

THE
**CHAMBER MUSIC
JOURNAL**

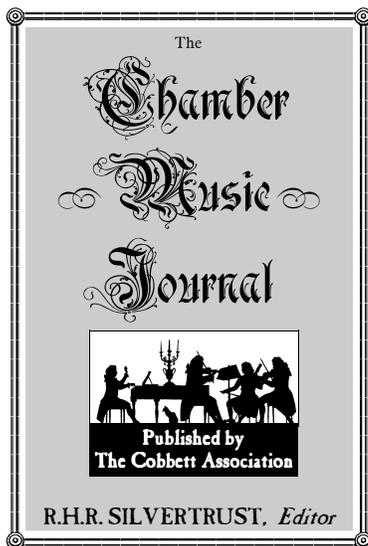
*The Essential Guide
For Players & Listeners
To The Wider World
of Chamber Music*

***Alexander Glazunov's Works
For String Quartet
The Piano in Chamber Ensemble
2nd Edition-A Review
The Wind Quintets of Franz Danzi***

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The Sounding Board-Letters to the Editor

**Stanley Grill's Nonet**

American composer and Cobbett Member Stanley Grill has written us with the following information:

My Nonet was started shortly after hearing Bohuslav Martinu's Nonet for the first time, with an aim towards achieving the same buoyant, passionate and optimistic expressiveness. The combination of a standard woodwind quintet plus a standard string quartet is a slight departure from the "Czech" nonet, which employs a single violin and a double bass. As I worked with the orchestral colors that this combination of instruments makes possible, I decided to make the work a 'quasi' concerto, and rather than balance the strings evenly, gave the first violinist a prominent role to play.

As it often does, life intervened to influence this piece – this time more so than usual. I started writing it during the summer of 2001, and was part way through the first movement on September 11th. That changed everything – as I found myself unable to write for months afterwards. At first, writing music seemed pointless in the face of the horror of that terrible event. Months later, having concluded that the awful things that some people seem willing to do to one another make it all the more necessary for others to strive to create beautiful things, I started back to work on the Nonet, completing it in the Spring of 2002. The piece starts out trying to convey something of the energy and motion of people in a big city going about their busy day – however this forward motion is broken, to resume, post 9/11, with the nine voices joined together in a hymn-like reprise. The juxtaposition of energetic motion with somber reflection, entirely unanticipated at the beginning, came to characterize the Nonet. The second movement is a gentle song. Somehow, the emotional strain of events caused me to start listening, rather obsessively, to Bruckner symphonies during this period, and the third and final movement is somewhat indebted to his penchant for orchestrating groups in blocks, even if stylistically very different.

The first movement is on my webpage at www.myspace.com/stanleygrill. It was recorded live at the premiere performance by the Bronx Arts Ensemble, with Jorge Avila playing the first violin part. The full score is available from the on-line library of the American Music Center and if anyone is interested in playing it, they can contact me directly for the parts at stgrill@optonline.net.

Hubert Parry's Nonet

I was very disappointed that Professor Ussi did not mention the 1877 Nonet in B flat Major of Sir Hubert Parry (1848-1918). This is a marvellous work. Surely it deserved a mention.

Arnold Glassberg
New York, NY

Professor Ussi replies: Yes, Sir Hubert's work is a very worthwhile piece, but I, as a violinist have never played it. And neither has any other string player because Parry's Nonet is a wind nonet for Flute, Oboe, English Horn, 2 Clarinets, 2 Bassoons and 2 Horns. As a work for winds only, it is of a different genre than that of works for winds and strings, or even winds, strings and piano and as such was beyond the scope of my article..

Slow Movement to Lalo's Piano Trio No.3

About a decade ago, for a number of years, we played two of Lalo's piano trios, the First and Third. I agree with Mr. Lefebvre regarding the pleasantness of the First Piano Trio (I've never heard the Second), but I disagree completely with his comments about the slow movement of Piano Trio No. 3. Yes, it is slow in developing, but the harmonies are powerful and, I think, for its time, highly unusual. To me, it has a somber power not "plodding" as he claims, not ponderous and pretentious, but intense and unique in the Trio literature. But, for what it's worth, our cellist of those days, didn't particularly care for it either. Personally, I think Lalo was almost the equal of Saint Saens in his Trio writing. Why don't we hear his music more often?

John F Wilson
Egg Harbor, Wisconsin

Another Recording of Lalo's Piano Trios

I read the article about Lalo's piano trios with great interest. Some of your readers might like to know that my Barbican Piano Trio also recorded these three wonderful trios together on one CD for ASV in 1994 CDDCA899. With the demise of ASV and Sanctuary Records I have the last remaining stock of this recording which earned an enthusiastic response from the critics on its release

Robert Max
London, UK

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.

ALEXANDER GLAZUNOV'S WORKS FOR STRING QUARTET

by Moise Shevitovsky



In Russia, when playing string quartets either professionally or just for fun, the works of Alexander Glazunov featured prominently. Later, I moved to the West, living for a while in Frankfurt, then Paris, then London and finally New York. I must say how surprised I was to find that in none of these places, with the exception of Frankfurt, did anyone play or even know of the string quartets of Alexander Glazunov. Oh yes, a few had heard the pieces he had written for the *Les Vendredis* of Belaiev or perhaps of his *Novelettes*, but certainly not his string quartets proper.

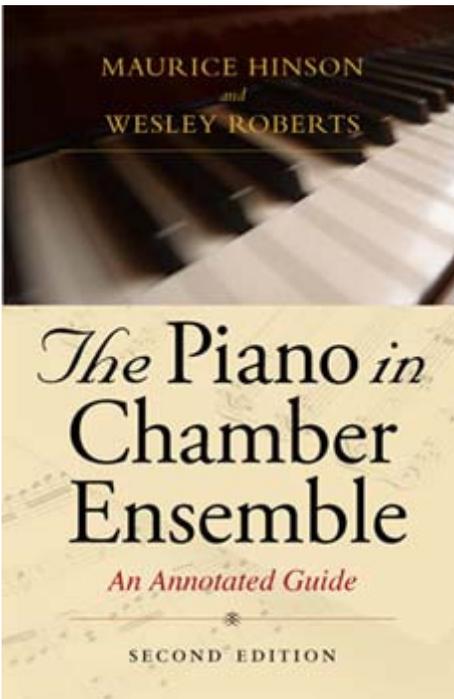
To be honest, Glazunov is simply not very well-known at all in the West. Although he has not been ignored by the recording companies, few, if any, of his compositions are ever programmed in the concert hall. Occasionally, one does hear the Violin Concerto, and in Germany I once attended a performance of his ballet *The Seasons*, Op.67. Alexander Glazunov (1865-1936) was born in Saint Petersburg, the son of a wealthy book publisher. He began studying piano at the age of nine and started composing not long after. It was Mili Balakirev (founder of the Russian nationalist group "The Mighty Five") who brought Glazunov to the attention of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. This was in 1879. Korsakov, who immediately recognized the boy's talent, took him on as a private student. Glazunov's progress was so fast that within two years, Korsakov considered Glazunov more of a junior colleague than a student. The next year Korsakov premiered Glazunov's First Symphony to considerable acclaim.

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The Piano in Chamber Ensemble

A Review of the 2nd Edition

by Ronald Brickman



For pianists such as myself who started exploring the further reaches of the chamber music repertoire in the late 1970's and 1980's, the publication of Maurice Hinson's *The Piano in Chamber Ensemble, An Annotated Guide* in 1978 provided a major resource and impetus. Clearly laid out and readable, the first edition provided chapters on the duo repertoire of piano paired with all the major instruments, together with chapters on works for piano with two or more instruments (but unfortunately not voice) up through octets. Organized alphabetically by composer, each listing included the title and opus number, the publisher and year of publication, number and titles or tempo markings of movements, in many cases the number of pages of the piano part and duration, and best of all, in most if not all cases, a short description of the work and its level of difficulty for the pianist.

In the early stages of my chamber music collecting, Hinson's annotations were particularly valuable and with hindsight, after discovering these works first hand, amazingly on target. Here, for example, is his description of the Trio, Opus 120 for piano, violin and cello of Fauré: "*Three lofty movements filled with Fauré's incomparable grace and elegance. Thin textures (especially for the period), serene, tenderly persuasive, freely tonal. The second movement projects the piano cantando espressivo spontaneously. Requires more musicianship and refined sensibility than*

(Continued on page 12)

The Wind Quintets

Of Franz Danzi

by Krzysztof Kowalski

Franz Danzi (1763-1826) was, like Franz Krommer, a string player, a cellist to be precise, and yet, today, again like Krommer, if he is known at all, it is for his works for wind instruments. The truth is, he is not that well-known, especially since the standard reference sources, including *Cobbett's Cyclopedia*, have little if anything to say about him or his music. Although surprisingly, a number his works have been recorded, some, such as his wind quintets, several times.

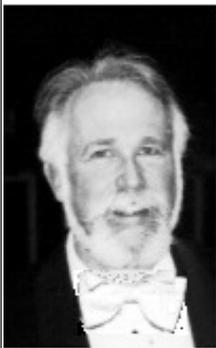
Danzi's father Innocenz Danzi was also a cellist, who had emigrated to Germany. Born in Schwetzingen, Danzi received his training on the cello from his father. He lived at a significant transitional time in the history of European concert music. His career, spanned the late Classical to the early Romantic eras, and coincided with the creation of much of the music which we still hear in concert halls.

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At The Doublebar



Now during the high point of summer, many of you have either attended or will be attending the many different summer work shops which are available all over the world. It has always seemed to me that the gatherings of chamber music players which take

place in these workshops is an excellent trolling ground for new members. Therefore, in the past we, have approached directors of these workshops for permission to send them information about the Association. And, most of the time we have been permitted to do so. However, the results have always been disappointing. Whether this is because the materials are not very prominently displayed or not displayed at all, I cannot say. But I have concluded that the results, in terms of new members, was not worth the tremendous amount of time and effort it took to prepare the information packets and to post them. The truth is, there is probably no better way for us to obtain new members than by current members speaking to their fellow players about the Association.

Why, you might ask, do we need new members. Because, over time, we loose members. As a rule, this is not because people loose interest in the wider world of chamber music. We lose most of our members through either death or by them reaching an age where they can no longer play. In any event, without replacing these loses, we cannot continue for very long. Thus it really is important for you to try and interest your fellow players in joining the Association. So I hope that you will make the effort during your visits to the summer workshops.

I wish to thank our contributors, Professor Kowalski, Dr. Brickman and Mr. Shevitovsky, for their fine articles. Messrs Brickman and Shevitovsky are members of the Association, and I would like to take the opportunity to encourage our membership to contribute articles about the musical discoveries and favorites.

In closing, if you have a renewal notice, please send it back with your payment as soon as possible.—Ray Silvertrust, Editor

Franz Danzi's Wind Quintets

In addition to studies with his father on cello, Danzi also studied composition with Georg Joseph (Abbe) Vogler. In 1778, he became a member of the Mannheim Orchestra of the Elector Karl Theodor, which was then undeniably the best orchestra in the world. In 1780, the first of his woodwind compositions was published. He eventually succeed his father as principal cellist of the orchestra in 1784, at which time it was resident in Munich. In 1790, he married a singer Maria Marchand, with whom he traveled in an opera troupe to Leipzig, Prague, Venice, and Florence. By 1798, once more in Munich, he rose to the position of assistant Kapellmeister in one of the most important musical centers of Europe, but in 1807, unhappy at the treatment he received at court and despairing of any further advancement, he left Munich to be Kapellmeister in the smaller and less important Stuttgart of Frederick I, King of Württemberg. In 1812, he moved to Karlsruhe, where he spent the last years of his life at the Royal Konservatorium struggling to raise the modest courtly musical establishment to respectability.

His three sets of wind quintets Opp.56, 67 and 68, in which he took justifiable pride for the idiomatic treatment of the individual instruments, are his best known compositions. The question arises, how was it that a cellist by training, and a composer drawn toward opera, came to write wind quintets. Two words, economic need, supply the answer. The wind quintet had been a little used genre before Antonin Reicha published his first set of six. Reicha, who was then living in Paris, no doubt was quite surprised by the incredible popularity they enjoyed, not only in Paris, but also in most of the other European capitals. As a result, he quickly followed this set with another each year for the succeeding three years. The evidence suggests that when Danzi published his own set of three wind quintets in 1821, he was well aware of the tremendous popularity of the Reicha wind quintets and hoped to cash in by composing similar works. Not only did he send the Op.56 Quintets to a different publisher—Schlesinger in Paris—rather than his regular German publisher, but on the title page, he made sure that the dedication to Reicha appeared in larger letters than his own name. He did not miscalculate, sales were brisk. It is also clear that Danzi studied Reicha's quintets closely before composing his own. Danzi's style was concise, easily understandable, technically undemanding and formally conventional, while Reicha's was expansive and often demanded a virtuoso technique from the players. In no small part did these calculations pay off for him. This was music which could not only be played in concert, but also at home by amateurs. The Op.56 quintets, of which there are three, are excellent examples of Danzi's gift for melody and tasteful use of chromatic harmonies. In his earlier chamber works, Danzi generally favored the top line, but in these works, he incorporated Reicha's approach of giving each voice an equal say in the proceedings.

Danzi is careful, except in the second quintet, to break no new ground or provide either melodic or harmonic surprises. The gentle, opening *Allegretto* of Op.56 No.1 in B flat Major is somewhat dreamy, the main theme built on an upward-moving scale figure.

Menuetto allegretto $\text{♩} = 69$

The second movement, *Andante con moto*, has a particularly charming main theme followed by an equally lovely second theme, with a marvelous duet between the flute and bassoon at the end.

The Minuetto could serve as perfect example of a classical minuet from the Haydn period. It is snappy and appealing. In the minuet proper (on left), the Oboe and the Flute have the melodic material

However, in the trio section, (example on right) Danzi demonstrates how well he has learned to apportion the melodic material. It is almost unnoticeable as bits of the theme are quickly passed from voice to voice

In the first section of the trio, the melody is begun by the clarinet, quickly taken over by the oboe and then the flute.

In the second strain, the bassoon leads off in the development, being given double the material that other three had in the first section. From there it goes to the horn, the flute and the clarinet.

The music flows along effortlessly, just as the minuet had. It is a perfect little gem that by itself might serve as an excellent encore, being little more than two minutes in duration.

The finale, *Allegretto*, in 6/8, has a up-beat chase melody for its main melody. Of interest is the brief, whirlwind 16th note passages all of the players receive. Again the music zips along effortlessly to the satisfying coda. With this work, Danzi served notice on the French musical public, which was then infatuated with what they considered the exotic sound of chamber works for winds, that here was another composer who could produce charming and effective works for wind quintets. Certainly Reicha, who would have been pleased with the dedication, must have sat up and taken notice that he now had a competitor, upon encountering such a fine work.

29 Trio

Of the three Op.56 quintets, No.2 in g minor is the odd man out. It stands apart from its fellows on several counts. First, it is in the minor. Second, it is considerably shorter than its companions. In Nos. 1 and 3, the opening movements are of substantial length, and by themselves as long as the three following movements together. However, the opening movement to No.2, though the longest, is not on the same scale as the other two. And while No.2 could hardly be called innovative, the format is not as straight forward as the other two. The opening *Allegretto*, for example, starts off with some hesitation before the charming main theme is brought forth by

responson. (example on the right) The hesitation is not really an introduction but an organic part of the main movement.

The following *Andante* is peaceful and a bit dreamy.

The *Menuetto* is quite interesting, being accented on the second and third beats, it has a lopsided quality. Here the melodic material is representative of the transition between the classic and early romantic. Though clearly not yet romantic, the music is certainly very late classic.

In the very short trio section, the flute alone is given the melody in a kind of a la tedesca dance, accompanied by a bagpipe drone created by the other voices.

The main theme to the short but exciting finale, *Allegretto*, is introduced by the flute over an pulsing accompaniment.

Rather than a development, a second theme is immediately introduced by the oboe. It is only after the restatement of the main theme that an interesting development takes place in which all of the voices join in. While considerably shorter than No.1, No.2 succeeds equally in making a fine impression, perhaps on the strength of being in the minor.

The big first movement to Op.56 No.3, *Andante sostenuto-Allegro*, is easily more than half the duration of the other three movements and the longest of the three opening movements. It starts with a formal introduction. It is has a choral quality as all of the voices create the overall effect. The mood is dreamy, almost drowsy with no real expectation created of what is to follow. What follows is a genial melody. Here, for the first time, we find tired and over used "roodle-doodle" or left-hand accompaniment consisting of exploded chords in the form of repeated 16th notes, given to that roodle-doodle expert, the clarinet. (example right). The main theme, a part of which can also be seen from this example, is like the others Mozartean. All in all, though, the thematic material, in my opinion, does not make a strong enough impression to justify the great size of the movement which after a while becomes somewhat monotonous.

In the following *Andante*, the part-writing is very fine, with the thematic material not only spread about equally, but done with superb integration. A pity then that the material itself is, though pleasant, rather unremarkable.

The *Menuetto*, while it certainly could not be called long, is nonetheless twice as long as those of the preceding quintets. Again, the part writing is first rate, with all of the instruments being used quite effectively, however, the thematic material is less than impressive. The trio section, despite the use of a roodle-doodle accompaniment, is stronger by virtue of the theme and by its presentation by the flute, oboe and horn together.

There is nothing really wrong with the finale, *Allegretto*, which does have charm and some telling moments but by and large suffers from its ordinary thematic material. I suppose to sit down and write three works at once and hope that they are all excellent is asking a lot. Even the masters often fail, so perhaps it is not surprising that No.3 is rather like that pleasant fellow one meets at a party, good to talk to, but who leaves no impression and is soon forgotten. Having said this. Nos.1 and 2 are altogether in a different class. Perhaps Danzi simply ran out of gas.

Several recordings of the Op.56 Quintets have been made and are available. The parts can be had from various publishers including Neil Kjos, Leukart and Edition Silvertrust among others.

I will discuss the remaining two sets, Opp.67 and 68, of Danzi's wind quintets in the second part of this article which will appear in the next issue of *The Journal*.

GLAZUNOV'S WORKS FOR STRING QUARTET *(continued from page three)*

Soon, Mitrofan Belaiev, the Maecenas of Russian chamber music and a rich timber merchant who founded a publishing house the sole purpose of which was to publish the works of Russian composers, became interested in Glazunov. He took the teenager with him to Western Europe in 1884 and arranged for a performance of his First Symphony. Shortly thereafter, Belaiev, so impressed with Glazunov's abilities, asked him to serve with Rimsky-Korsakov and Lyadov on his publishing board to help determine which new works were worthy of being published.



Belaiev's Board of Editors: (from left to right) Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazunov & Liadov—They Wrote *Jour de Fête*

With this kind of backing, it was not long before Glazunov's reputation both inside and outside of Russia grew.

During the 1890's he wrote three symphonies, two string quartets and the ballet *Raymonda*. In 1899, Glazunov became a professor at the St Petersburg Conservatory and became its director in 1905. It was during these years that he was at the height of his creative powers. His best works from this period are considered his Eighth Symphony and Violin Concerto. This was also the time of his greatest international acclaim. He was frequently invited to conduct abroad and received many prestigious awards including honorary Doctor of Music degrees from Oxford and Cambridge. Within Russia, cycles of all-Glazunov concerts were regularly programmed. But already, signs of his problems with alcohol were evident. Rachmaninov's wife claimed that the disastrous premiere of her husband's First Symphony in 1897 was due to the fact that Glazunov, the conductor, was nearly dead drunk. Shostakovich, a Glazunov student, was later to write that Glazunov made a practice of hiding a bottle of vodka in his desk and often took quick nips during lessons.

No longer remembered is the fact that Glazunov was almost universally acknowledged as a great prodigy. Along with Rimsky-Korsakov, he finished some of Alexander Borodin's greatest works, among them the Third Symphony and the opera *Prince Igor*, including its popular piece, the *Polovetsian Dances*. It was said that he reconstructed the overture from memory, having heard it played on the piano only once. But Shostakovich related that Glazunov told him the wonderful overture was not actually a reconstruction but an original composition which Glazunov penned while drunk. Glazunov chose to give full credit to Borodin for the composition. While Glazunov's ability to perfectly mimic Borodin's style was a tribute to his astounding musical ability, his giving the credit to Borodin, Shostakovich noted, said much more about his character. *"It doesn't happen often that*

a man composes excellent music for another composer and doesn't advertise it (to talk while drinking doesn't count). It's usually the other way around—a man steals an idea or even a considerable piece of music and passes it off as his own."

Stories of Glazunov's amazing memory are almost beyond belief. Certainly they verge on the Mozartean. Again in his book *Testimony*, Shostakovich tells of how Sergei Taneyev came to Petersburg with a new symphony. He performed it on the piano for a select group of friends at a private house. The teenage Glazunov was hidden in the next room. After Taneyev finished and the guests had praised and congratulated him, the host then told Taneyev, *"I'd like you to meet a talented young man. He too has composed a new symphony."* Glazunov was brought in and told to play his new symphony for Taneyev and the assembled guests. Glazunov sat down at the piano and played Taneyev's symphony from beginning to end. Even in his early sixties Glazunov's amazing memory stayed with him. Again, from Shostakovich we hear of a student applying to enter the composition department at the Petersburg Conservatory. The applicant, who had on numerous other occasions unsuccessfully applied, played a piano sonata he had written. When he was finished, Glazunov said, *"If I'm not mistaken, you applied a few years ago. If I recall you had another sonata with quite a good secondary theme."* Glazunov then sat down at the keyboard and played a large segment of the horrendous second theme from the old sonata. The effect was enormous.

With the onset of the Russian Revolution, Glazunov did not abandon Russia, but remained active as a conductor, conducting concerts in factories, clubs and Red Army posts. After World War I, he was instrumental in the reorganization of the Conservatory, improving its the curriculum and raising standards. Among his achievements were an opera studio and a students' philharmonic orchestra. Shostakovich in his memoir *Testimony* noted that Glazunov showed considerable concern for the welfare of needy students, such as himself. When in 1922, the government decided to give him living conditions commensurate with his achievements, Glazunov, who had lost a tremendous amount of weight and was living as hard a life as many in that time, asked instead that the government send firewood to the Conservatory so the students could study more easily. The firewood was delivered. He gave away a tremendous amount of his salary to needy students out of compassion for them. He wrote countless letters of recommendation for his students. Sometimes he went to government officials to plead their case. Many Jewish musicians were given permission to live in Petrograd only because Glazunov personally interceded on their behalf. Thanks to him, Jascha Heifitz, Nathan Milstein and Mischa Elman, among others, were able to come and study at the Conservatory.

Glazunov's untiring efforts and his great reputation helped the Conservatory receive special status among institutions of higher learning in the aftermath of the Revolution. But, his tonal conservatism was attacked both within and outside of the Conservatory. In the end, tired of the strife in the Conservatory and repulsed by the advent of Stalin, the new head of the regime, he took advantage of the opportunity to go abroad in 1928 for the Schubert cen-

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(Continued from page 7)

tenary celebrations in Vienna. He did not return, but embarked on a conducting tour in Portugal, Spain, France, England, Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Netherlands, and the United States.

Eventually, he settled in Paris maintaining that the reason for his continued absence from Russia was “ill health”. This claim preserved his reputation in the Soviet Union, unlike that of Stravinsky and Rachmaninov, who made no such claims. By the time he died in Paris in 1936, the announcement of his death shocked many, who associated his music with a bygone era and thought he had already been dead for many years. However, these would have been people who had not heard any of his compositions that he had written after the First World War.

If one excludes his instrumental sonatas, virtually all of Glazunov’s chamber music was composed for string quartet. The sole exceptions being his Quartet In Modo Religioso for trumpet, two horns and trombone, and the String Quintet for two violins, viola and two cellos. Given that Glazunov’s own instrument was the piano, it is interesting to note that he never penned a piano trio, quartet or quintet. Of his works for string quartet, there are seven “proper” string quartets, two additional larger works—the Five Novelettes and the Suite, and numerous occasional pieces. The latter are generally one movement affairs which appear in collections such as *Les Vendredis* or *Jour de Fete*. These collections consist of a number of movements each by a different contributor. Most often these were Rimsky-Korsakov and Liadov.

Given this dichotomy of proper quartets and occasional pieces, it would seem that the two most cogent approaches to a discussion of his works for string quartet would be either a chronological presentation or a discussion which places the works into their two separate categories and treats them individually. The first approach, arguably, has the potential advantage of highlighting the composers development over the years. However, a chronological integration which involves the occasional pieces would be misleading because the purpose and goal of these compositions were very different from the more serious and formal works for string quartet. Therefore, I have opted for the second approach and will discuss the so-called proper string quartets separately from the occasional pieces.

I will begin then with **String Quartet No.1 in D Major, Op.1**. This work was composed sometime in 1881 and premiered the following year. It is dedicated to Madame Ludmilla Schestakov, maiden name Glinka. She was Mikhail Glinka’s sister. To put this work into its historical context, we must consider that Glazunov had more or less finished his formal studies with Rimsky-Korsakov, who now considered him a colleague and friend rather than a mere student. The Russian National school of composing, founded by Balakirev and his followers, was approaching its zenith, having dominated the Russian musical scene for nearly 30 years. Balakirev, who wrote no chamber music of note, had long since composed his ground-breaking and highly influential orchestral works. The same was true for Mussorgsky, who had died the year before, as well as Borodin, who would die the next year, and Rimsky-Korsakov, the bulk of whose Nationalist compositions had already been written. In a few years, the urgency to produce Russian-sounding music began to dissipate as the need had been clearly met. Even Rimsky-Korsakov recognized a need to

assimilate other influences and more traditional methods of composition. But all this was still in the future.

The quartet begins with an introduction, *Andantino moderato*, which is closely related to the main theme of the following *Allegro moderato*.

The treatment of the main theme is quite plastic. Of particular note is the use of fifths in the accompaniment of the cheerful melodies, especially the second theme. This was a technique of which Korsakov and his students were particularly fond. It undeniably helps to create an exotic oriental atmosphere to which the Russians were attracted. Rather than placing a slow movement next, Glazunov opts for a lively *Scherzo, vivace*. The brisk, main theme recalls Schumann:

The second theme, though somewhat threadbare, does provide a good contrast:

Glazunov omits writing a trio and contents himself with alternating these two subjects several times, ending with the 2nd theme.

The following *Andante* serves as the slow movement. It is perhaps based on a folksong:

Though attractive, Glazunov does not develop it, but rather repeats it over and over, each time with slight changes. It is a good thing that the movement is quite short because the treatment of the theme is barely enough to hold one’s interest for the duration.

The main subject of the finale, *Moderato*, also has the appearance of being based on a Russian folk melody:

This becomes more obvious later in the movement when the cello restates the melody in straight quarter notes. The second theme is more lyrical and relieves the angular rhythmic quality of the first. Here, Glazunov lavishes considerable effort on the working out of the themes. Of note, is the excellent part-writing for each voice.

To sum up, it cannot be argued that this is a great masterwork. However, it is an appealing work which surely will be of interest to amateurs and perhaps strong enough to merit a very occasional concert performance. Certainly, it was a fine effort for a 17 year old composer.

String Quartet No.2 in F Major, Op.10, dedicated to Belaiev, was composed the following year in 1883. The fingerprints of Rimsky-Korsakov are still all over the music. The first movement, *Allegro non troppo*, really does not sound at all different from the First Quartet. The opening theme is only two measures in length. Though it is clearly Russian, melodically it is rather weak, and it becomes monotonous quite quickly, largely due to the fact that it is repeated at least a dozen times, without alteration, in the various voices before Glazunov moves on.

Allegro non troppo M.M. ♩ = 108 op. 10

The second subject suffers from exactly the same treatment as the first, in addition to which it sounds rather closely related to it. The constant repetition without development truly is mystifying. In my opinion, this is a very serious defect, given the melodic weakness of the music.

1st Movt, 2nd theme—Violin 1

When one hears quartets from the same period by some of Korsakov's other students, for example Kopylov or Sokolov, one can clearly hear how much weaker Glazunov's effort is.

The second movement, *Scherzo, allegro*, depends on its rhythm to carry the music along. While the melodic material is not all that memorable, it is strong enough, given the rhythmic interest:

Allegro M.M. ♩ = 126 **SCHERZO**

In the trio, Glazunov succeeds in creating really beautiful music. The theme, which is briefly introduced by the cello, is then elaborated by the first violin.

Allegro scherzando ♩ = 126

The recapitulation, with a further working out section, is considerably better than the first section of the trio, and the coda is quite effective. It's quite a good movement and certainly stands out alongside the preceding one.

Next comes a slow movement, *Adagio molto*. The opening melody, played muted, is reflective and tinged with melancholy, but it cannot be styled as more than pedestrian despite the lovely way in which it is presented.

Adagio molto M.M. ♩ = 60
con sordino

The somewhat quicker middle section, during which the second subject is first presented high in the register of the first violin, is stronger and more effective.

senza sordino

Again, in the finale, *Allegro moderato*, the melodic material is repeated at several times, and once again, it works against the effectiveness of the music. The opening, dance-like theme, given out by the viola, has many of the qualities of those found in the first two movements. It is Russian-sounding, but its rhythm is such that the constant repetition quickly makes it monotonous.

Allegro moderato ♩ = 84

The second theme, unfortunately does not provide very good contrast.

While there are certainly several very effective, even exquisite moments, when Glazunov, for a few seconds creates a magical effect, overall these are not enough to sustain an overly long movement. Many years ago, when I was living in Russia, the quartet, of which I was a member, thought it might be a good project to record all of Glazunov's string quartets. We did not know them, however, and before approaching the record company with this idea, naturally, we realized that we had to play through them and familiarize ourselves with them. It was upon meeting this work that we abandoned the idea so, I cannot in good conscience, recommend this quartet. However, tastes are subjective and you may conclude otherwise. Messers Altmann

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

and Calvocoressi give a far less negative evaluation that I have, although I wonder whether they actually played through the music or listened to it.

Seven years and sixteen opus numbers separate the Second Quartet from **String Quartet No.3 in G Major, Op.26**. Composed in 1890, it is better known by its French subtitle **Quatour Slav** (Slave in the French). "The third time is a charm," certainly applies here for with this work, Glazunov finally produced a brilliantly executed quartet which is also highly appealing. Despite its subtitle, with the exception of the last movement, the quartet is not program music, but rather music which consists entirely of Slavic melodies.

The opening movement, *Moderato*, begins in an almost elegiac mood.



This is dissipated by the appearance of the more lively second theme with its use of pizzicato chords in all of the voices.



For the first time, Glazunov places a slow movement, *Interludium*, second. The movement impresses on two counts: First, the main theme, introduced by the cello and then elaborated by the first violin is sounds, as if it is straight out of the Russian Orthodox liturgy. Its chorale-like treatment creates the peaceful, somber aura of a church service.

II. Interludium



Second, its—unusual for Glazunov—conciseness leaves no feeling of padding or the use of unnecessary notes to fill out the movement. Instead, the music flows along, even in its *pesante* passages, effortlessly and concludes in orderly fashion.

The third movement, *Alla Mazurka*, *allegretto*, is even more appealing. The main theme is bright, dance-like and lively.

III. Alla Mazurka



Interest is sustained throughout largely on the strength of the part-writing, very effective tempi changes, and lastly the melodic and rhythmic material which is in no way hackneyed as the example from the somewhat quicker middle section reveals. Here, all four voices are given a series of double-stops to play simultaneously. The effect is quite orchestral, but also very striking.



The finale, *Allegro moderato* and subtitled *Une fête Slave*, is clearly the quartet's center of gravity and no doubt led to the subtitle that the work as a whole has traveled under. While sections of the third movement, as previously noted, approached the orchestral on occasion, the finale is for long stretches very densely scored, so much so, that one is struck by its potential suitability for a string orchestra. However, this was hardly accidental as here, Glazunov was obviously trying to create a tone picture of a village festival in all its various moods. The main theme, which is also used as a refrain between the various episodes, is stated immediately.



M.D. Calvocoressi, in his article for *Cobbett Cyclopedia*, gives a very telling example of the heavy scoring to be found in this movement and I thought it might be useful to reproduce it here.

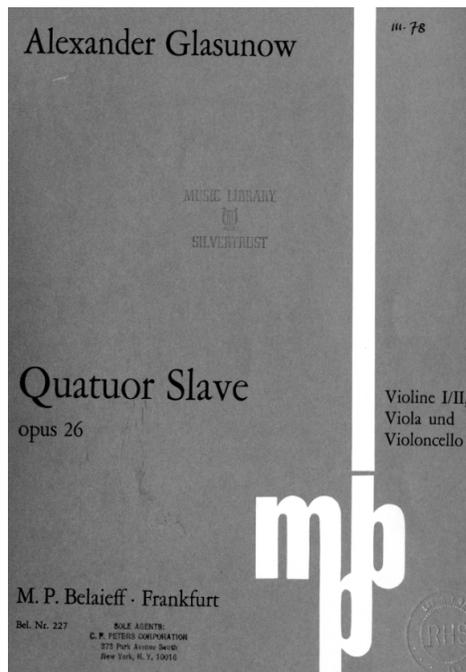


The example is taken from the section which follows a quicker *piu mosso* passage that ends after letter D on the second of the eight pages of this massive movement. The technique is one which Glazunov was to use repeatedly in other works. Primarily, it is found in slower sections where its effect is more clearly felt. One is reminded of the Op.48 String Serenade, where Tchaikovsky gets the most mileage out of this kind of writing in the slow

introduction to the first movement. Another striking feature of the finale is its tremendous length. It is the equal in length to the other three movements. In his two earlier quartets, the excessive—though nowhere near as long as here—length of some of the movements was a definite drawback, especially because the thematic material was often far too weak to support it. Here, however, Glazunov is simply brimming with good ideas. There are five main themes which are woven into the whole and juxtaposed in several very effective ways. Certainly, the movement could well serve as a stand alone work.

I can recommend this quartet to professionals and amateurs alike. The melodic material is a cut above his earlier efforts and the part-writing, as is always the case with Glazunov, is first rate. In Russia, I heard this work performed in concert on many an occasion. Perhaps, this is not surprising. But that I have never seen it programmed outside of Russia, that is surprising for it is first rate and deserves to be on the concert stage. As for amateurs, they should certainly get great pleasure from it. It is easy to put together and presents no special technical difficulties.

The parts to all three of the quartets are available from M.P.



Belaieff of Frankfurt which, I believe is now owned by Peters, who serve as the agent for Belaieff in North America.

The Utrecht String Quartet has recorded all three of these works for MDG.

(This article will be continued in the next issue of The Journal with a discussion of Glazunov's later string quartets.)

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New Recordings



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

String Quartets

Benjamin BRITTEN (1913-76) No.3, Somm 065 / Otto DESSOFF (1835-92) Op.7, Audite 97.505 / Joseph EYBLER (1765-1846) Op.1 Nos.1-3, Analekta 9914 / Pavel HAAS (1899-1944) No.1, Supraphon 3922 / Barbara HARBACH (1946-) Transformations, MSR Classics 1253 / Charles KOEHLIN (1867-1950) Nos. 1-2, Ar Re Se 2006-3 / Ernst KRENEK (1900-94) Nos.3 & 5, Capriccioso 67 197 / Nicholas MAW (1935-) No.3, Somm 065 / Krzysztof MEYER (1943-) Nos. 11 & 12, Acte Prelable 146 / Ludwig SPOHR (1784-1859) Nos. 33 & 35 & Potpourri No.1, Op.5, Marco Polo 8.225316 / Joseph STARZER (1726-87) Divertimento, Arte Nova 516260 / Sergei TANEYEV (1856-1915) Nos.1 & 3, Naxos 8.570437 / Anton TITZ (1742-1810) Qt in G, Arte Nova 516260 / Moisei VAINBERG (1918-96) Nos.11 & 13, Delos 1042 & Nos.4 & 16, CPO 777 343

Strings Only-Not Quartets

Krzysztof MEYER (1943-) Trio, Op.81, Acte Prelable 146

Piano Trios

Jean DAETWYLER (1907-94) Concertino, Gallo 1216 / Joseph JONGEN (1873-1953) 2 Pieces, Op.95, Cypres 1647 / Erich KORNGOLD (1897-1957) Op.1, MD&G 303 1463 / George ONSLOW (1784-1853) Op.14 No.2 & Op.27, CPO 777 230 / Valintin SILVESTROV (1937-) Drama, Koch 7740 / Romuald TWAROWSKI (1930-) No.2, Acte Prelable 0140

Piano Quartets, Quintets & Sextets

Ernest BLOCH (1880-1959) Qnts Nos.1 & 2, Hyperion 67638 / Theodore DUBOIS (1837-1924) Qt in A, Alma 2385 / Heinrich v HERZOGENBERG (1843-1900) Qnt, Op.17, EDA 025 / Paul JUON (1872-1940) Rhapsodie, Op.37 for Pno Qt, Profil 07013 / Erich KORNGOLD (1897-1957) Qt for 2Vln, Vc & Pno, Op.23, MD&G 303 1463 / Moisei VAINBERG (1919-1996) Qnt, Op.18, Delos 1042

Winds & Strings

Adolphe BLANC (1828-85) Septet, Op.40 for Str Trio, Kb, Cln, Hn & Bsn, Alma 2224 / Jean DAETWYLER (1907-94) Divertimento for Fl, Vln & Vc, Gallo 1216 / Georg DRUSCHETZKY (1745-1819) 3 Oboe Qts, Hungaraton 32491 / Paul HINDEMITH (1895-1963) Cln Qnt, Op.30, &

Octet for Cln, Hn, Bsn, Vln, 2Vla, Vc & Kb, MD&G 304 0447 / Antonin REICHA (1770-1836) Trio & 18 Variations for Fl, Vln & Vc, Globe 5219 / Joseph RHEINBERGER (1839-1901) Nonet, Op.139 for Str Trio, Kb & Wind Qt, MD&G 301 1453 / Ferdinand RIES (1784-1838) 3 Flute Quartets, Op.145, Naxos 8.570330

Winds, Strings & Piano

Adolph BLANC (1828-85) Trio, Op.23 for Cln, Vc & Pno, Alma 2224 / Theodore DUBOIS (1837-1924) Quintet for Pno, Str Trio & Ob, Alma 2385

Piano & Winds

Adolphe BLANC (1828-85) Qnt, Op.37 for Pno, Fl, Cln, Hn & Bsn, Alma 2224 / Albert DOPPLER (1821-83) Works for 2 Flutes & Piano, Opp.10, 25, 26, 35 & 38, Acte Prelabe 0145 / Joseph RHEINBERGER (1839-1901) Sextet, Op.191b for Pno & Wind Qt, MD&G 301 1453

Winds Only

Barbara HARBACH (1946-) American Solstice et.al., MSR Classics 1253 / Paul HINDEMITH (1895-1963) Septet for Fl, Ob, Cln, B-Cln, Bsn, Hn & Trpt, MD&G 304 0447 / Johann SOBECK (1831-1914) 3 Wind Qnts, Opp.9, 11 & 14, CPO 777203

The Piano in Chamber Ensemble—A Review of the 2nd Edition

(Continued from page 3)

a brief look at the score would suggest. *M-D*” (moderately difficult). Having already proved his bibliographic skills in the monumental *Guide to the Pianist’s Repertoire*, published in 1973 (also by Indiana University Press), Hinson was to be congratulated for putting together the most comprehensive and useful reference work to the chamber music repertory that includes the piano.

Over time, however, the shortcomings of the Hinson first edition became increasingly apparent and I found myself consulting it less and less. First, the work devoted just over half of its listings to the duo repertory; while this is a legitimate choice of emphasis, it makes the work less valuable to those of us primarily interested in music for trios or larger ensembles—and happy to leave the task of uncovering gems in the duo literature to the instrumental specialists—who usually have a determining say in what gets played anyway (many of whom, however, would be well-advised to consult the Hinson volume, whose piano-centric title may have unjustly deterred them). But the main problem was that there proved to be an increasing probability that a work that came to my attention simply was not listed in the Hinson guide. This was not simply because the work was published after 1978; like many chambers pianists, or at least those who read *The Chamber Music Journal*, I am more interested in resurrecting out of print items than I am keeping abreast of newly published contemporary works or the rare reprint.

A major part of the problem was Hinson’s unclear strategy in the first edition for including works that had already gone out of print. He states only that “*some works known to be out of print were included because of their merit*” but he did not tell us which ones they were or how to get a hold of them, other than that “*many of them can be located at second-hand music stores, in the larger university or municipal libraries, or, more especially, in the Library of Congress.*” The more I learned about the existence of such out-of-print gems, the greater my frustration that Hinson did not mention them. Other limitations of the first edition were less serious: a very haphazard listing of works written before the invention of the piano and the exclusion of transcriptions and orchestral reductions. Finally, the first edition was becoming increasingly out of date because many important works of the chamber music repertory out of print in 1978 were becoming available, primarily through smaller photocopy-based services or improved online access to worldwide library holdings, and even the brief annotations that Hinson could provide would be welcome indeed.

In other words, it was time for a second edition of the *Guide* and I was pleased to observe that it finally appeared under the joint editorship of Hinson and Wesley Roberts. The question: has the second edition retained and expanded upon the considerable merits

of the first edition, corrected its more glaring deficiencies and evolved into an essential, single-source and up-to-date guide for chamber pianists?

Well, not exactly. The second edition must be judged something of a disappointment. Although expanded by some 32 pages and now including some 3,200 entries, the second edition is very much the image of the first. The same clear presentation and organization are retained (albeit with smaller type) but the emphasis on duos is even more pronounced (62% of the second edition by page compared to 54% in the first.) The authors have made a modest effort to include works available through online publishing, but the focus on mainstream music publishers is still very much in evidence. In the piano trio chapter, for example, they have included some 45 new works (most of which, curiously, come from a single publisher, Donemus) but have eliminated 23 that were in the first edition—mostly obscure works that had not been annotated. But even this updating has wide gaps. In the piano trio literature again, a quick perusal of the holdings of one prominent retailer, Broekmans and Van Poppel of Amsterdam, reveals over 100 works, even excluding transcriptions, popular and student works, that are currently in print but have no mention in the Hinson-Roberts volume. When one is contemplating spending \$50 or more for a piano trio or quartet, it is frustrating not to have some guidance. Moreover, surprisingly, the authors seemed to have completely overlooked the burgeoning availability of new and reprinted scores by such editions as Phyllocopus, SJ Music, MJ Cerri, Edition Silvertrust, Rosewood and others. Anyone wanting an informed opinion about these now readily available works will have to look elsewhere.

In sum, *The Piano in Chamber Ensemble* still provides a convenient resource, with much excellent commentary, to chamber musicians of all backgrounds seeking to expand their playing to in-print works beyond the standard repertory. If you don’t have the first edition, by all means buy the second edition as most of the advantages of the first are retained. If you already have the first edition, the second edition, by mostly missing the wave of the newly rediscovered repertory, is probably not worth the investment. If you are primarily interested in rare chamber works from earlier eras, a better option altogether would be to keep up your membership in The Cobbett Association.

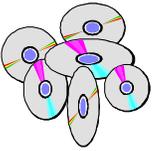
The author, a pianist and avid collector of chamber music, is President of the Mother Lode Friends of Music, an organization of classical music performance in the historic gold rush country of central California, where many of his acquisitions are performed

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Diskology: Hear Sound-bites to These CD Reviews On Our Website—www.cobbettassociation.org

Piano Quartets by Joseph Suk, Vitezslav Novak And Bohuslav Martinu



Dorian CD# 93261 presents three piano quartets by Czech composers. The first is by Josef Suk (1874-1935), who was born in Krecovice in southern Bohemia, then part of Austria. He studied piano, violin and organ with his father who served as village choirmaster. His exceptional talent led to his being enrolled at the Prague Conservatory in 1885 at the age of 11 where he first studied violin. Eventually, he became a composition student of Antonin Dvorak. He graduated in 1891, and kept up a

friendship with Dvorak, whose daughter he married in 1898. He formed what became the world famous Bohemian Quartet with three 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 Martinu and the pianist Rudolf Firkusny. Suk served as the Conservatory's director after 1924, on and off, until the end of his life. The **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op.1** was composed in 1891 while Suk was a student in Dvorak's composition class. It was premiered at his graduation with great acclaim. The first movement *Allegro appassionato*, right from the opening notes, begins with a burst of passionate energy. The main theme is appealing and easily holds the listener's attention. The lovely second theme is quite lyrical and romantic. Both convey a sense of striving and youthful hope. The main theme of second movement, *Adagio*, begins with a highly romantic, luscious solo in the cello. The melody is exquisite and delicate and wonderfully executed. A gripping dramatic climax is found in the middle of the movement. The finale, *Allegro con fuoco*, begins with an excited somewhat nervous theme which exhibits Czech dance origins. The lyrical second theme provides excellent contrast. Interestingly, the exciting coda sounds as if Gershwin had written it. Perhaps, he was familiar with Suk's Quartet. Currently, the parts are unavailable, however, Edition Silvertrust is planning to bring them out in early 2009.



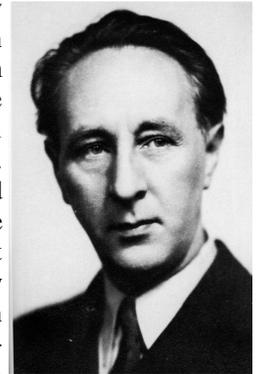
The second work on disk is by **Vitezslav Novak** (1870-1949). Novak began by hating music as a result of being brutally forced to study the violin and piano as a young child and it seemed unlikely would he become a musician. But a fascination for composition, which he discovered in his teens, led to his decision to enter the Prague Conservatory, where he, too, studied with Dvorak. Dvorak's example of using Czech folk melody in his music to foster the nationalist cause at a time when the Czech and

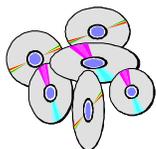
Slovak peoples were seeking statehood from Austria encouraged the young composer to follow this path. After graduating from the Conservatory in 1896, he traveled to eastern Moravia and Slo-

vakia 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 Dvorak and Smetana. The **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op.7** originally dates from 1894. However, despite the fact that it won a state prize with a stipendium upon its premiere, Novak 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 main 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 two themes with their different moods. The second movement, *Scherzino, allgretto comodo*, as noted, 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 on the edge of modernism, but still rooted in the ground of romanticism. Parts are available from Simrock or Edition Silvertrust.

The last work on the disk is by **Bohuslav**

Martinu (1891-1959). Martinu was born in the town of Policka 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, Martinu 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. His **Piano Quartet** was composed in 1942 as 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, *Allgretto poco moderato*, the piano introduces the cheerful and mostly affirmative main theme. Its development does have some





Luigi Boccherini: Six String Quintets for 2 Vln, Vla & 2 Vc Works for Piano Trio by Alexander Zemlinsky & Arnold Schoenberg

hectic and rather frantic moments but it all ends joyfully. Parts are available from Associated Music Publishers (Hal Leonard). A highly recommended CD.



The Italian cello virtuoso and composer **Luigi Boccherini** (1743-1805), who lived most of his life in Spain as composer to the royal court, is no stranger to these pages and is also well enough known to dispense with any biographical information. He wrote an incredible amount of chamber music, just how much is still the subject of argument. *Cobbett's Cyclopaedia* claims he wrote 113 cello quintets. Neither *The New Grove* nor *Altmann* take the trouble to add up the number and simply list them. I did not think it worthwhile wasting the time adding them myself. But obviously, he wrote a lot of works for this combination and his reputation, in great part, rests on this fact. The jacket notes to **Brilliant Classics CD# 92503** have virtually no information about the music that is recorded on this two disk set. It appears that the six **String Quintets for 2 Violins, Viola and 2 Cellos, Op.10** were quite likely the first of such compositions that he wrote. They date from 1774, just after he arrived in Madrid. It must be admitted that for the most part, though pleasant enough, the bulk of the movements leave little or no impression. As such, it is not worth discussing each individual quintet. However, I will briefly mention those movements which rise above the merely ordinary. These include the finale, *Allegro*, to Op.10 No.1 which is quite exciting and caps an otherwise colorless work. The second movement to Op.10 No.3, *Adagio non tanto*, is a cut above average though in many ways representative of his slow movements at this period. The third movement to the same work, *Minuetto*, makes an impression on the strength of the lovely main theme and the explosive, percussive second theme. The big second movement of Op.10 No.4, though not extraordinary seems to make the very most of only reasonable material while the stately, somewhat funereal *Adagio* (third movement) of the same quintet is quite good. Nos.5 and 6 each have three movements and are, in my opinion, the weakest of the set. I would reiterate there is nothing overtly wrong with these works, but in my opinion, they do not rise to a level beyond background music. The fact they are recorded on period instruments does not help to make their case. As far as I know the parts are not in print.



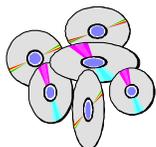
During his lifetime, **Alexander Zemlinsky** (1871-1942) was very highly regarded not only as a composer but also as a teacher and conductor. His works are an authentic testimony of the turbulent developments in music between 1890 and 1940. He stands between times and styles but in this intermediary position he found a rich, unmistakable, musical language. His personality and work epitomize one of the most fascinating epochs of art in Europe. Zemlinsky was born in Vienna. His musical talent became

evident at an early age and he was enrolled at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde Konservatorium (Conservatory of the Society of the Friends of Music) when he was 13 years old. There he studied piano and composition. He was greatly influenced by Johannes Brahms, who at the time was serving as President of the Gesellschaft. Brahms thought highly enough of the young man's compositional abilities to recommend Zemlinsky's Op.3 Clarinet Trio, written shortly after graduating, to his own publisher Simrock for publication. About this time, Zemlinsky also met Arnold Schoenberg. The two became close friends. Zemlinsky gave Schoenberg lessons in counterpoint, thus becoming the only formal music teacher Schoenberg would have. Later, Schoenberg married Zemlinsky's sister. By 1900, Zemlinsky was firmly established as an important, though not a leading, musical figure in Vienna. However, though he did well, he was unable to achieve the major success he had hoped for and therefore left for Prague in 1911. In Prague, he held the important post of opera conductor of the Deutsches Landestheater until 1927. He became well-known as a perceptive interpreter of Wagner, Bruckner, Mahler, and Schoenberg. In 1927, he moved to Berlin to take up a position as a conductor of a major opera house. In 1933, he returned to Vienna where he remained until 1938, before emigrating to New York. The **Trio in d minor, Op.3**, which dates from 1895, was originally composed for clarinet, cello and piano. However, when Brahms sent it to Simrock, the publisher insisted on an alternate violin part for the clarinet. This Zemlinsky supplied and the work became almost as well-known in this version as the original. Certainly, the performers (the Vienna Piano Trio) on this **MDG CD 1354** make a case for it in this version. The big, broad opening movement, *Allegro ma non troppo*, has for its main theme a heroic melody to be played "*Mit Schwung und Wärme*" (warmly and with swing). This is late Romantic music on a grand scale. The coda is particularly well done and makes a great impression. Although the influence of Brahms is undeniably in the language of the music, it does not sound much like him. In the second movement, *Andante con moto espressione*, which in the clarinet version calls for an A clarinet to create a bright sound, the violin plays the overtly romantic melody in a high register. The middle section is slightly faster and very freely written. It takes an almost melodramatic stance but is undeniably effective. The bustling finale, *Allegro*, has a remote slightly exotic quality, interspersed with dramatic and passionate outbursts. This is an absolutely first rate work, deserving of concert performance to be sure. Parts are available from Simrock.



The second work on disk is a transcription of Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, for piano trio by Eduard Steuermann (on right). As most of you know, this work was originally for string sextet. Several composers attempted transcriptions, but only Steuermann's met with Schoenberg's approval. Steuermann, a Polish-born, Austrian pianist had not only studied with Schoenberg, but had also premiered virtually all of Schoenberg's works which involved piano. So perhaps

his success it not totally a surprise. The transfer of the very tonally nuanced string sextet to a work with piano is no easy mat-



Two Piano Quartets of Richard Franck / Heinrich Kaspar Wind Quintet Karl Goepert Wind Quartet / August Reuss Wind Octet

ter. However, Steuermann, perhaps because he was such a fine interpreter of composer's music, succeeded. The 1932 transcription has enjoyed success in the concert hall and has been recorded elsewhere on a number of occasions. I believe it succeeds on its own terms. Listen to the sound-bite and decide for yourself. The last work on disk, is the one movement **Mahler Piano Quartet**, written when the composer was only 16. This is the only extant chamber work we have as he destroyed the others composed during this time. It is an emotive, melancholy movement, evoking echoes of Schubert and Brahms. A recommended CD



Audite CD# 92.522 presents the two piano quartets of **Richard Franck** (1858-1938). Franck was the son of the composer, concert pianist and teacher Eduard Franck, whose string sextets have been previously reviewed in *The Journal*. 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 he 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, he enjoyed a long career as a teacher, composer, and pianist, during the course of which he held several positions in Germany and Switzerland. Although Wilhelm Altmann is rather dismissive of his chamber works, I found them very ingratiating, so much so, that I contacted his family to see if I could obtain the parts to reprint. **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 excitement 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. The third movement, *Allegretto*, is unusual in that it is in four 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 four subsections, *Allegro*, *Adagio*, *Allegro* and *Allegro*, so to a certain extent it retains a relationship with classical structure. While perhaps not as impressive as the First Quartet, it is by turns poetical, atmospheric and fiery. The part-writing is good and it plays well. Parts to both works are available from Edition Silvertrust. A recommended CD.

Centaur CD# 2594 is entitled German Romantic Wind Music. The first work on disk is the **Wind Quintet in B flat Major, Op.28** by **Heinrich Kaspar Schmid** (1874-1953). Schmid studied with Ludwig Thuille at the Munich Conservatory where he later taught. The Quintet dates from 1919. In three movements,



the opening *Allegro* is bright and good-natured. The horn is given an especially grateful part. The style is neo-classical and quite appealing. The middle movement, *Grazioso amabile*, is a rather humorous, lopsided dance, which somehow manages to maintain an aura of gracefulness. The first part of the finale is a lengthy *Moderato*. It is subdued, but not slow. An exciting, energetic *Allegro* follows. The part-writing throughout leaves nothing to be desired. This is a first rate work which would make an excellent addition to the concert repertoire. The parts are available from Schott.

The second work on disk is by **Karl Goepfert** (1859-1942). After initial studies with his father, he became a student of Franz Liszt in Weimar. He enjoyed a career as a concert pianist as well as a conductor both in Europe and the United States. He wrote operas and symphonies as well as several chamber music works. The **Quartet in d minor, Op.93** for flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon dates from 1907. In three movements, it begins with an *Allegro risoluto* which is quite substantial and actually as long as the following two movements together. It is in two sections which alternate with each other. The first begins in canonic fashion with a brisk, charming melody. The second section is slower and somewhat dreamy. The middle movement is a lively, somewhat nervous *Scherzo*. The finale, *Allegro con vivo bravura*, begins with a energetic fugue which over time imperceptibly leads to a slower interlude before a fugue on a related but different subject is begun. Here, too, is another first rate work. Parts are available from Edition Silvertrust.



An **Octet in B major, Op.38** for 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Horns and 2 Bassoons by **August Reuss** (1871-1935) is the final work which receives its world premiere recording on the CD. Reuss worked in his father's construction business until he was nearly 30 when he finally enrolled in the Munich Conservatory where he also studied with Ludwig Thuille. The rest of his career was spent as a teacher, most notably at the Akademie der Tonkunst in Darmstadt. The Octet is four movements and dates from 1918. By comparison to the Schmid which was written the following year, this work is much more tonally advanced, showing considerable influence of Richard Strauss and sometimes sounding a bit like Kurt Weill. While the first movement, *Unruhig bewegt, mit sehnsüchtigem Ausdruck* (unsettled, conveying a sense of longing) is treated with great plasticity, it is hard to follow the theme. The mood is by turns restless and reflective, I did not detect much in the way of longing. The big second movement, *Langsam* (slow), begins in a somber vein. As the dynamic and tension rises, the sound of an organ is created. Doom and drear hangs over the proceedings. A scherzo, *Ziemlich bewegt* (not quite fast) has a processional quality to it. The finale, *In singender Bewegung* (with lilting movement) is gentle and generally calm. I cannot say the Octet matched the first two works. There was not enough contrast between the movements to make a strong impression. A very worthwhile CD, recommended.

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE



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Franz Danzi



Alexander Glazunov



Joseph Suk



Bohuslav Martinu



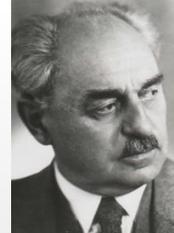
Luigi Boccherini



Alexander Zemlinsky



Richard Franck



Heinrich Kspr. Schmid



Karl Goepfert

ONSLOW, SPOHR, STENHAMMAR, FUCHS, KIEL



HERZOGENBERG, GLIERE, TANAYEV, REINECKE

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