flute solo, later taken up the strings, creates the hazy atmosphere of a midsummer’s daydream. The finale, *Allegro commodo*, is a jolly sort of march led by the winds which sounds a bit Elgarian. It was interesting to me that despite the addition of the extra string voice, hence giving them a 5 to 4 advantage, the winds clearly dominate the work, not so much because the strings have nothing to do, but because the wind parts are very upfront and are regularly entrusted with the melodic material, while the strings seem more often used to add body to the overall work. It is also interesting to note that Spohr’s nonet, in particular, but also those of Onslow, Farrenc, Lachner and Naumann still retain the intimate aura of chamber music, while those of Rheinberger, Taylor and Stanford have a more orchestral feel to them. The music is published by Phylloscopus.

Readers may recall that in the first part of this article, I included the Bax Nonet, finished in 1930, as one of the works worth playing. It certainly is that. However, when I went to examine my notes along with the parts (it has been quite a while since I last played it), I was surprised to see that it is actually for flute, oboe, clarinet, string quartet, bass and *harp*. Mixed in with my parts was a transcription of the harp part for piano which a friend of mine had made and, it was with the transcription that we played it. I must admit, I have never played with a harpist and my guess is that neither will most of you. So I think we will move along to what was to be the last work I planned to discuss.

That then brings us to the second Nonet of **Bohuslav Martinu** (1891-1959). Martinu 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

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Martinů left Czechoslovakia for Paris, and deliberately withdrew from the Romantic style in which he had been trained. In the 1930s 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 was communist, he lived in Switzerland for the rest of his life.

vakia, which was at that time was communist, he lived in Switzerland for the rest of his life.

Martinu wrote two nonets. The first was composed in 1925 shortly after he moved to Paris. It is scored for string trio, wind quintet and piano. It is an interesting work but I have only heard it and not played it. His **Nonet No.2** was composed in 1959 shortly before his death. It is scored for string trio, bass and wind quintet. The work was commissioned to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the famous Czech Nonet, virtually the only permanent ensemble of its kind. Of the two nonets, it is the better known and has received considerable critical acclaim. It consists of three movements, all of them of only modest length. The opening *Poco allegro* is sunny and bright, sounding a bit like a neo-classical Haydn might have. The music is lively but not hectic or overly energetic. The winds and strings are very nicely blended and the work retains the intimate nature of chamber music rather than tilting toward the orchestra. The only real surprise is the rather sudden ending. The second movement, *Andante*, stands in stark contrast to the first. Though the air of mystery runs throughout, there is also a deep vein of sadness and defeat. Though obviously pleased to be writing for an important group of Czech musicians, Martinu was, at the time, dying of cancer and was convalescing from a serious operation. The dynamic range virtually never rises to above a mezzo forte. The main theme of the finale, *Allegretto*, is rhythmically complex, while its melody is once again bright though not joyous. A second theme brought forth by the upper strings, and then reiterated by the massed winds, has a warm dream-like quality. It is followed by a playful, boisterous interlude, but the short coda surprises by suddenly inserting a calmness, which changes the mood entirely, ending the work by softly evaporating. This is a very high quality modern work which is not at all hard to play. It has been published by Editio Praga Barenreiter.

At the outset of this article, I promised readers ten nonets, but by removing the Bax I have only presented nine. I feel honor bound to remedy this and since we just had a Czech composer, I suddenly remembered another nonet by a second Czech composer **Vaclav Trojan**, (1907-1983). He is mostly known for his film music. I have played his nonet but once, according to my notes, approximately 15 years ago. I do not own the parts but they were published by the Czech Music Fund, CHF.

Trojan was born at Plzen (Pilsen) in Bohemia. As a boy, he often traveled with his father, a photographer, visiting small towns and villages, where he would hear country musicians playing. He entered the Prague Conservatory at age 16, studying composition with several teachers including Vitezslav Novak and Alois Haba, the doyen of quarter-tone music. For several years he worked as a free-lance musician, then served as the music director for a radio station before beginning to write for the theater. This led to engagements to write music for the cinema. He proved so adept at this that many of his scores won prizes and medals. In Europe, he became known for his score to the puppet film of Jan Trnka. In this film, there is no dialogue, The music carries the whole action, and replaces the spoken word.

In the 1970's, he returned to purely instrumental music writing in what could be called a neo-classical style which are combined with Bohemian dances: the polka with its variants, the landler, and the furiant, among others. However, the material for these works often came from his film music. This was the case with his **Nonetto Favoloso**, which he composed in 1979 specifically for the Czech Nonet. The work uses material from the film, *The Valiant Knight Bajaja* and consists of six short movements, each having a programmatic subtitle along with the tempo marking.

First comes, *Sostenuto, quasi una ballata*, subtitled *The Dismal Kingdom*. The slow-moving music indeed paints a gloomy, depressed picture in which not much happens. This is followed by *Bajaja Coming to Rescue the Princess*, an *Allegretto grazioso*. This is a very short, but attractive bouncy affair which well conveys a sense of travel. Trills in the various wind parts create a sense of the days of mediaeval chivalry. *The Royal Castle* is a *Lento*, and my notes say, that judging from the music, it must have been a spooky or haunted palace. *The Guests are Welcomed* consists of majestic, neo-baroque theme which sounds as if Handel might have penned it. *I sing to you O Princess* is slow but without tempo direction. It is a short interlude with a bassoon solo. Again my notes recall that it was not at all romantic music, but rather subdued, almost funereal. The finale, also without tempo marking, is entitled *Bajaja's Fight with the Dragon and Rescue of the Princess*. The movement begins exactly as the work started, intimating that the dragon is hiding out in the Dismal Kingdom. Tension is created by sudden, soft chromatic passages in the winds. The horn and the other winds create a very scary mood and here the music does sound like it might be right out of an old black and white horror film, the backdrop of which must have been a dungeon. The last third of the movement consists of a soft, somewhat oriental-sounding section which leads to a coda in which the music softly dies away. Effective, but hardly conjuring the image of a knight rescuing a princess. But, of course, I have not seen this film so I don't know what happened. In any event, this is an entirely accessible, pleasant modern work, which again could be played by amateurs without any real difficulty.

Getting the parts is the real difficulty as they must be obtained directly from the Czech Music Fund unless something has recently changed.



The Piano Trios of Édouard Lalo *(continued from page three)*

and studied with the French violin virtuoso, François Habeneck. He studied composition privately with the Austrian piano virtuoso and composer, Julius Schulhoff, who was then living in Paris. Financially, these were very difficult years for Lalo. He made ends meet by giving violin lessons and playing in pick-up orchestras such as that of Berlioz.

Between his late 20's and mid 30's, the decade between 1850 and 1860, Lalo wrote three major chamber works: two piano trios and a string quartet. That he did so, on the surface, is quite surprising. One might almost say that in doing so, he had entered *terra incognita* as far as French composers were concerned. This is not to say French composers before him had not tried their hand at chamber music. George Onslow, Louise Farrenc and Théodore Gouvy, along with a few others, had all written a substantial number of chamber music works, but none had made their reputation in France by so-doing. For example, Onslow's sublime quartets and quintets, though widely popular in Germany, Austria and England, were virtually unknown in his native land. In despair and realizing that the only way to make a name for himself as a composer in France was to write an opera, Onslow attempted it with mixed results. By 1850, French interest in chamber music, in fact in all pure instrumental music, was at low ebb and opera was held to be the alpha and omega of a composer's talent. As Saint-Saëns was later to write, the only way a composer could get a chamber work premiered in Paris was by renting the hall himself and inviting his friends. Lalo was to learn this the hard way, finding that none of his three chamber music works attracted any attention.

Lalo's interest in chamber music can be attributed to two factors. First, his musical education had had a strong German bias. This came from both Schulhoff, who was Austrian, as well as from Habeneck, who championed Beethoven at a time when he was highly unpopular in France. The second factor was that for more than a decade, Lalo served as second violin in Jules Armingaud's string quartet, probably the premier ensemble of its type in France at the time. Swimming against the current of French taste, Armingaud took upon himself the task of re-introducing the French public to the works of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven as well as the new efforts by Mendelssohn and Schumann. Lalo's own quartet was inspired by this experience and, for a time, it became part of the Armingaud Quartet's repertoire. But despite the success of the Armingaud's quartet in generating some interest chamber music, Lalo's quartet quickly disappeared from the scene once they disbanded.

This experience caused Lalo to turn away from chamber music for two decades. Though he enjoyed some modicum of success from his instrumental concerti: the *Symphonie Espagnole* and the *Concerto Russe*, both for violin, and the cello concerto, *Rhapsodie Norvégienne*, he still remained a minor name in France as his operas from this period failed. It was not until 1885, when his opera *Le roi d'Ys* was staged with overwhelming success in Paris, that he finally achieved fame in his homeland.

Speaking in general of all three of Lalo's piano trios, one must note that the string parts reveal a composer who was extremely familiar with the technique of both the violin and the cello. This

is no surprise as Lalo was a deft performer on both instruments. And though he was no pianist, Lalo's piano parts are no less effective, although at times, the massive chords for which he calls are somewhat awkward to execute. In these trios, the pianist is assigned a role similar to the that of an orchestral conductor. The dense instrumentation of the music requires the pianist to be alert to the tonal color which is in great part the allurements of these compositions. As such, the pianist must be alive to the quick changes in dynamics and touch, which are indicated in the part.

The structural form of the trios follows the German model of four movements, which became the norm from Beethoven on. Their design is clear and extremely easy to grasp. Tonally, Lalo was influenced greatly by Mendelssohn and to a lesser degree by Schumann. However, unlike either of them, he often utilizes bizarre rhythms with highly colorful harmonies and extreme dynamic contrasts. This is particularly true of his scherzi, which add to this mix the clever use of syncopation. His melodies are often noble with a bent toward the melancholy. The way in which he takes motifs and breaks them into smaller fragments to obtain smaller kernels from which to build new melodies is not really contrapuntal. These smaller kernels are played off of each other in elaborate juxtapositioning by different voices. In his choice of key selection, Lalo, as did Schubert, favored a very wide variety, which he quickly visits by means of bold modulations. While the melodies do not employ much in the way of chromaticism as those of say Spohr or Onslow, it is often found in his harmonies.

Lalo's first two piano trios were composed in the first part of the 1850's, the exact dates are no longer known. Hence, chronologically speaking, these works fall between those of Schumann and Brahms. In his article on Lalo's chamber music in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, in my opinion, Monsieur Florent Schmitt unjustly ignores the **Piano Trio No.1 in c minor, Op.7**. Of course, it may not have been intentional, but to my mind this is a very appealing work and certainly the equal of Nos. 2 and 3, which he discusses at length. The trio is in four movements and follows a Fast-Slow-Fast-Fast pattern. The opening *Allegro moderato* begins with a moody theme in the cello.

The violin then takes it up and brings with it additional forward motion.

The lyrical second theme (example on right) is full of hope. It, too, is introduced by the cello.

(Continued on page 8)

Andante. (Met: ♩ - 76)

PIANO. *p*

espressione.

cres.

After the drama and excitement of the preceding movement, Lalo relaxes with a lovely, peaceful *Romance, andante*, classical in form. The presentation of the theme is, in this case, entirely entrusted to the piano. The cello restates the theme and is given the task of developing it further. After this, the violin makes an entrance. Then comes a march like second subject in which the tempo is picked up. The melody is restless. When the violin is given the development, the broader picture starts to become clearer. Lalo is creating, in the loosest sense, a set of variations, or so it appears, because of the nearness of the two themes.

A rhythmically interesting *Scherzo, allegretto* follows. Notice how the perky quality of the melody is entirely created by the use of repeated eights in the piano, first on the third beat, then twice in the second beat and finally on the first beat. Added to this is the fact that the theme in the strings always begins with an entrance just after one of the beats, the first part of which is struck by the piano. Again Lalo resorts to a march for his second theme

Allegretto.

pp

Allegretto. (Met: ♩ 176)

mf

pp

The trio section is rather short and very closely related in rhythm to the scherzo which makes it arguable as to whether there even is a trio. All told, however, it is not a criticism because this is a very deftly handled movement, where he moves from one theme to the next seamlessly.

pp

pp

FINAL. Récit. (ad lib.)

mf

f

rit - -

lento.

pesante.

ff

Cello Recitativ to Finale

In the finale, *Allegro*, the listeners attention is immediately captured by the searching, melancholy, dramatic solo cello recitative, which serves as a short introduction to the main movement. This is a movement full of drama and of passion, at times interspersed by lovely, and somewhat dainty, interludes.

As can be seen from the example above and the one on the right, the recitative is closely related to the main theme, which is presented by the violin alone with an accompaniment in the piano. Lalo is able to keep the excitement at a high pitch through out and caps off the whole thing with an exciting and satisfying coda. In my opinion, this work is every bit as fine, as the following two trios, and perhaps finer.

FINAL. Récit. *pesante.* *lento.* *ff* *pp* *cres.*

Allegro. (Met: ♩ 80)

8 *ff* *pp*

Violon.

This trio along with the others was recorded on MDG CD# 303 0482 more than 15 years ago. I believe that it is the only time that all three trios were recorded together. I think the recording is still available. The first and third trios were recorded on LP more than 40 years ago and the likelihood of finding them is rather slim. As for the parts, they were originally brought out by the French publisher Costallat, but they have long been unavailable. However, in 2007 the parts to this trio, as well as the Second Piano Trio, were published by Edition Silvertrust and are available from them.

Allegro maestoso

Violin

Violoncello

pp

pp

f

sf

sf

p

As stated earlier, there is no conclusive evidence as to when the first two trios were written, and hence no one any longer knows just when they were composed other than sometime in the 1850's. As such, it is impossible to say, just how much time separated the first trio from the second. But judging from the thematic material, its treatment and the overall impression of each work, I would not be surprised to learn that Lalo had started in on **Piano Trio No.2 in b minor** immediately after he completed No.1. Interestingly, unlike the first and third trios, it has no opus number. The first movement, *Allegro maestoso*, begins quietly in a Schumannesque fashion with an attractive, yearning melody presented by the strings alone. (example at top of page) Slowly the music builds in dynamics and tension. Suddenly Lalo inserts a dramatic, downward-plunging chromatic passage which sets things off. Exciting, and at times turbulent, this theme stands in stark contrast to the delicate and excruciatingly lovely second movement. Without saying, it is the rhythms or the searching melodies, there is, nonetheless, a certain *je ne sais quoi*, which if you listen to this movement immediately after hearing the first trio, clearly establishes that the two trios are related. Especially impressive is the brilliant coda by which

Andante con moto

mf

Ped: *

f

p

mf

mf

f

pp

this movement is brought to a conclusions.

The slow movement, *Andante con moto*, consists of two simple but very fine melodies which Lalo seamlessly juxtapositions. It begins quite reticently with the main theme being given out by the piano alone. While not quite religious it has an ethereal nature about it. The highly romantic second theme has a wonderful duet between the strings.

Minuetto, allegretto 1° tempo.

In the third movement, *Minuetto, allegretto*, a Spanish element appears. Neither a minuet nor an allegretto, it is a rhythmically interesting scherzo. After a short introduction, an off-beat, Spanish style rhythm announces the main theme.

pp

p

f

ff

cresc:

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

The exciting and dramatic finale, *Allegro agitato*, crowns this very fine work. It begins immediately without any introduction, as the piano pounds out the first theme, which when taken over by the strings is much less ferocious and considerably more lyrical. Again, there is a short but brilliant coda

Allegro agitato

The image shows two systems of musical notation for the finale. The top system features a piano part with a treble and bass clef, marked with *ff* and *cres.*. The bottom system features a string part with a treble and bass clef, marked with *pp ben staccato* and *Ped.*

Piano Trio No.3 in a minor, Op.26, Lalo's final effort in this genre, has generally been held to be his best by most critics. The reason that is usually given is that it alone of the three, sounds French. But there is a very good reason for this. Nearly thirty years separate the third trio from his earlier two, and much had happened during those thirty years. Of the younger generation, the only French composers of any significance who tried their hand at chamber music were Lalo and Saint-Saëns. (Théodore Gouvy, a French Alsatian, chose mainly to live in Germany thus permanently removing himself from realm of mainstream French composers. Félicien David (1810-76) a contemporary of Farrenc, who gained fame for his exotic operas, did write three piano trios in 1857. But though they post-date the works of Farrenc and Onslow, they are no more advanced, taking Beethoven and Schubert as his models. The fact is, except in the realm of opera, there was no French school of composition. The French regarded pure instrumental music as German. Hence, there was no other model for French composers to follow but that of the Germans. Those French composers who had come before Lalo and Saint-Saëns, such as Onslow and Farrence, were in a similar situation. Though their compositions (especially Onslow's) are entirely original sounding, Mozart, Haydn and early Beethoven served as their models. For Lalo and Saint-Saëns, it was Mendelssohn and Schumann. But beyond serving as mere models, the music of Mendelssohn and Schumann was *admired* by both men. Considering all of this, it is not surprising that the early chamber works of both composers—though they do not sound like either Mendelssohn or Schumann—do sound like they could have been written by a German composer. What then happened during the intervening 30 years was that, bit by bit, French composers such as Lalo, Saint-Saëns and Fauré began to create

a French sounding body of instrumental music. Lalo's Third Piano Trio, dating from 1880, was one of the first works of its type, and as such, it marks a clear break with the earlier two trios

Allegro appassionato (♩ = 160)

The image shows five systems of musical notation for the first movement, labeled VIOLON and VIOLONCELLE. The notation includes various dynamics such as *ff*, *mf*, *dolce*, *pp*, and *espr.*, along with performance markings like *poco cresc.* and *mf*.

The opening movement, *Allegro appassionato*, does not really begin passionately. The main theme, consists of a dialogue between the violin and the cello, with each instrument giving out only part of the theme. (example on the left) Slowly, the music does become more passionate by means of gradual dynamic increases. The theme is well suited to this. The overall effect is of water coming to a boil, you can hear the climax coming.

Diskology: Sergei Lyapunov: Sextet for Piano, 2 Violins, Viola, Cello & Bass

(Continued from page 3)

composition teacher. After his studies in Moscow, he moved to St. Petersburg, where he became friends with the composers of the Nationalist School, in particular Balakirev. He eventually became a professor of piano at the Petersburg Conservatory and in 1893, along with Liadov and Balakirev, was commissioned by the Imperial Geographical Society to collect folksongs from the northern provinces of the Russian empire. The bulk of his work is for piano and shows the influence of Liszt. At the same time, however, he was firmly in the Russian nationalist school formed by Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov and the latter's students. Toward the end of his life, he was hailed as the foremost living composer of the Nationalist School by the leading Russian music critic, this despite the fact that Glazunov was still alive. The **Sextet for Piano, String Quartet and Bass, Op.63** was composed in 1915 and revised in 1921 and is the sole significant piece of chamber music he composed. Although there are other piano sextets of the same instrumentation, probably only the Mendelssohn and the Glinka sextets would have been known to him. The big first movement, *Allegro maestoso*, makes a very strong impression. It begins with a somber, folksong-like melody. As the

movement is developed the music becomes more passionate. A second theme sounds even more Russian than the first, and reminds one of music from the Orthodox Church. The second movement is a sparkling, *Scherzo, allegro vivace*. One can hear echoes of some of Korsakov's favorite rhythmic patterns, particularly those used in *Schererazade*, yet the music in no way sounds derivative or imitative. A crystalline quality is created by the tonal registers in which he writes for the individual voices. A long, but beautiful, slow movement follows. The writing is very romantic, the high point coming with a fetching cello solo that then morphs into a lovely lovers' duet between the first violin and cello, which would not have been out of place in a Russian opera set in Central Asia. The opening bars to the finale, *Allegro risoluto*, have a hard-driving rhythm and a Brahmsian tonal flavor. By contrast, the second subject is intensely lyrical. The powerful coda, in which both themes battle it out for supremacy, makes a deep impression. I found this a highly appealing, well-written work. We are unlikely to ever hear it in concert and therefore I recommend that you take advantage of the opportunity to hear this fine work on **Dutton CD# 6880**.



New Recordings



A listing of recently recorded non standard chamber music on CD by category.

String Quartets

Jon BAUMAN (1939-) Nos. 1-4, Diskant 077 / Agusti BORGUNYO (1894-1967) Nos.1-2, La Ma de Guido 2078 / John JOUBERT (1927-) No.2, SOMM 060-2 / Karl KUPINSKI (1782-1857) Fantasie, Acte Prealable 143 / Carl NIELSEN (1865-1931) Nos.1-2, BIS 1444 / Nikolai MYASKOVSKY (1881-1950) Nos.1-3, Northern Flowers 9950 / Quincy PORTER (1897-1966) Nos.1-4 Naxos 8.559305 / Jan SIBELIUS (1865-1957) Complete Str Qts, BIS1903-5 / Igor STRAVINSKY (1882-1971) 3 Pieces, MD&G 613 1333

Strings Only-Not Quartets

Luigi BOCCHERINI (1743-1805) 6 Trios, Op.14, La Camera Real Glossa 920308

Piano Trios

Volkmar ANDREAE (1879-1962) Nos.1-2, Guild 7307 / Rhene BATON (1879-1940) Op.31, Alma 2542 / Niels BENTZON (1919-2000) Op.553, Dacapo 8.226503 / Jozef ELSINER (1769-1854) Op.2, Acte Prealabel 138 / Zdenek FIBICH (1850-1900) Trio in f, Supraphon 3927 / John Ireland (1879-1962) Nos.2-3 & Phantasie Trio, Lyrita 2271 / John

JOUBERT (1927-) Trio, SOMM 060-2 / Herman KOPPEL (1908-99) Op.88, Dacapo 8.226503 / Franciszek LESSEL (1780-1838) Op.5, Acte Prealable 143 / Bohuslav MARTINU (1891-1959) No.2, Supraphon 3927 / Poul OLSEN (1922-82) Op.77, Dacapo 8.226503 / Karl RASMUSSEN (1947-) Trauergondol, Dacapo 8.226503 / Joseph Guy ROPARTZ (1864-1955) Trio in a, Alma 2542 / Jan SIBELIUS (1865-1957) Complete Pno Trios, BIS 1903-05 / Charles Villiers STANFORD (1852-1924) No.3, Naxos 8.570416 / Rodion SHCHEDRIN (1932-) Terzetto & 3 Funny Pieces, Hanssler 93.195

Piano Quartets, Quintets & Sextets

William ALWYN (1905-85) Rhapsody for Pno Qt, Naxos 8.570340 / Samuel COLERIDGE TAYLOR (1875-1912) Quintet, Op.1, Hyperion 67590 / Jan DUSSEK (1760-1812) Quintet, Op.41, Brilliant Classics 93203 / Jozep ELSNER (1769-1854) Qt, Op.15, Acte Prealable 138 / Johann Nepomuk HUMMEL (1778-1837) Quintet Op.87, Brilliant Classics 932203 / George ONSLOW (1784-1853) Quintet Op.76, Brilliant Classics 93203 / Ferdinand RIES (1784-1838) Quartet Op.16, MD&G 643 1454 / Jan SIBELIUS (1865-1957) Complete Pno Qts, BIS 1903-05

Winds & Strings

Muzio CLEMENTI (1752-1832) Nonet in E flat, Genuin 87087 / Samuel COLERIDGE TAYLOR (1875-1912) Cln Qnt, Op.10, Hyperion 67590 / Georg RITTER (1748-1808) 6 Bassoon Qts, Op.1, Naxos 8.570500 / Howard SKEMPTON (1947-) Cln Qnt, NMC D135/ Louis SPOHR (1784-1859) Nonet Op.31, Genuin 87087 / Charles Villiers STANFORD (1852-1924) 3 Fantasies for Cln & Str Qt, Naxos 8.570416

Winds, Strings & Piano

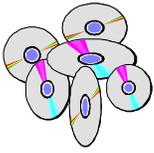
Anton EBERL (1765-1807) Trio for Cln, Vc & Pno, Op.36, Quintet for Pno, Cln, 2 Vla & Vc, Op.41 & Quintet for Pno, Ob, Vln, Vla & Vc Op.48, CPO 777 184 / Alfred UHL (1909-92) Kleines Konzert for Vla, Cln & Pno, Centaur 2853

Piano & Winds

Franz DANZI (1763-1826) 3 Quintets, Op.41, Op.68, BIS 1581-82 / Johann Nepomuk HUMMEL (1778-1837) Trio for Fl, Vc & Pno Op.78, Fleur de Son 57983

Winds Only

Franz DANZI (1763-1826) 3 Quintets, Op.56, 3 Quintets Op.67, 3 Quintets, Op.68, BIS 1581-82



Diskology: Alexander Grechaninov: String Quartet No.3 Walter Rabl: Quartet for Clarinet, Violin, Cello & Piano Joseph Labor: Quintet for Piano, Clarinet, Violin, Viola & Cello



Also on disk is **String Quartet No.3 in c minor** by **Alexander Gretchaninov** (1864-1956) Readers may recall that in Vol.17 No.1 (Spring 2006) we reviewed a recording of his first two string quartets. Gretchaninov, born in Moscow studied with Arensky and Sergei Taneyev and subsequently with Rimsky-Korsakov in St. Petersburg. His works, especially those for the Russian Orthodox service, achieved considerable success within Russia, while his instrumental works enjoyed even wider acclaim. By 1910, he was considered a composer of such distinction that the Tsar had awarded him an annual pension. Though he remained in Russia for several years after the Revolution, ultimately, he chose to emigrate, first to France in 1925 and then to the U.S. in 1939 where he remained for the rest of his life. His First String Quartet, composed in 1894, shows the influence of Rimsky-Korsakov and to a lesser extent Tchaikovsky, the Second, which dates from 1913, is a kind of synthesis of Sergei Taneyev, Scriabin and the French impressionists. **String Quartet No.3 in c minor, Op.75** was composed in 1916, at the height of the First World War just as things began going very poorly for the Russians. Certainly one can imagine strife and struggle very clearly in the highly dramatic opening movement, *Lento, allegro moderato*. The music is very chromatic and develops as a tense conversation between the voices. Here Gretchaninov has distanced himself entirely from the influence of the French impressionists and, to a lesser degree, from the Russian Nationalist School with its insistence on the use of Russian folk melody. Instead, we hear the tonalities of Central European, late romanticism. The second movement, *Lento assai*, is a theme and set of variations. The theme, *Espressivo, amoroso* is languid. One of the middle variations is a terse fugue with echoes of Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*. It is only in the fast, pulsing *Scherzo*, which comes next, that we hear an overtly Russian theme, framed in the manner of Korsakov. In the middle, a march follows a fanfare. The big, exuberant finale, *Allegro vivace*, though not overtly Russian, nonetheless, does sound like music for a festival, as Glazunov might have conceived it., but executed far more effectively. Although this quartet breaks no new ground, it is a first class work

Cedille CD#90000 088 presents two superb, but virtually unknown, works for piano, clarinet and strings. The first is the **Quartet in E flat Major for Piano, Clarinet, Violin & Cello, Op.1** by **Walter Rabl** (1873-1940). If you have not heard of him, you may be excused. Although Rabl, after giving up the study of law, set out to be a composer, his composing career was rather short and most of what he wrote was either for voice or the opera. He made his name as a conductor and only has two chamber works to his credit, a set of fantasy pieces for piano trio and this Quartet for Piano, Clarinet, Violin and Cello. Rabl was born in Vienna and studied there as well as in Salzburg and Prague where he worked on a doctorate. It was this Quartet which set him on his way. He entered the work in the 1896 competition held by the Wiener Tonkünstlerverein. Brahms, who was the head judge, selected the work for the first prize.

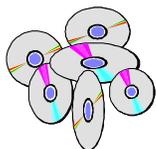
Despite the quartet's Op.1 designation, this is an extraordinarily mature work which could well have come from the pen of someone who had been practicing their art for 25 years. The opening *Allegro moderato* begins with a rather languid, melody, reminiscent of Brahms' Op.114 trio for piano, clarinet 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 relaxed Brahmsian fashion but changes mood in a rather original fashion. The buoyant finale, *Allegro con brio*, brings this excellent piece to a satisfying close. As noted, this is a first rate work. Parts are available from Simrock or Edition Silvertrust



The second work on disk is the **Quintet for Piano, Clarinet, Violin, Viola & Cello in D Major, Op.11** by **Josef Labor** (1842-1924). Labor, who was born in the Bohemian town of Horowitz and blinded by smallpox at the age of three, was, as a result, sent to Vienna to study at the Institute for the Blind. His precocious musical talent resulted in his being sent to study at 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. His Quintet was composed in 1900. The opening *Allegro* begins in a very leisurely fashion with a rather gentle melody, despite the tempo marking. Only gradually does the tempo quicken, and then not all that much. Labor achieves a wonderful sonority with this combination of instruments. The viola allows him to write for the cello in its lowest register more often than he could have without it. The second movement, *Allegretto grazioso*, begins with a lovely folk melody in the clarinet. Again the music is genial with a gentle quality. The second theme though passionate remains controlled and avoids dramatic outbursts. The very interesting *Quasi fantasia—Adagio* which follows has a very free form structure with many tempo changes. Beginning with a solemn funereal subject in the form of a fantasia for piano, the other instruments are then given short solos before a violin cadenza leads to the finale, *Tema con variazioni, quasi allegretto*. It has a simple folk melody for the theme and begins at a leisurely pace. Each variation builds upon the last and very gradually brings more drama than the preceding variation. The coda recalls the opening theme from the

(Continued on page 14)



Franz Krommer: 2 Quintets and a Quartet for Oboe and Strings

Johann Kalliwoda: Three String Quartets

first movement. A fine work unlikely to be heard in concert, hence all the more reason to hear it on CD. Highly recommended.



Franz Krommer (1759-1831) has appeared on these pages with some regularity, and deservedly so. After Mozart and Haydn, Krommer ranks as one of the best composers of the Viennese Classical era. As a violin virtuoso, it is ironic that today Krommer is primarily remembered for his works for wind instruments. Chamber music, of which he wrote a tremendous amount, was unquestionably his *métier*. The first work on Naxos CD#8.557669 is his **Quartet**

No.3 in F Major for Oboe, Violin, Viola & Cello. This work, along with the two others on disk, were discovered by Nancy King, the oboist on disk, in a catalogue of works for oboe by Czech and Slovak composers. This is most likely the first recording of these works. The Quartet is in four movements: *Allegro moderato*, *Menuetto*, *allegretto*, *Andante* and *Rondo*. No specific information about any of the works on disk is given, but the quartet appears to date from the 1790's. This is truly a lovely work and a fine example of Krommer's gift for melody. However, it is basically a mini oboe concerto. The strings are entirely used in an accompanying role with the exception of the violin which occasionally is given a bit of thematic material. **Quintet No.1 in C Major** and **Quintet No.2 in E flat Major**, are both for Oboe, Violin, 2 Violas and Cello. Each is in four movements. Quintet No.1 has an *Allegro moderato*, *Adagio*, *Menuetto*, *allegretto*, and *Allegro* while Quintet No.2 has an *Allegro moderato*, *Andante moderato*, *Menuetto*, *allegretto* and an *Andante poco allegretto*. Both of these works appear to date from the same period as the quartet, the 1790's. Each quintet is full of lovely melodies. While the style is concertante, and while the oboe is clearly *primus inter pares*, neither of the quintets qualifies for the sobriquet oboe concerto. The strings are altogether more prominent than they are in the quartet. Not only is the accompaniment more interesting, but the strings are given a more independent role to play, albeit usually as a massed group. None of these works is likely to be heard in concert or seen in print and the only

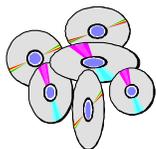
way you will get to hear them is via this CD which is recommended.



Johann Wenzel Kalliwoda (1801-66), Jan Vaclav Kalivoda in the Czech form, is a name though virtually unknown today, except perhaps to violinists. However, he was a well-known and highly respected composer, conductor and soloist during his lifetime. Schumann, among others, held a high opinion of his compositions and he is sometimes spoken of as the link be-

tween Beethoven and Schumann. He was born in Prague and studied at the conservatory there. After some years of touring as a concert violinist, he chose permanent employment as conductor of the Donaueschingen Orchestra at the court of Prince Karl Egon II. Thereafter, Kalliwoda devoted what free time he had to composition as a means of supplementing his income and was, for the last 30 years of his life, considered a "house composer" by the publisher C.F. Peters who published all but 60 of his nearly 250 works. In 1831, Peters commissioned three string quartets, specifying that they "were not to be merely a showcase for the first violin, but that the music should be divided up nicely among the instruments and in the beautiful style of Mozart." **String Quartet No.1 in e minor, Op.61** was completed in 1835. The opening of the first movement, *Allegro moderato*, is highly chromatic and almost modern sounding. This gives way to a very dramatic main theme brought forth by the first violin. While the style is neither concertante nor a *quatour brillant a la Spohr*, nonetheless, Kalliwoda seems to have had some trouble following the instruction of "nicely dividing up the music" and more than the lions share is given to the first violin. None of the other voices are given the chance to carry any of the themes for more than a few moments at a time. In the *Adagio* which follows, he is more successful. The main theme is quite lovely and presented as a group effort, with the cello taking the lead in the early innings. The second theme borders on being trite while the dramatic middle section, underpinned by an accompaniment of drummed triplets, is quite effective. The very original *Scherzo*, with its quirky rhythm, is entirely *pizzicato* and extremely well done. In the contrasting trio section, the lower voices imitate the droning of bagpipes, while the first violin plays a folk melody. The exciting finale, *Vivace*, is, more or less, a group effort with all taking part. The themes are appealing and a clever fugue pushes the music forward effortlessly. All in all, this is a good work, pleasant to hear and probably fun to play if it were in print.

String Quartet No.2 in A Major, Op.62 was completed a year after the first in 1836. The *Allegro vivace*, which begins the quartet, starts with two powerful chords, portending a dramatic and stormy theme to come. But what follows is a rather sunny and light-hearted mazaruka. At times very fast plunging passages dominate, but they are separated by more relaxed episodes where the music is more expansive. Most of the difficult and fleet passage work is given to the first violin. The second movement is a short scherzo, *Presto*. It begins as a canon between the first violin and cello before the former breaks loose and carries the melody by itself. The trio consists of a very beautiful and lyrical melody given to the first violin and then the viola. Next comes an *Adagio*, which opens with the cello brooding in its lowest register. The rest of the movement is an aria for the first violin, with a soft accompaniment. The short finale, *Vivace*, is an exciting *moto perpetuo* but almost entirely for the first violin. Amadeus brought out a new edition of this work a few years back. **String Quartet No.3 in G Major, Op.90** dates from 1838. Kalliwoda seems to have entirely forgotten the instructions he received from Peters because this work, more or less, is a vehicle for the first violin, a *quatour brillant*. Recognizing this, of its kind, it is on a par with, if not superior to the best of the works of Spohr. It is full of lovely themes and fine writing. Of the three, the first is the best,



Charles Villiers Stanford: A Piano Quintet & A String Quintet César Franck: Two Piano Trios

but all are worth hearing. Its unlikely you will ever hear them in concert A recommended CD.



Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) was born in Dublin. After attending Cambridge, he 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. He was 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 another Brahms imitator. This criticism is both unfair and wide of the mark. While it is to some extent true that his early works show a German influence, this should really come as no surprise. 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. So this criticism seems particularly unjust in view of the fact that he ultimately 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 single-handedly, jump-started the British repertoire. Among his many students were Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, Herbert Howells, Frank Bridge, Ernst Moreran, Arthur Bliss, and Percy Grainger.

The first work on **Hyperion CD#67505** presents his **Piano Quintet in d minor, Op.25**. The Piano Quintet dates from 1886. This work was conceived as a successor to the quintets of Schumann and Brahms. The opening *Allegro moderato ma agitato* is written on a colossal scale. The opening theme in the minor is troubled and ruminative with an elegiac tinge. The lovely second theme is not so gloomy. The melodies and harmonies are lush and the music richly scored. The following energetic *Scherzo* is rhythmically original and captivating, while the mood is redolent of goblins. The writing and ideas are superb. The trio is based on a simple folk melody. The substantial *Adagio espressivo* showcases Stanford’s gift for expansive, self-developing lyrical melodies and is clearly the work’s center of gravity. It begins leisurely and flows along calming for quite some time before it suddenly rises to a huge dramatic climax in the middle of the movement. The finale, *Allegro risoluto*, is in the major and serves as an affirmation of hope setting aside the troubled moods which have preceded it. In my opinion, this quintet must, after the Brahms and the Dvorak, be placed near the top of its class. The second work on disk is his **String Quintet (2 Vla) No.1 in F Major, Op.85**. The opening *Allegro* has a buoyant theme, full of warmth and richly written. The middle movement, *Andante*, features a lovely viola solo. The second theme is of Irish origin. A powerful and rhythmically restless middle section presents a lament. Stanford chose to combine the scherzo, an *Allegretto*, with the finale, an *Allegro*, into one movement. The two are linked together by the larger structure of a theme and set of variations. The *Allegretto* is also of Irish ori-

gin. The finale serves as the last and biggest variation. Another excellent work. Both are available from Edition Silvertrust, or photocopy facimile from Merton Music.

As influential as **César Franck** (1822-1890) was to the development of French music, today, his compositions, including his chamber music works, are rarely performed. Born at Liège in 1822, Franck originally planned to follow a career as a virtuoso pianist, but, while at the Paris Conservatory, it became clear that he was not good enough, so he decided to concentrate on composition. He earned his living and eventually won fame as an organist, later becoming organ professor at the Conservatory. His best known chamber works are his Piano Quintet from 1879 and his String Quartet, composed in 1890 not long before his death. Even today, both works are occasionally performed in concert. But one never hears any of his four piano trios. The first three were published as his Op.1 Nos.1-3 in 1840, composed while he was a student of Reicha at the Conservatory.



Vincent d’Indy, in his article on Franck in Cobbett’s Cyclopedica, calls Franck’s **Piano Trio No.1 in f# minor, Op.1 No.1** a work, which despite its timidity and artless modulations, an epoch-making work in the history of composition. This is certainly an overstatement, but it *is* a very interesting work. In three movements, the lengthy opening *Andante* begins very calmly and stays that way for a long time as the two main song-like themes are introduced. Each is attractive. Except for a brief period in the middle, the dramatic temperature is kept on low. Franck succeeds in holding the listener’s interest by having the music continually sound like something dramatic is about to happen. The influence of middle Beethoven can be heard in both this movement and particularly in the middle movement, *Allegro molto*, an engaging scherzo. The massive finale, more than 14 minutes in length, bursts forth in a series of powerful chords in the piano. The writing is highly dramatic and does have what might be called an early French sound. Beethoven is not hovering in the background. Parts are available from several publishers. Franck gave **Piano Trio No.2 in B flat Major, Op.1 No.2** the subtitle *Trio de Salon*. Despite its title, it is not a light-weight piece of fluff. Nor can I agree with d’Indy who, in his article, trashes it. For one thing, here the part writing is far better in that the piano does not continually overpower the strings. The substantial opening *Allegro moderato*, is dominated by an air of pathos. In the following, *Andantino*, the music elicits the exotic and features a long and haunting cello solo. Third is a lovely and somewhat dainty *Tempo di Minuetto*. The finale, *Allegro molto*, begins with an off-beat rhythm in the piano. When the strings enter, we hear echos of Mozart and early Beethoven, but later there is a touch of salon music to be heard in a kind of Italian operatic interlude. A masterwork—no, but not a bad work. Both on **Pavane CD ADW 7500**. Recommended.

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE



Charles V. Stanford



S. Coleridge-Taylor



Édouard Lalo



Bohuslav Martinu



Vaclav Trojan



Sergei Lyapunov



Joseph Labor



Alex. Gretchaninov



Johann Kalliwoda



César Franck

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KROMMER, LACHNER, GRANADOS, VAN BREE, GRETCHANINOV