

THE
CHAMBER MUSIC
JOURNAL

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

***A Guide
To
Piano Quartets
Part I***

Volume XXVII No.1 [2016]

ISSN 1535 1726

A Guide to the Piano Quartet Literature

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Introduction

This is the first part of the guide I am currently writing. The second part will appear in the next issue of *The Journal*. The main objective of this guide is to provide both professional and amateur chamber music players, as well as concert-goers, with a practical guide to the piano quartet literature. But it is a special type of guide which up until now has not existed in English; a guide which can be used as an aid to helping explore the wider world of chamber music, most of which in my experience, is virtually unknown to professional musicians as well as the listening public. However, this guide is by no means a mere compilation or an encyclopaedia of works, nor is it an academic treatise which analyzes how a composer actually wrote his music.

It is unfortunate that today's concert-goer is presented with the same works over and over again. As far as chamber music concerts go, most of them are by string quartets or piano trios and only very occasionally is a piano quintet presented. One can go to a piano trio concert in Vienna, Amsterdam, London, Tokyo or Chicago and often find the same works on the program. Nowadays, Piano Quartets are almost never given an airing. And when one is presented, it is invariably a piano quartet by either Mozart, Schumann or Brahms. The argument in support of this is that, given the fact that piano quartets are almost never performed in concert, you might as well program the most famous. Still, it is a shame that most chamber music lovers will never hear a piano quartet performed live that is not by either Brahms or Mozart. Their only recourse is to obtain recordings.

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

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

There are literally dozens if not hundreds of permanent string quartets performing before the public. But unlike a piano quintet, the piano quartet is not a string quartet plus piano but a string trio plus piano. There are virtually no permanent string trios performing before the public. This means that if a piano quartet is to be

programmed the host organization must either engage a string quartet and a pianist, or find a 'pick up' group of string players and a pianist. If a string quartet and pianist are engaged and a piano quartet is to be presented, one of the violins must sit out. Further the cost to the organization is the same as if they had presented a piano quintet. So, as far as cost goes, a 'pick up' group of free lancers makes the most sense. But even in big cities where there are hundreds of free lance musicians, organizations almost never take advantage of the situation to present piano quartets. Again, this is understandable since a no-name group is not going to sell the same amount of tickets as a known group.

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

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

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

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

the concert hall became the main venue for performing chamber music.

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

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

As to the question of whether a work is a good one and deserving of attention, the answer unfortunately must be subjective. There is, as they say, no accounting for taste and intelligent men can differ on such things. Fashion and tastes change over time as well. My judgments as to the value of most of the works discussed obviously come into play and I make no apology for them. At the same time, unlike late 19th century Viennese music critics, I do not consider myself a Tsar on the question of Musical Worth. Therefore, I have taken considerable pains to arrive at a composite judgment based not only on my own feelings but also the opinions of my fellow players and performers and in many instances the audiences in front of whom I have had the opportunity to perform. This fact has allowed me to be able to comment with some confidence on whether a given work might be well received by an audience or would be fun for an amateur group to read through or to work on.

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

When record collectors buy records from those companies offering new selections, they increase the chances that previously unrecorded works will see the light of day. When professional chamber music groups are urged by their audiences to present a wider offering of works from all periods, concert halls will be filled with the sounds of new and long-forgotten works. Inevitably, a by-product of this will be that music publishers will bring out modern reprints and publish new music which in turn will increase its availability among amateur players. (This is something which I have already undertaken by founding a publishing firm, Edition Silvertrust, which has, to date, made over 2,000 chamber works available) So it is with this goal in mind that I offer the reader this work.

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

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

A Guide to the Piano Quartet Literature

Mozart is often regarded as the father of the piano quartet, but prototypes are to be found in the music of composers in Mannheim and Vienna from the 1760s onwards. The most important precedents are probably the four *Sonates en quatuor pour le clavecin, avec accompagnement de deux violins et Basse ad libitum* of the Silesian composer Johann Schobert (ca. 1735-1767), whom the seven-year-old Mozart met in Paris in the winter of 1763-64 (and who died infamously from eating poisonous mushrooms). There is notable similarity between Schobert's Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 7 no. 1, and Mozart's second quartet in the same key. Equally influential was *galant* style of Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782) Curiously, the fourteen-year-old Beethoven wrote three piano quartets in Bonn in early 1785, just months before Mozart began his first piano quartet, but he is never mentioned as the founder perhaps because his were published posthumously.

Given the variable scoring of quartets for keyboard and three string instruments in the later eighteenth-century, Mozart's inclusion of the rarely-used viola with the customary violin and cello was notable. Perhaps he included it because he often performed when he played chamber music. His personal regard for the instrument as well as its additional colouristic potential must have led to its inclusion in the "new" genre.



Elfrieda Andrée (1841-1929) are recorded. She was born on the island of Gotland, the child of avid amateur musicians, and was sent at age 14 to study the organ in Stockholm. She became a virtuoso, the first woman cathedral organist, the first woman conductor and the first woman symphonist. If this were not enough, she also became the first woman telegraphist. Her composition teachers included Ludwig Norman and Niels Gade.

Besides her musical work, she was politically active and played an important role in the Swedish feminist movement. Her **Piano Quartet in a minor** was composed in 1865. It is in three movements—Allegro molto moderato, Adagio con espressione, and Allegro. There are good melodies, fine part-writing and the movements are well-constructed. Mendelssohn and Schumann are the composer's sources of inspiration. It is a good, if not great work and can be recommended to amateurs as it plays without any great technical difficulties.



Georges Antoine (1892-1918) was born in Belgian city of Liege. He studied at the conservatory there winning several prizes. An asthmatic, he nonetheless enlisted in the army at the outbreak of WWI in 1914. The war years did not improve his condition and he died shortly after the war's close. His **Piano Quartet in d minor** was composed in 1916 while on active duty. He sent the score to Vincent d'Indy who suggested some revisions which he duly made. The work was

not published, however, during his lifetime. In three movements—Modéré-Animé, Assez lent and Résolu et animé it is in the late French Impressionist style. It is an interesting work with many appealing ideas but thematically it seems to lack a certain cohe-

sive quality and a lack of contrast in the outer movements. Not particularly difficult from a technical standpoint.



Arnold Bax (1883-1953) was born in London. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music. Of independent means, he never needed to teach or conduct. He was a fine pianist but his main interests were composing music and poetry. His strong affinity for Ireland led him to spend considerable time in that country which influenced his outlook and music. The 1916 Easter Uprising in Ireland and its brutal suppression, which included the execution of several of

his friends, was to have a profound influence upon him. He is remembered mostly for his orchestral compositions but he wrote a great deal of chamber music. His music show many influences, perhaps the strongest of which is impressionism.—The **Piano Quartet in One Movement** dates from 1922 is quite challenging which ebbs and flows in various sections with many different tempo markings and myriad moods. This is not a work for the average amateur player.

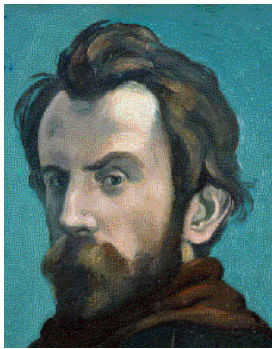
Beethoven transcribed his Op.16 work for winds and piano to a Piano Quartet in E flat Major. Dating from 1798, it is not a great work and had he not been the composer would be long forgotten. There is yet another work WoO 36, again a work which on its own is forgettable but has been recorded and performed because he wrote it.



Wilhelm Berger (1861-1911) was born in Boston but returned to Germany with his family within a year of his birth. He grew up in Bremen where he received his first lessons in voice and piano. A scholarship allowed him to study with the famous composition teacher Friedrich Kiel in Berlin at the Hochschule für Musik. After graduating, he held a number of teaching positions, including that of Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy. He

also served as director of the famous Meiningen Court Orchestra. Berger, though his compositions had won many prizes and were often performed, did not quickly achieve the fame he deserved. Highly respected by the cognoscenti, he never self-promoted or advertised himself with the wider musical public as did several others. Fame finally did start to come, but just at the moment of his death, at which time he was starting to be regarded, along with Max Reger, as Germany's most important successor to Brahms. Unfortunately, the First World War and its aftermath, led to a total lack of interest for many decades of nearly all romantic composers, and the reputation of those who were less well-known such as Berger, never really recovered. Berger's **Piano Quartet in A Major**, Op.21 dates from 1885. It is well-written. The melodic material of the serious opening Allegro could be richer and more memorable. The Andante ma non troppo which follows is somewhat dry except for the middle section which is full of passion. The third movement, Intermezzo, allegro scherzando, is quite effective, especially the lyrical trio section. The bustling finale is characterized more by its rhythm than its themes. He wrote a second piano quartet, Op.100, which

remained unpublished until 2011. It was composed toward the end of his life and here he no longer is a follower of Brahms seems to have taken Reger's ideas on tonality as his model.



Emile Bernard (1843-1902) was a French Romantic composer and organist. He was born in Marseille and studied at the Paris Conservatoire. His **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op.50** dates from 1899. Although the Vienna Classics serve as his model, his own voice is apparent. The main theme of the first movement, *Allegro con fuoco*, is powerful and full of energy. A more lyrical second subject provides adequate contrast. The second movement, *Andante*,

except for its restless middle section, is tender. A jovial *Allegro giocoso* in rondo form follows. The finale begins with an elegiac introduction which leads to the main section, *Allegro con spirito*, is lilting and spirited. This is a good work, deserving of the occasional concert performance and certainly can be warmly recommend to amateurs who will enjoy it.



Theodore Blumer (1881-1964) was born in the German city of Dresden. He studied at the Dresden Conservatory with Felix Draeseke and enjoyed a long career as a teacher and conductor besides working as a composer. He left works in virtually every genre. His **Op.50 Piano Quartet appeared in 1925**. The marking to the opening movement, *Allegro con brio, Leidenschaftlich bewegt*, perfectly describes the music, which

is exciting, dramatic and full of passion. It is quite effective. The *Adagio non troppo* which follows is warm and atmospheric. The third movement, *Vivace*, is a very original sounding scherzo, the tricky rhythm creates a feeling of playfulness. The finale, *Allegro appassionato, sehr schwungvoll*, has many of the same characteristics of the opening movement. Particularly striking is a hymn-like section and the very effective *Presto coda*. A first rate work, deserving a place in the concert hall as well as on the stands of experienced amateur players.

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



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

at the young age of 35.

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



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

Wagner and later from the respected French composer and professor at the Conservatory Auguste Barbereau. These came to an end when Saint Saens warned him away from Barbereau and briefly took the aspiring composer under his wings. Of independent means, he was able to devote himself to composition. He was especially fond of the genre of chamber music writing several trios, quartets and quintets, all with piano, as well as a number of instrumental pieces. He wrote two piano quartets and a set of three character pieces for the same grouping. **Piano Quartet No.1 in g minor, Op.13** appeared in 1879 and shows the influence of Saint Saens and to an extent, Schumann and Mendelssohn. It is a good work, fun to play with appealing melodies. It would do well in concert and will be enjoyed by amateurs. His **Trois Pieces en Quatuor** dates from 1890. It is a set of three romantic pieces: *Les Echoes*, *Elegie* and *Serenade*. Each is lovely and contrasting. They make a fine short program selection and any of the three movements could be used as a fine encore. They are also suitable for amateurs as they present no technical difficulties. The **Piano Quartet No.2 in E flat Major, Op.91** was completed in 1906, shortly before his death. Except for the middle movement, it does not show the influence of his countrymen who were busy writing impressionist works, but as his first quartet, takes the Austrian and German classical and romantic composers as his models. It is beautifully written and quite charming to hear. The opening movement's two main themes are expressed by different tempo markings. The first, *Andante espressivo*, the second *Allegro con brio*. Only in the *Vivace*, a spirited scherzo with an *Andante espressivo* trio, does the music take on a French flavor. In the finale, *Allegro vivace*, is full of march-like, almost military, spirited themes bring this good work to a close. It will succeed in the concert hall if given a chance and will make a hit with amateurs.

When Saint Saëns, after hearing this work, remarked to its dedicatee Jean Gounod, "I never thought a woman could write something such as this. She knows all the clever tricks of the composer's trade," this was both a compliment and a sad commentary on the fact that women composers were basically ignored and regarded as second rate.



Mel Bonis (Melanie Helene Bonis 1858-1937) was born in Paris, She was a gifted but long underrated composer. She used the pseudonym Mel Bonis because she rightly felt women composers of her time weren't taken seriously as artists. Her music represents a link between the Romantic and Impressionist movements in France. Her parents discouraged her early interest in music and she taught herself to

play piano until age 12, when she was finally given private lessons. A friend introduced her to Cesar Franck, who was so impressed with her abilities he made special arrangements for her to be admitted to the then all-male Paris Conservatory in 1876. She won prizes in harmony and accompaniment and showed great promise in composition, but a romance with a fellow student, Amedee Hettich, caused her parents to withdraw her from the institution in 1881. Two years later she married and raised a family. Then in 1893 she again encountered Hettich, now a famous critic; he urged her to continue composing and helped launch her career in fashionable Parisian salons, where her music made a considerable stir. Saint Saens highly praised her chamber music and after hearing her **Piano Quartet No.1 in B flat Major, Op.69**, he was said to have remarked, *"I never thought a woman could write something such as this. She knows all the clever tricks of the composer's trade,"* Although her music was much played and praised she never entered the first rank of her contemporaries as she probably would have because she lacked the necessary vanity for self-promotion. It did not help that she was a woman. As a result, by the time of her death, she and her music had fallen into obscurity. She composed over 300 works in most genres. Piano Quartet No.1 was completed in 1905. The opening movement, Moderato, begins gently but its main theme also shows a marked intensity of feeling. The music has a certain diffidence. The second theme is used to slowly build tension. The second movement, Intermezzo, allegretto tranquillo, also begins quietly but momentum picks up almost immediately, while still keeping the laid back mood of an intermezzo. The lovely Andante which follows is the work's center of gravity. The first part of the main theme has a sad, searching quality while the second half is surprisingly optimistic. From this she branches out, building beautiful tonal episodes. In the finale, Allegro ma non troppo, the relaxed geniality is substituted for passion, drama and excitement. This is an important work which any piano quartet group, professional or amateur, would be well served playing. In 1928, she published at her own expense **Piano Quartet No.2 in E flat Major, Op.91**. It was never publicly performed in her lifetime and although she considered it her musical testament, it has never gained any traction, even in France. The opening Moderato begins in a quiet, reflective fashion. There is a gentle valedictory mood throughout. The Allegretto which comes next is a pleasant, lively scherzo-like affair. Here we encounter echoes of impressionism of the best kind. The third movement, Lent, is subdued and perfumed but not particularly gripping. It is only in the restless finale, an Allegro, that any real excitement is created.

Johannes Brahms' three piano quartet Op.25 in g minor, Op.26 in A Major and Op.60 in c minor are among the best known and very best. Every piano quartet group owes it to themselves to become acquainted with these fine works. There is no need to discuss them here as they have been analyzed and discussed many times over elsewhere and there is little more to add.



Frank Bridge was born in in the English city of Brighton and learned to play violin from his father. He had much early exposure to practical musicianship, playing in theatre orchestras his father conducted. He studied violin and composition, the latter from Charles Stanford, at the Royal College of Music. He later played viola in prominent quartets and was a respected con-

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



August Bungert (1845-1915) was born in the German town of Mühlheim. He studied at the Cologne and Paris conservatories, after which he served as a music director in a small German resort town for a brief period before moving to Berlin and studying composition with Friedrich Kiel. Although primarily a composer of opera, Bungert's **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op.18** won the 1877 Florentine Quartet prize. The judges of the competition which selected this work were none other than Johannes Brahms and Robert Volkmann. The Piano Quartet was very popular for many years, especially during the last part of the 19th century when piano quartets were more often performed in concert than they are today. The opening movement, Con brio, is distinguished by two fine themes, the first quite captivating, the second more vigorous. The second movement, Adagio con moto and subtitled Volkston (a folk tune), is highly expressive. A gloomy middle section provides a superb contrast. The third movement, Un poco agitato, is pervaded by a thunder-charged atmosphere which gives way to a heroic middle section. The finale, Allegro giocoso, is melodious and full of gaiety. This is a fine work, unjustly forgotten, deserving of concert performance but which can also be warmly recommended to amateurs as it makes no extraordinary technical demands.

Adolf Busch (1891-1952) was born in the German town of Siegen. He studied violin and composition at the Cologne Conservatory and became one of the leading soloists of the day spe-



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



Alexis de Castillon (1838-1873) was born in the French city of Chartres. As a member of the nobility his parents initially expected him to have a military career, which for a time he pursued, joining the imperial cavalry. However, his love of music, which came from the piano lessons he had received as a boy, led him to enter the Paris Conservatoire where he ultimately studied with César Franck. His health,

always of a fragile nature, was not helped by his military service in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71. His health deteriorated and he never really recovered. He composed several chamber works which his contemporaries considered to be first rate. Vincent d'Indy called him one of the best chamber music composers of his time. The Op.7 Piano Quartet was completed in 1869 and dedicated to the Russian pianist Anton Rubinstein. The chamber music of Robert Schumann began to be performed in France during the 1860's and while it generally met with hostility, Castillon was immensely impressed by it and one can hear that composer's influence on this work. The opening *Larghetto*, with its succession of chromatic chords creates a mood reflective melancholy. The main section of the first movement, *Allegro*, opens in turbulent, impassioned fashion. However, the slower reflective opening section suddenly returns before the appearance of the lyrical second theme. The second movement, *Scherzando*, begins in a rather subdued fashion, sounding more like a minuet than a little scherzo. It is the impassioned trio section with its fine string writing which leaves a stronger impression. The third movement is actually two bound together. It begins as an engaging Mendelssohnian song without words *Larghetto quasi marcia religioso*. A highly romantic second theme is full of pathos. It eventually leads to the lively Finale which is played without pause. The music is boisterous and with a sense of ceremony.

Georgy Catoire (1861-1926) is generally considered the father of Russian modernism. He was born in Moscow to a French noble family which had emigrated to Russia in the early 19th cen-



tury. Although fascinated by music, he studied mathematics and science at the University of Moscow, graduating in 1884. After graduation, however, he decided to devote himself to music. His early compositions showed the influence of Tchaikovsky who described Catoire as talented but in need of serious training. Eventually Catoire was to study composition with Rimsky-Korsakov, Lyadov, Arensky and Taneyev. In

1916, he was appointed Professor of Composition at the Moscow Conservatory, a position he held for the rest of his life. Catoire wrote several treatises on music theory, which became the foundation for the teaching of music theory in Russia. His composition style was a synthesis Russian, German and French influences--Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Cesar Franck, Debussy and Richard Wagner were the chief influences. From them, Catoire developed a highly personal and original idiom. His championing of Wagner is partially responsible for the fact that his works are relatively unknown today. Rimsky-Korsakov's circle disliked Wagner's music intensely and did little to promote it. This resulted in its being barely known in Russia. They also shunned Catoire's music because he was a Wagnerite. His **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op.31** was composed in 1916 and is his last chamber music work. Like his other chamber works, is quite individualistic and original sounding. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins softly with an attractive melody veiled in the aura of mysticism. The music quickly becomes rather dramatic and creates a sustained sense of tension. The mood of the second movement, *Andante*, is subdued and dreamy. The finale, *Allegro molto*, conjures up a modern vision of elves, sorcerers and fairies. Catoire's music, it must be said, is beyond most amateurs as it is very hard to put together. Nor is it to everyone's taste. It is tonal but requires some getting used to. Certainly it is a cerebral work.



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

with Jules Massenet and later Cesar Franck. His friend Vincent d'Indy introduced him to the music of Wagner. Scholars generally divide his work into three periods, early, middle and late. His very early works tend to show the influence of Massenet. In those which come later there is also the influence of Franck and Wagner. His **Piano Quartet in A Major, Op.30** dates from 1897. The lovely opening movement, *Animé*, is warm and bright, sunny skies and well-being are conjured up. The second movement *Très calme* has a limpid, poetic quality. It is lyrical and gentle. Next comes a kind of intermezzo, *Simple et sans hâte*, essentially gentle and pleasant. The finale, *Animé*, opens in frenetic fashion, full of breathless anxiety. And here, Chausson shows he is still a bit under the influence of his old teacher Franck as themes from all of the preceding movements are given a recapitulation. There is no mistaking this work as a child of French impressionism. Of its kind, it is a very good work. It deserves to be heard in concert but although not requiring a virtuoso technique from the performers, nevertheless, is not particularly easy to bring off.

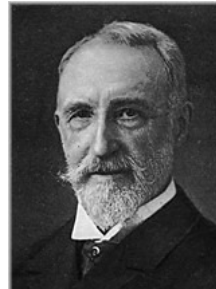


Carl Czerny (1791-1857) is remembered as one of the most famous piano teachers of all time. He was a child prodigy. When Beethoven heard Czerny play, he invited the boy to study with him, which Czerny did for three years. He also studied with Muzio Clementi and Johann Nepomuk Hummel. Besides being Liszt's only real teacher, Czerny taught a host of other famous pianists. Today, the only music of Czerny's which is ever played are his pedagogical works for pianists such as his etudes and his famous *Art of Finger Dexterity* and his *School of Velocity*. But Czerny composed over 1000 works in virtually every genre although most were for the piano. The bulk of his oeuvre---potpourris based on various opera arias and such which made his publishers rich, was composed at their request. These salon pieces were incredibly popular throughout the 19th century but for this very reason Czerny was attacked by most critics as nothing more than a hack. Very few of his other works received more than a premiere and it is highly doubtful that his critics ever heard his symphonies, lieder or chamber music. Had they done so, their opinion about Czerny and his music would certainly have been very different because Czerny was not only a master craftsman but also a composer with a gift for melody. His **Piano Quartet No.1 in c minor, Op.148** is an excellent example of this. Piano Quartet No.1 in c minor was published in 1827 and composed not long before. It not only shows the influence of Beethoven, but also that Czerny drank from the same cup of Viennese melody as had Schubert. The opening *Allegro molto agitato* begins quietly in a foreboding mood. Suddenly a storm of passion breaks loose as the music almost bursts the bounds of chamber music. A second theme is more lyrical though it has almost as much forward motion as the opening subject. Next comes a hard-driving scherzo, rhythmically very similar to that of Schubert's last string quartet. A finely contrasting trio section offers a lovely melody first sung by the cello and then the rest of the strings. A deeply felt Beethovenian *Andante sostenuto* comes next. The strings present the long-lined melody over the soft piano filigree accompaniment. The captivating main theme of the finale, *Allegro vivace*, is first heard in the piano over the strings quick 16ths which almost sound like tremolo. It is a rhythmic horse ride. The romantic second subject, is highly lyrical and followed almost immediately by another lovely melody.



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

composed it in 1891 at the age of 14, it displays an incredible maturity. Had Brahms heard it, he would have thought himself in the presence of a second Mozart. There is no question in my mind that this work ranks alongside those of the great masters. The attractive main theme to the opening *Allegro moderato* is brooding and weighty. From the opening notes, Dohnányi makes clear he is in the camp of Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann and Brahms and not that of Liszt and Wagner. The clever second movement, *Scherzo, allegretto vivace*, is a somewhat bizarre, pulsating dance. The gorgeous *Adagio molto espressivo* which comes next begins in a mock baroque style but quickly migrates to the chromaticism and intense feeling of the late German romantic period. The finale, *Allegro con brio*, is a lively rondo permeated with the characteristics of a Hungarian dance.



Théodore Dubois (1837-1924) was born in the French town of Rosnay. After an impressive career at the Paris Conservatory, where he studied with Ambroise Thomas, he won the coveted Prix de Rome. Among the many important positions he held during a long career was that of director of the Madeleine, where he succeeded Saint-Saëns, and later of the Paris Conservatory. Among his many students were Paul Dukas and Florent Schmitt. Dubois wrote a considerable amount of music in nearly every genre. Like Saint Saëns, he eschewed impressionism, and continued on in the French Romantic tradition which the former had helped to pioneer. It is characterized by, logic, clarity, fine melody, drama and a refined sense of taste. His music is finely crafted and clearly shows that he was a gifted melodist. It is truly a pity his chamber music is unknown because it is absolutely first rate. The **Piano Quartet in a minor**, dates from 1907. The opening *Allegro agitato con calore*, begins with a sweeping theme in the strings to a breathless accompaniment in the piano. Here by turns we find drama and gorgeous melody all swept along by a tempestuous breeze. The sweet *Andante molto* which follows is full of romantic lyricism. The third movement, *Allegro leggiero*, is a buoyant and rhythmically bouncy scherzo, full of lightness and humor. Dubois specifically states that finale, takes its themes from the preceding three movements and as such is a summary of the entire work. These are masterly transformed and cleverly altered in the powerful and exciting denouement. This is a first rate work by any standard and marvelous example of late French romanticism.



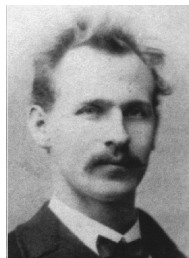
Thomas Dunhill (1877-1946) grew up in London and was part of the Dunhill family which founded the famous tobacco shop in that city. He studied composition at the Royal College of Music with Charles Villiers Stanford. After graduating, he enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a teacher and composer, eventually serving as a professor at the Royal College. He was especially fond of chamber music and wrote a considerable amount. The **Piano Quartet in b minor, Op.16** was composed in 1901 and won the prestigious Leslie Alexander Prize. The opening *Allegro* begins pensive and emotional vein. A series of charming themes, one after the other, are presented and developed in a very natural fashion. The second movement, *Adagio non troppo*, has evident vocal qualities in its use of its melodies and the way that they are presented by the strings. The depth of emotion is to the

fore with one of the greatest viola solos in the literature. A very effective pulsating scherzo with a Brahmsian trio follows. The finale begins with a lengthy, somber *Molto lento e serio* introduction. However, in the main part of the movement, *Allegro*, a calm sense of affirmation prevails. This is a first rate late Romantic piano quartet which surely would have taken its place in the repertoire except for the prejudice against Anglo-American composers at that time.



Jan Dussek (Dusek in the Czech form 1760-1812) was one of the first great touring piano virtuosos during the last quarter of the 18th century. He concertized throughout Europe and served as Pianist to the likes of Catherine the Great, whom he was later accused, probably speciously, of trying to assassinate. He also served as pianist for the King of Prussia, Prince Radziwill of Poland, Marie Antoinette and later Talleyrand. While in England, he collaborated with the famous piano maker John Broadwood and encouraged him to extend the piano's range and power. Broadwood's piano with Dussek's improvements was eventually sent to Beethoven and became his favorite instrument. Not a lot is known with whom Dussek studied, however, it is thought he may have studied composition with C.P.E. Bach. In any event, he wrote a huge amount of music, most of it for piano in one form or another, including a considerable amount of chamber music with piano. His contemporaries often considered his music very modern and hard to understand because of his use of chromaticism and certain harmonies. Today, of course, they sound more or less typical of the Vienna Classical era. Dussek's **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op.56** was dedicated to his star pupil Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia a virtuoso pianist and a fine composer in his own right. It dates from 1802. The writing here and the style shares an affinity with that of Carl Maria von Weber and Johann Nepomuk Hummel. In three movements---*Allegro affetuoso*, *Larghetto quasi andante* and *Allegro moderato*, which shows that structurally the work is rooted in the classical era it. However, the melodic writing already is exhibiting some of the trends of very early romanticism.

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



Catharinus Elling (1858-1942) was born in Oslo.) He studied piano and composition briefly at the Leipzig Conservatory and later with Heinrich von Herzogenberg in Berlin after which he pursued a career as teacher at the Oslo Conservatory and also as a composer. He became know as a collector of Norwegian folk music, and as Bartok did in Hungary, he traveled the length and breadth of Norway to record the folk music. He wrote in most genres and had three string quartets as well as his **Piano Quartet in g minor** which dates from 1901. It begins with a powerful, persuasive and somewhat

Brahmsian *Allegro*. The second movement, *Adagio*, begins quietly with a lovely, long-lined, lyrical theme. The middle section is restless and full of drama. Next comes a hard driving scherzo, *Presto*, full of forward motion. The finale, *Allegro*, is rich and darkly hued and tonally reminiscent of Brahms. This is a very well written work, first class, certainly deserving of concert performance and a good choice for amateur groups as well.



Georges Enescu (1881-1955) was a child prodigy on the violin and also the piano. He entered the Vienna Conservatory at age seven graduating at age 13. The next year he continued his studies at the Paris Conservatory. He became a violin virtuoso and famous teacher of the violin, but also devoted himself to composition which he studied with Massenet and Faure. He is remembered today mostly for his two Romanian Rhapsodies for Orchestra, but he wrote in virtually every genre and produced a considerable amount of fine chamber music. Enescu's **Piano Quartet No.1 in D Major, Op.16** was begun in 1900 but was not finished until 1909. It is written on an epic scale and if not the longest, certainly one of the longest ever written. Like his earlier Octet from 1906, one might say that the music, at several points bursts the bounds of chamber music and enters the realm of the orchestral. It is a very forward looking work can be appreciated by the fact that decades later, scholars and critics came to compare it to and find similarities with the late chamber music of Gabriel Fauré, which was composed a decade after Enescu had completed this work. In the broader sense, the music follows a traditional pattern but the various tonal and rhythmic effects, always interesting, might be considered pioneering if not revolutionary. Very original in conception, there was nothing like it being contemporaneously written. **Piano Quartet No. 2 in d minor, Op.30** was composed between 1943 and 1944. It was written to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Fauré's death. Unlike No.1, which is heavily influenced by Fauré's melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic language, if not so much his elegant, refined style, the later work seems to take note of Bartók in the way it draws upon Magyar folk elements in its first and last movements, and to explore a kind of post-Debussy Impressionism in its slow movement. Neither of these works can be recommended to amateurs unless they are of the highest technical standards and experienced ensemble players. No.1 is more immediate in its ability to be appreciated, but No.2 is also a very fine work which ought to be performed in concert.



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

Among his students were Maurice Ravel and Nadia Boulanger. He was a founder of the Société Nationale de Musique and eventually became director of the Paris Conservatory. In retrospect, he has come to be regarded as a transitional and unique figure in French music. His lifetime and works spanned the period of the mid Romantic right up to the modern post-WWI developments of Stravinsky. Fauré's **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op.15** was per-

haps his best known chamber music work and was considered in the front rank of such works, being regularly performed in the days when piano quartets were frequently heard in concert. It dates from 1879 not long after Fauré had visited Wagner and listened to his music. Impressed though he was, unlike Cesar Franck or d'Indy, he refused to fall under Wagner's spell and set off on his own path. No better example can be found than this work. The opening movement, *Allegro molto moderato*, is bold and sweeping over a wide range, powerfully rhythmic and very original, it is clearly a challenge to Franck and the other French Wagnerians. He is deliberately seeking to expand the language of romanticism without going in the same direction as Wagner. Fauré, unlike Brahms or Schumann, never resorted to having the strings treated as a choir against the piano. He recognized and accepted the basic difference in sound and character between the piano and string instruments and never tried to make the piano sing long sustained melodies. He showed that it was not necessary. Using opposing arpeggios, chords and runs against the singing of a single instrument or a group of them, and giving the piano an equal role in a rich contrapuntal texture created a dazzling variety of tonal effects. Faure's **Piano Quartet No.2 in g minor, Op.45** was completed in 1887. It is his only major work that experiments with cyclic form, an approach that was quite popular in France thanks to the influence of Cesar Franck and Franz Liszt. The first movement, *Allegro molto moderato*, opens with a long and flowing unison string melody. The viola introduces the secondary theme, which is closely related to the first subject. The second movement, *Allegro molto*, begins in turbulent fashion with a breathless, syncopated theme in the piano. What appears to be a lyrical contrasting theme in the strings is another version of material from the beginning of the first movement; at the same time it is related to the scale passage of the scherzo theme. Faure wrote that the third movement, *Adagio non troppo*, grew out of his memories of the sounds of bells heard years before in the garden of his family's home in Cadirac. The finale, *Allegro molto*, is full of energy, passion, and turbulence. Its theme of surging triplets has a relentless forward drive. Later, contrasting ideas recall themes originally heard in the scherzo and the first movement. Both of these works are among the finest ever penned, masterworks.



Alexander Ernst Fesca (1820-1849) was born in the German city of Karlsruhe where his father Friedrich Ernst Fesca, also a composer, was serving as music director of the Ducal Court Orchestra of Baden. Fesca received his first lessons from his father and was considered a prodigy on the piano. He attended the Prussian Royal Conservatory in Berlin where he graduated with a degree in composition at the young age of 14 after

which he enjoyed a career as a pianist and music director. Though he did not live very long, he composed a considerable amount of music. His chamber music includes six piano trios, two piano quartets and two septets for piano, winds and strings. Fesca's **Piano Quartet in c minor, No. 2 Op.26** is a version of his Septet No.1 for Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass, Oboe, Horn and Piano which was published in 1842. It is not clear if Fesca made this version at the same time as the Septet. It seems probable that it was done shortly afterwards based on the fact that it was not published until 1844. The rationale for a second version would have most likely been premised on the fact that the Septet was

not likely to be played very often, it being for an unusual ensemble, while piano quartets on the other hand, were quite popular at that time. The opening movement, *Allegro con spirito*, begins with a powerful, unison statement of the main theme. It promises turbulence but more lyrical passages follow. The lovely second movement, *Andante con moto*, opens with a long, dreamy theme. Next comes a fleet Scherzo, *allegro vivo*. The piano starts things off and then suddenly the rest join in. The music alternates between powerful thrusting episodes and softer and mysterious intermezzo-like passages. The treatment is quite fetching. The finale, *Allegro con fuoco*, also starts off unisono with a thumping introduction which is suddenly interrupted twice by a baroque sounding recitative. Finally, a very long-lined theme which is rather relaxed issues forth. But then the music turns frantic and hard driving. **Piano Quartet No.2 in d minor, Op.28**, like No.1 is an arrangement by Fesca of his Second Septet. The opening movement, *Allegro con spirito*, begins with a march-like introduction presented in unison. After developing the material further, a second more lyrical subject is introduced by the oboe. Toward the end is an unusual recitativ for the cello and bass. The fetching main theme to the slow movement, *Andante con moto*, is entirely introduced by the cello in a lengthy solo over soft accompaniment. Eventually the others join in this dreamy, peaceful and pastoral idyll. The violoncello figures so prominently in this movement that one wonders if the commissioner was a cellist. Rather than a scherzo, as one might expect, Fesca inserts a minuet. This *Tempo di Menuetto*, is intentionally archaic, harking back not to Mozart, Haydn or the classical era but beyond to the time of Gossec with its formal, baroque style. Yet Fesca inserts several very imaginative ideas into this old form, including brief Rossini-esque episode in the trio section. In the finale, *Allegro moderato*, the piano brings forth the lilting main theme, full of chromatic digressions. When the others join to create a powerful impression the character of the music becomes much more dramatic before Fesca retraces his steps. Both works are effective and can be recommended to amateurs and professionals alike.



If reputation could be likened to a horse race, then in the "19th Century Czech Composer's Derby" Antonin Dvorak would cross the finish line several lengths ahead of his nearest rival, Bedrich Smetana, and then, after an even greater distance, would come **Zdenek Fibich**, far behind in third place. But reputation must not be confused with quality. Fibich (1850-1900) is no

third rate composer. His music is of very high quality, and totally undeserving of the near obscurity into which it has fallen. Fibich, in contrast to either Dvorak or Smetana, was the product of two cultures, German and Czech. He had been given a true bi-cultural education. And during his formative early years, he had lived in Germany, France and Austria in addition to his native Bohemia. He was perfectly fluent in German as well as Czech. All of these factors were important in shaping his outlook and approach to composition. In his instrumental works, Fibich generally wrote in the vein of the German romantics, first falling under the influence of Weber, Mendelssohn and Schumann and later Wagner. It seems, that like Tchaikovsky, Fibich did not wish to write music that merely sounded nationalistic. And therein lies the reason that Fibich has never been held in the same regard by his countrymen as either Dvorak and Smetana or even Janacek. Yet Fibich was the first of any Czech composer to use native Czech folk melody in his works and these melodies, though not as pronounced as in

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



If Arthur Foote's his name is not entirely unknown, it is fair to say that his music is. This is a shame especially as far as chamber musicians are concerned. Foote's chamber music is first rate, deserving of regular public performance. **Arthur Foote** (1853-1937) certainly was the equal of nearly any of his European contemporaries, but the fact that he was an American, at a time when American composers were not generally taken seriously, was without doubt an insurmountable obstacle to his achieving the reputation he deserved. Foote was born in Salem, Massachusetts and was the first important American composer trained entirely in America. His main teacher was John Knowles Paine, from whom Foote gained an admiration for and was primarily influenced by the leading Central European Romantic composers of the day, such as Mendelssohn, Schumann, Dvorak and Brahms. The **Piano Quartet in C Major, Op.23** was completed in 1890 and was, during Foote's lifetime, one of his most popular works, receiving numerous performances in both the U.S. and Europe before inexplicably disappearing from the concert stage. The celebratory opening movement, *Allegro comodo*, is sunny and full of good spirits. A vivacious and energetic Schumannesque Scherzo follows. The third movement, *Adagio, ma con moto*, is a leisurely, joyous theme of thanksgiving. The appealing finale, *Allegro non troppo*, is full of excitement, wonderful melodies and even a fugue before the satisfying coda. Here is work of the first order, fun to play and an audience pleaser. It ought to be heard in concert halls once again and will be appreciated by both amateurs and professionals alike.



Richard Franck (1858-1938) was the son of the composer, concert pianist and teacher Eduard Franck (whose music we also publish). 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, Richard enjoyed a long career as a teacher, composer, and pianist, during the course of which he held several positions in Germany and Switzerland. Franck's **Piano Quartet No.1 in A Major, Op.33** was composed in 1901. The opening *Allegro*, has for its main theme a lovely, lyrical melody in the strings that slowly builds in 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 (our sound-bite begins here) in which the theme is further developed before returning. 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. It is by turns poetical, atmospheric and fiery. The part-writing is good and it plays well.



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

Franz Schrecker and Richard Heuberger were among his many students. **Piano Quartet No.1 in g minor, Op.15** dates from 1876 at a time when Fuchs was establishing his own style. The first movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins with a dark and elegiac melody reminiscent of Schubert. The rhythm plays an important role in the development of the theme. The second subject, first introduced by the violin partially lightens the mood. A lively scherzo, *Allegretto quasi allegro*, comes next. The calm trio section provides excellent contrast. The work's center of gravity is the chorale-like *Adagio*. The huge finale, *Allegro molto*, has several highly effective episodes of tension and technical fireworks. **Piano Quartet No.2 in b minor, Op.75** was composed in 1904. Of this work, It is an inspired work of great merit. The first movement is reminiscent of Schubert. The beautiful second movement, a theme with variations has many outstanding episodes, while the charming Scherzo and trio which follow are true examples of Austrian music. The energetic and buoyant finale, *Allegro*, makes a very strong impression and fitting close to this outstanding work. Obviously, worthy of both professionals and amateurs alike.



Hans Gal (1890-1987) was born in the small village of Brunn am Gebirge, just outside of Vienna. He was trained in that metropolis at the New Vienna Conservatory where he taught for some time. Later, with the support of such important musicians as Wilhelm Furtwangler, Richard Strauss and others, he obtained the directorship of the Mainz Conservatory. Gal composed in nearly every genre and his operas were particularly popular during the 1920's. Upon Hitler's rise to power, Gal was forced to leave Germany and eventually emigrated to Britain, teaching at the Edinburgh Music Conservatory for many years. His *Piano Quartet in A Major, Op.13* was completed in 1915. While it shows the influence of Brahms, it would be more accurate to say it is written in a

post-Brahmsian mode, much like the later works of Dohnanyi. The opening *Allegro energico*, is edgy with much forward motion. The second subject is more lyrical and quite appealing. The second movement, *Andante con moto*, might be likened to a lullaby, gentle and flowing. The third movement in the form of a scherzo, *Agitato*, has strongly rhythmic episodes which are frequently interrupted while the trio consists of a beautiful singing solo for the cello. The finale, *Allegro vivace*, is more genial, though rhythmic and here quite Brahmsian. This is a first class work, well-written for all of the instruments. A good concert hall choice and also for amateurs.



Friedrich Gernsheim (1839-1916) is a composer whose music was held in the highest regard by critics during his lifetime. His chamber music is poetic and of a high intellectual content. But Gernsheim had two misfortunes, which led to his music not obtaining the reputation it might have. The first was to be born within a decade of Brahms. A misfortune because, in what is surely an extraordinary phenomenon, virtually every composer

in the German-speaking countries born within a decade either side of Brahms were so eclipsed by him that their reputation and music all but disappeared when that era was over. Names such as Rheinberger, Reinecke, Kiel, Bruch, Dessoff, and Herzogenberg, among many others, come to mind. Ironically, Brahms had considerable respect and admiration for Gernsheim's work. An accolade which was, in Brahms' case, no mere flattery as Brahms only very rarely praised the works of other composers. The second misfortune was that being Jewish, his music was officially banned during the Nazi era, which insured that it would fall into oblivion. Gernsheim was somewhat of a piano and violin virtuoso as a child. He studied at the famous Leipzig Conservatory where he studied piano with Ignaz Moscheles and violin with Ferdinand David. After graduating, he continued his studies in Paris, getting to know Saint Saëns, Lalo, Liszt and Rossini. Despite his admiration for France and the French, he returned to Germany and during the course of his life, he held academic and conducting positions in Cologne, Rotterdam and finally Berlin. **Piano Quartet No.1 in E flat Major, Op.6** dates from 1860. It was begun whilst he was in Paris and so impressed Ferdinand Hiller, director of the Cologne Conservatory, that he offered Gernsheim a position as a composition teacher there. Stylistically, an early work, it shows the Mendelssohnian influence of his Leipzig training but also of the melodic influence of Rossini. The first movement, *Allegro ma non troppo*, begins with a optimistic theme full of forward drive. The second theme has chorale-like quality. The extraordinarily fine second movement, *Allegro vivace assai*, though it starts quietly, quickly becomes is a whirlwind scherzo. This is followed by an *Andante con moto*, with its sweet and lovely main theme. It is in the first theme of the finale, *Allegro con brio*, that one hears the influence of Mendelssohn with its rhythmically driving first theme. This is followed up by a lovely second subject. **Piano Quartet No.2 in c minor, Op.20** appeared in 1870. There is an aura of drama and seriousness to the opening *Allegro molto moderato*. The lovely *Adagio* which follows is peaceful and calm. The finale, combines folkdance like main section with a more pastoral second section. **Piano Quartet No.3 in F Major, Op.47** was completed in 1883. While it shows the influence of Brahms, it is in no way imitative. More than elsewhere, the big first movement, *Allegro tranquillo*, with its rhythmic phrases and dark tone

color brings Brahms to mind. But where Brahms generally has the strings play as a group against the piano, Gernsheim uses this technique only rarely. The movement begins quietly, the strings slip in gradually and only then does the tempo increase. The music, which is overflowing with wonderful melody after another is mostly genial and the combination of the instruments is superb. The second movement, *Allegro energico e appassionato*, a blustering and exciting scherzo, is for its time quite modern sounding. From the opening notes, its begins in dramatic and exciting fashion. However, Gernsheim plays with the listener, constantly interrupting the music just when one expects a theme to receive a more lengthy treatment. This creates a very impressive effect. The slow movement, *Andante cantabile*, brings relief with its long-lined soothing melody, it could almost be called a song without words. The finale, *Tema con variazione*, has for its main theme a simple, child-like tune which is first given out by the piano. In the several variations which follows, Gernsheim demonstrates his mastery of form and instrumental technique and finishes it off with an exciting conclusion. All three of these works are first rate and belong in the front rank of such compositions. It goes without saying that they belong in the concert hall and should not be missed by amateur players.



Hermann Goetz (1840-1876) studied theology and mathematics in Königsberg where he was born. Eventually he switched to music and attended the Stern Conservatory in Berlin where he studied with the founder Julius Stern, as well as Hans von Bülow and Hugo Ulrich. In 1862, he succeeded Theodor Kirchner as organist at the church in Winterthur. His **Piano Quartet in E Major, Op.6**,

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



Prince Heinrich XXIV Reuss of Köstritz (1855-1910), was born in the Prussian town of Trebschen. The Reusses were a large old German noble family with several branches and literally dozens of princes called Heinrich. There was even another Prince Heinrich XXIV, but he "of Greiz", hence the need for the lengthy name. Our Prince

Reuss after initially studying music with his father, who had been a student of Carl Reissiger, took a law degree. However, subsequently he devoted himself to music, studying composition privately with Heinrich von Herzogenberg who introduced him to Brahms. Although Brahms never formally gave lessons to Reuss, according to the prince he gave the young composers numerous suggestions and considerable help which as far as Reuss was concerned almost amounted to the same thing. Though not a prolific composer, he did pen six symphonies as well as a considerable amount of chamber music, including five string quartets, two string sextets, a piano trio, and piano quartet, this string quintet and several instrumental sonatas. His style can be an amalgam of Brahms, Herzogenberg and to some extent Dvorak and Mendelssohn. His works were premiered to critical acclaim and were held in high regard for many years before disappearing from the repertoire after the First World War. His **Piano Quartet in f minor, Op.6** dates from 1895. Like many works from this period, it was influenced by Brahms, but to be clear, it is not imitative. It is well-written for all of the instruments, grateful to play and to hear. Amateurs will take especial pleasure in this work as it presents no great technical difficulties while sounding magnificent. The first subject of the opening movement, *Allegro non troppo*, is powerful and energetic while a contrasting second theme is graceful. A ghostly but spirited scherzo, *Allegro molto*, follows with a contrasting trio section. The *Adagio* which comes next approaches a song without words. A dramatic finale brings to an end what is a very appealing work.



Reynaldo Hahn (1875-1947) today is primarily remembered as a composer of the operetta *Ciboulette*, but he did devote a fair amount attention to composing chamber music. Born in Venezuela, Hahn's family moved to Paris when he was three. He studied at the Conservatory under Massenet who considered him a genius. Handsome and worldly, Hahn drew his friends from a much wider circle than other musicians, for example Marcel Proust and Sarah Bernhardt, and was greatly interested in the literary scene as well as the theater. Having a gifted voice and being an excellent pianist, Hahn needed no assistant for vocal concert evening. He was also a deft conductor who eventually directed the Paris Opera. **Piano Quartet in G Major** dates from 1946, the year before his death. The opening *Allegro moderato* is genial and sunny. The second movement, *Allegro assai*, is a cross between an intermezzo and a scherzo, essentially gentle and dance like. The *Andante* which follows is autumnal. The finale, *Allegro assai*, is an upbeat and full of good feelings. This is a charming work, which if you did not know it, could have been written in 1890 during the height of the French impressionist movement. It can be recommended both for concert and to amateur players.



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

Whereas her mother and aunt also composed, but only French art songs with piano accompaniment, Louise wrote in virtually every genre. Among her works are some four string quartets, three piano quartets, two piano trios and several instrumental sonatas. Unfortunately, much of her oeuvre is now lost. Of her chamber music, only the three piano quartets have survived. **Piano Quartet in d minor**, bears no opus number but is the first that she wrote, dating from the mid 1870's. The first movement, *Allegro*, is powerful but heavy, almost ponderous. The following *Andante* begins with the strings bringing forth an arresting melody over the hushed tremolo accompaniment of the piano. The striking *Scherzo con moto* which comes next has a Halloween-like subject for its main theme. Its syncopated rhythm gives the impression ogres dancing. The whole thing is extraordinarily effective. The rousing finale, *Allegro con brio*, is better yet, full of verve and élan. **Piano Quartet No.1 in A Major** (actually number 2 but it has traveled under No.1) dates from 1883. It is clearly programmatic music as Heritte-Viardot not only titled the work *Im Sommer* (In Summer) but gave each of the movements a subtitle. The first movement, *Allegro un poco animato*, is subtitled *Des Mornings in the Walde* (Mornings in the Forest) evokes the awakening dawn of the forest and is both lyrical but also incorporates a hunting motif. The second movement, a scherzo, is subtitled *Fliegen und Schmetterlinge* (Flies and Butterflies). The music alternates between quick presto sections and slower moderatos. The third movement, *Die Schwüle* (Sultry Weather) is a *lento*. Slow and ponderous but at the same time lyrical, it is meant to convey the stifling heat of a hot summer's day. The finale, *Vivo allegretto*, is subtitled *Abends unter die Eiche* (Evenings under the Oak). The composer further notes that it is a *Bauertanz*, that is, a peasant dance and the music aptly conveys the rustic yet graceful quality of such a dance. This is a great choice for a concert program which audiences are sure to enjoy. And amateurs as well should not miss the chance to play it. The part-writing is very fine and highly effective and the ideas are perfectly suited for its purpose. **Piano Quartet No.2 in D Major, Op.11** also dates from 1883. It enjoyed a successful premiere and was one of the few works from the more than 300 she wrote which was published in her lifetime. Since each of its movements bears a Spanish subtitle, it may be considered program music, but in the very best sense of the word. It was quickly given the subtitle "*The Spanish*" The opening movement, *Allegretto*, is a *Paseo*, a classical Spanish dance characterized by a walking step. This sparkling music is brisk but not overly fast. This is followed by an *Andantino* entitled *Caña*. It is a sad song first given out by the viola and then taken up by the violin as the cello and piano provide a strumming background. A more lively *Allegretto con moto* follows. The title, *Serenada*, gives away the mood of the music, a romantic and lovely melody. The finale, *Allegro giocoso*, entitled *Divertimento*, is a kind of upbeat traveling music which takes the listener on exciting, bumptious tour. This is another great audience piece and would surely please in the concert hall and amateurs will greatly enjoy it.



The Austrian composer **Heinrich von Herzogenberg** (1843-1900) has sometimes been attacked as nothing more than a pale imitation of Brahms, of whom he was a great admirer. There is no denying that his music often shows the influence of Brahms, however, listeners and players alike have discovered that it is original and fresh, notwithstanding the influ-

ence of Brahms. Most of his chamber is first rate and Brahms might well have wished he had written some of it. Toward the end of his life, Brahms, who was not in the habit of praising other composers publicly, wrote of Herzogenberg, whom he had often harshly criticized in the past, "*Herzogenberg is able to do more than any of the others.*" His **Piano Quartet No.1 in e minor, Op.75** dates from 1892 during his wife's final illness. While it is not a tragic work, it is full of many different emotions and exudes a spiritual quality. The first movement, Allegro, opens in a dramatic, serious mood as storm clouds threaten. There is an undeniably Brahmsian aura to it. Although the second theme, based on a folk melody, is more lyrical, still, the quiet air of desperation hovers over the music. Altmann described the following Andante quasi allegretto as a song without words. It is calm and reflective but when the cello enters it becomes a solemn declaration of love. Although the Vivace, is lively, it is a grotesque and macabre liveliness. Only in the trio, a Bach-like fugue, does the mood lighten. The finale, Moderato, consists of several episodes each of a different mood, representing a kind of biographical summing up of their life together. It begins with a dignified, church-like anthem of resignation, but also of thanksgiving. This gives way to a romantic and turbulent section which is followed by a measured dance of joy. Herzogenberg himself wrote of the finale that it was a declaration of love to my dead Lisl. Toward the end, main theme from the second movement briefly reappears, perhaps to indicate that there is, after all, heavenly peace. A powerful work. **Piano Quartet No.2 in B flat, Op.95** was his last chamber music work. It was begun in 1895 and finished a few months before Brahms' death in 1897. Herzogenberg, who knew that Brahms was seriously ill, dedicated the work to him and this certainly explains the almost overt influence of Brahms in this music. It was undoubtedly intended as a tribute to his erstwhile and unresponsive friend. For many years prior, Herzogenberg has studiously gone his own way and though he admired Brahms greatly, had long since stopped imitating him. The opening Allegro begins with a series of sharp chords which are subsequently developed and serve as the core material of the entire movement. The superb second movement, a big, emotive Adagio, is titled "Notturmo" and the music, though very romantic is also quite dream-like. A powerful and thrusting Scherzo follows. Its middle section surprises with music which could very well be styled a Shepherd's Idyll. The rousing finale, Allegro vivace, is tinged with Hungarian melody but also reprises the three main themes of the prior movements and melds them into a rousing conclusion. Both of these piano quartets are absolutely first rate. They belong in the concert hall and are not beyond amateurs who are experienced ensemble players.



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

composer. He knew and was on friendly terms with many of the important composers of his day including Brahms, Anton Rubinstein and Louis Spohr. He wrote in most genres and, as far as chamber music goes, composed two piano trios, a string quartet, several instrumental sonatas and the **Piano Quartet in E flat Major Op.44** which was completed in 1879. It shows the influence of Robert Schumann. The first movement begins with a

powerful and energetic theme which is in strong contrast to the pleasing and delicate subject which appears in the violin and cello. In the Poco Adagio which follows, one hears echoes of Wagner's Lohengrin which offers a nice change of pace rhythmically speaking. This is followed by a waltz like Allegro animato which takes the place of a scherzo. The main subject of the finale, Allegro con brio, succeeds because of its clarity. The quartet is well put together and a good, though not a great, work. But amateurs will certainly take pleasure from it.



Ferdinand Hiller (1811-1885) first studied piano and violin in his native Frankfurt. His talent was such that he was taken to study with Johann Nepomuk Hummel, then the greatest living pianist. Hiller eventually became one of the leading pianists of his time and for a while devoted himself to a concert career before deciding to concentrate on composing and conducting. For more than 2 decades he was one of Mendelssohn's closest friends, succeeding him as conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. He served as a Professor and Director of the Cologne Conservatory for several decades.

Among his many students was Max Bruch. A prolific composer who wrote works in virtually every genre, Hiller's output was vast and it is fair to say that he wrote too much (more than 200 works with opus number and nearly as many without) and certainly not everything was worthwhile. Today virtually all of it is forgotten, despite the fact that there are some fine works which deserve to be revived. Hiller wrote three piano quartets. The first two, Opp.1 and 3 are among his earliest published works which appeared in the 1830's. I am not familiar with them, however, judging from the various historical sources I have consulted, they are not worthy of discussion. The **Piano Quartet No.3 in A Major, Op.133** is his final work for this combination. It was completed in 1868 and was written on a large scale. The massive opening movement, Allegro appassionato, begins rather abruptly, almost as if in mid phrase, with an unsettling, ascending chromatic passage. The treatment of the restless and brooding main theme is extremely plastic, which allows the thrusting rhythm to dominate until finally the strings, in unison, state the theme in a much more emphatic fashion. A lovely Adagio comes next. It opens with the cello alone bring forth the very lyrical, somewhat sad first subject in its entirety before the rest of the strings join in. A Mendelssohnian episode, with the strings playing pizzicato, follows and provides a fine contrast. Hiller subtitles the third movement, marked Allegretto grazioso, an intermezzo. It is a quite interesting blend--- it begins with the piano given the lead and sounds like a sad Mendelssohnian Song Without Words, but when the strings join in, the music is transformed into just the kind of intermezzo for which Mendelssohn was famous. In the finale, Allegro con fuoco, the music once again begins rather abruptly, this time it is a short boisterous, martial introduction. Although the music is fiery, it is also characterized by the good spirits. An occasional concert performance would not be amiss.



Heinrich Hofmann (1842-1902) was born in Berlin and studied there at the Neue Akademie der Tonkunst with the Theodor Kullak and Siegfried Dehn. At first, he embarked upon a career as a pianist and teacher. However, by the late 1860's, his operas and his choral and orchestral works began to

achieve great success and for the next two decades, he was one of the most often performed composers in Germany and much of Europe. Success came at a price. Although hailed by some critics, such as Hermann Mendel, as a of real talent and one of the most important emerging composers of his time, many others, jealous of his rocketing success or determined to protect their favorites (such as Eduard Hanslick was of Brahms), derided him for his "fashionable eclecticism". While his works broke no new ground, on the other hand, they were masterfully conceived, beautiful and well-executed. This is especially true of his chamber music. Besides this Piano Quartet, he composed a Piano Trio, a String Sextet, an Octet and several smaller works. The **Piano Quartet in d minor, Op.50** dates from 1880, composed at a time when Hofmann was at the height of his powers and success. The quartet begins with a massive, *Vivace ma non troppo*. The brooding opening theme immediately captures the listener's attention. It is both attractive and full of drama. The writing, that is the integration of the strings with the piano, is truly first rate. All of the instruments are handled marvelously. After a masterly development, the second theme brings with it a lovely lyricism. The highly romantic second movement, *Andante poco sostenuto*, begins with a gorgeous violin solo soon followed by the cello and the other voices. After reaching a powerful climax, another sweet and romantic melody is brought forth by the cello. A robust and hard-driving scherzo, *Vivace*, full of forward motion comes next. A slower and gentle trio section completes the picture. The finale, an *Animato* in D Major, bursts out of the gate from its opening notes full of energy. The music is triumphant and jovial. A spacious and more relaxed second subject provides fine contrast. This Piano Quartet is a superb work and for many years enjoyed great popularity. It is not hard to see why once you have heard the music. As there are so few piano quartets performing before the public today, it is no mystery why it disappeared. All but a few works from this genre are known to the public today. Certainly, here is one that is as good as any and which belongs in the front ranks. We recommend it without reservation to both professionals and amateurs alike.



Joseph Holbrooke (1878-1958) born near London in the town of Croydon. Both his parents were musicians and his early lessons were with his father. He was sent to the Royal Academy of Music in London and after graduating worked as a pianist and conductor, all the while composing. Eventually his big works for orchestra and chorus and his operas brought him considerable fame,

however, after the First World War, he and his works fell into obscurity. He composed a considerable amount of chamber music, most of which is of a high quality and awaits rediscovery. His **Piano Quartet No.1 in g minor, Op.21** started off life as a piano trio. He revised it and it was published in 1905. He titled it *Symphonic Quartet No.2* telegraphing that it was a piece which might burst the boundaries of chamber music. It is a grandiose affair. The first movement, *Allegro moderato, ma non troppo*, opens ominously. One can almost hear an orchestra performing it. The middle movement, *Lament, largo e molto espressione*, is just that, a lament, clearly based on English folk melody. This is extremely well done. The finale, *Maestoso, allegro*, again begins in ominous fashion with the strings trumpeting an alert, interspersed by lightening bolt chords from the piano. Finally, the music takes off. It is by turns highly energetic, bordering on the frenetic, but there

are also several appealing lyrical sections which provide a fine contrast. This is without doubt one of the very best English piano quartets from the period. It is indeed a first rate work deserving of concert.



Herbert Howells (1892-1983) was born in Gloucester. In 1912 he won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music and studied composition with Stanford and Parry. Howells was one of the most brilliant and gifted pupils and Stanford considered him "my son in music". He persuaded young Howells to enter the first Carnegie Trust composition competition in 1916 and his **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op. 21** won an award. From 1936 to 1962 he taught at St. Paul's Girls School in Hammersmith, where he succeeded Gustav Holst and later became a professor at London University. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato tranquillo*, combines elements of English folk tunes with a kind of French impressionist Ravel-like approach. The middle movement, *Lento*, begins gently but builds to an impassioned climax in which the folk theme of the first movement is recalled. The finale, *Allegro molto energico*, is lighter in mood and full of high spirits. This is a good work which is interesting, not particularly easy to play, but it might do well in concert.



Hans Huber (1852-1921) was born in the Swiss town of Eppenberg. Between 1870-74, he studied at the Leipzig Conservatory with Carl Reinecke and Ernst Richter. After graduating he held a number of positions before being appointed a professor at the Basel Conservatory, where he served as director between 1889-1917. Huber's music was firmly rooted in the Romantic movement inspired at first by Schumann and Brahms and

then later by Liszt and Richard Strauss. He was widely considered Switzerland's leading composing during the last quarter of the 19th and first decade of the 20th century. He composed in virtually every genre and many of his works were for long years part of various repertoires and the only works by a Swiss composer that were regularly performed outside of Switzerland. **Piano Quartet No.1 in B flat Major, Op.110** dates from 1893. The main theme to the first movement, *Allegro moderato*, shows the influence of Brahms but is quite impressive, the development section is superbly done and engrossing. The second movement, *Adagio con molto sentimento*, appeals by virtue of its lovely, noble melody which serves as the main theme. Next comes an exciting scherzo, *Presto*, with a contrasting *tranquillo* trio section which is elegant and even delicate. The very effective finale, *Allegro vivace*, is marked 'alla svizzera' and is clearly based on Swiss folk melodies. Huber's **Piano Quartet No.2 in E Major, Op.117** dates from 1901. It became known as the *Waldlied* (Forest Song) Piano Quartet because lines from a poem by the important Swiss poet Gottfried Keller appeared on the title page of the first edition: "The branches and the treetops of the oak forest are standing intertwined / Today it sang to me its old song in a happy voice." The Swiss music critic wrote of the Piano Quartet that "the music breathes the joy of the holidays and the wanderer's happiness, depicting with graphic clarity, as does Keller's poem, the forest in calm and in storm." The opening movement, *Andante con moto*, begins with an air of contemplation, tenderly creating a sound picture of nature's magical moments. However,

as the music progresses, the we hear winds rushing through the trees creating a sense of drama. The second movement, *Allegro con fuoco*, characterized by an ever present restlessness and as well as downward plunging chromaticism, is a furious scherzo in which a storm bursts. The next movement, *Adagio molto*, begins where the scherzo has left off. One can hear the forest after the storm, the raindrops dripping from the branches, which are hanging low from the damaging winds. But in the finale, *Allegro ma non troppo*, the sun has come out and is glistening upon the leaves. There is a joyous return of normality in a hymn of thanksgiving. Both of these works are absolutely first rate can be unconditionally recommended to both professional as well as amateur players.



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

native Pressburg (today Bratislava) at the age of 4, Hummel auditioned to study with Mozart. While Mozart accepted the occasional day student for the odd hour or half hour lesson, he refused to take on full-time students because he was too busy. In Hummel's case, immediately recognizing the extraordinary talent, Mozart not only made an exception, but insisted that Hummel live with him so that he could supervise every aspect of the his musical education. In fact, Hummel was the only full-time student Mozart ever had. It appears that he wrote two piano quartets. **Piano Quartet No.1 in D Major, S.3** dates from 1790. Considering the time at which it was composed and how old Hummel was at the time, 12 years old, it should come as no surprise that it sound rather like the music of his only teacher, Mozart. However, it must be admitted, though it is pleasant, and also the fact that the piano is not given a virtuoso part but an equal to the strings, it is not a great work and certainly not on a par with that of the master. Outside of any historical interest it might hold for Hummel fans, it is probably not worth reviving. **Piano Quartet No.2 in G Major, Op. Post.** Was discovered in 1839 along with a bunch of other manuscripts. I would guess that it was composed about the same time as No.1 and sounds much like it. Both of these works could have been homework assignments given to him by Mozart, in which case, the young Hummel deserved an "A" for composition, effective part-writing and decent melodies. But they cannot be considered strong enough to revive.



William Yeates Hurlstone (1876-1906) was born in London and at an early age he showed great interest in music and soon played the piano brilliantly. Unfortunately his activities were hampered by bronchial asthma, from which he suffered all his life. Hurlstone won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music when he was 18 and studied piano and composition, the latter with Sir Charles

Stanford, who among his many brilliant students considered Hurlstone his most talented. Virtually all of his contemporaries recognized his tremendous ability and the excellence of his compositions. In 1905 at the age of 28, he was appointed Professor of Harmony and Counterpoint at the Royal College but unfortunately, less than a year later, he died. The **Piano Quartet in e**

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



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

learn music "from the ground up." Both Massenet and Bizet were impressed by his early compositions and encouraged him to show his work to César Franck. Franck did not share their enthusiasm and was reputed to have told D'Indy, "You have ideas but you cannot do anything." Apparently those ideas were enough, however, to convince Franck to show D'Indy how to do things, as he took the latter on as a pupil. Though D'Indy was to assimilate and be influenced by many different sources, Franck and his music left the most telling mark on him. D'Indy's reputation, during his own lifetime was considerable, having founded, in 1900, what was to become the most important music school in France after the Paris Conservatory—the Schola Cantorum. His **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op.7** dates from 1878 shortly after completing his studies with Cesar Franck. The work shows the influence of Franck, who along with Liszt and Wagner, were to remain d'Indy's models throughout his life. The opening movement, *Allegro non troppo*, begins with a dark melody presented first by the cello over a quiet, but rushing accompaniment in the piano. After a full statement of the theme, d'Indy introduces some very original chromatics in very fast downward passages and also repeats modulation chords which creates a feeling of uncertainty. The second movement, *Andante moderato*, subtitled *Ballade*, opens with a mellow theme given out by the viola. One can well imagine a ballad singer. The second theme, which consists of the various strings echoing each other, is quite romantic. The very French finale, *Allegro vivo*, begins in jovial fashion with the rhythm playing as important a role as the melody. Here is a very fine work which should interest those looking for a French piano quartet from the mid romantic period. It is one of his more appealing works and suitable for both amateurs and professionals



Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859-1935) was born in the town of Gatchina, near St. Petersburg. He studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. After graduating, he obtained the position of Director of the Tiflis (Tbilisi) Music Academy. He spent the next seven years in the Georgian capital, also holding the post of conductor of the

city's orchestra. It was during this time that he developed his life-long interest in the music of the Georgian region and many of his compositions reflect this, the most famous being his *Caucasian Sketches*. In 1893, he became a professor at the Moscow Conser-

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



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

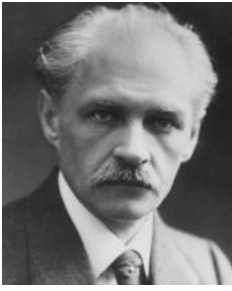
communicate to the listener. When Schoenberg and Stockhausen became the rage, his music was slowly elbowed aside. His **Piano Quartet** was the result of a commission from the Bernard Richards Piano Quartet, one of the few such permanent performing ensembles at the time. The work was composed in 1969.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



Salomon Jadassohn (1831-1902) was one of the most famous and respected teachers of composition during the last half of the 19th century. He was born in Breslau, the capital of the Prussian province of Silesia. First educated locally, Jadassohn enrolled at the Leipzig Conservatory in 1848, just a few years after it had been founded by Mendelssohn. There he

studied composition with Moritz Hauptmann, Ernst Richter and Julius Rietz as well as piano with Ignaz Moscheles. At the same time, he studied privately with Franz Liszt in Weimar. Being Jewish, Jadassohn was unable to qualify for the many church jobs which were usually available to graduates of a conservatory such as Leipzig. Instead he worked for a Leipzig synagogue and a few local choral societies as well as teaching privately. Eventually, he was able to qualify for a position at the Leipzig Conservatory, teaching piano and composition. Among his many students were Grieg, Busoni, Delius, Karg-Elert, Reznicek and Weingartner. Jadassohn wrote in virtually every genre, including symphonies, concertos, lieder, opera and chamber music, the latter being among his finest compositions. Considered a master of counterpoint and harmony, he was also a gifted melodist, following in the tradition of Mendelssohn. But one also hears the influence of

Wagner and Liszt, whose music deeply impressed him. That Jadassohn and his music were not better known can be attributed to two reasons: The first being Carl Reinecke and the second being the rising tide of anti-semitism in late 19th century Wilhemine Germany. Reinecke was almost Jadassohn's exact contemporary and somewhat of a super-star. Not only was he a world famous piano virtuoso but also an important professor at the Leipzig Conservatory and later its director. If this were not enough, he served as the conductor of the renowned Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. Under these circumstances, it was hard for a colleague to get the public's attention. And then, toward the end of the 19th century, anti-semitic critics attacked Jadassohn's music, labeling it academic and dry, an epithet which has stuck with it ever since without anyone ever investigating. However, even a brief hearing of any of his chamber music reveals how ludicrous this assessment is. Salomon Jadassohn was a first-rate composer, who unfortunately was never really given a chance to promote his music. Jadassohn's Piano Quartet No.1 in c minor, Op.77 dates from 1884 when he was at the height of his powers. The opening movement, Mesto-Allegro agitato, begins with a slow, brooding and somewhat sad introduction, which quickly builds excitement and tension, and then gives way to the Allegro. Tonally rich, written for all of the voices in their mid and low registers, Jadassohn achieves a satisfying fullness. The second movement is an updated and brilliant Mendelssohnian Scherzo, allegro vivace. Light and airy, goblins can be heard dancing. The Quartet's center of gravity is clearly its slow movement, Adagio. The lovely opening theme has a valedictory quality to it. Painted on a broad tonal canvas, the music proceeds along quite leisurely, taking its time to slowly build to a dramatic climax in its middle section. The part writing is clearly outstanding and, of its type, surely the equal of anything else written. The finale, Allegro con brio, might well serve as a textbook example of how to bring a work to a successful conclusion. Warm and big-shouldered, the genial melody and tonal writing are all that one could ask for. Of its kind, this is a masterwork. It goes without saying that it should be performed in concert. It presents no particular technical difficulties to amateurs and cannot be too highly recommended. **Piano Quartet No.2 in G Major, Op.86** dates from 1887. It opens with a genial Allegro tranquillo, ma non troppo. A big Mendelssohnian Scherzo, molto vivace, follows. It is a real showpiece. There is a finely contrasting trio section. The broad Adagio sostenuto, which comes next, begins with an extended, lovely solo in the piano which sets the mood for the rest of the movement. An ebullient, march-like Allegro risoluto concludes this very good work. **Piano Quartet No.3 in a minor, Op.109** was commissioned by the Polish-American pianist Alexander Lambert. It dates from 1890. The works explosively opens with a series of unison triple stops and 16th notes, before the searching and thrusting main theme is brought forth. This big opening Allegro energico, ma non troppo vivace, makes a very strong impression. The Adagio sostenuto which follows is a cross between a song without words and a lullaby. Next is a substantial Scherzo, allegro moderato, which despite its moderate tempo instruction, resembles a moto perpetuo. The Allegro moderato, which concludes the quartet, is in the major and relieves the ominous sense of gloom which pervaded the earlier movements. Here, too, is a first class work. It is grateful to play and to hear. Along with the other two, it can be warmly recommended to amateurs as it plays quite easily, making no extraordinary technical demands. Much pleasure is to be gained by making the acquaintance of these works.



Gustav Jenner (1865-1920) was Brahms' only full-time composition student. Jenner, who was born in the town of Keitum on the German island of Sylt, was the son of a doctor who was of Scottish ancestry and a descendant of the famous physician Edward Jenner, pioneer of the vaccination for smallpox. On his mother's side, he descended from Sylt fishermen. Jenner began to teach himself music and attracted the attention of

his teachers in Kiel who sent him to study in Hamburg with Brahms' own teacher, Eduard Marxsen. Eventually, Jenner's friends and mentors in Kiel arranged for the penniless young man to study with Brahms in Vienna, which he did from 1888-95. Jenner in his biography of Brahms (*Brahms, The Man, The Teacher and The Artist*) writes that although Brahms was a merciless critic of Jenner's efforts, he took considerable pains over Jenner's welfare, eventually recommending him for the position of Music Director at the University of Marburg. Jenner held this post from 1895 until his death. Jenner, no doubt due in part to the training he had under the ultra critical Brahms, was highly critical of his own works and took care to see that only a few were published during his lifetime. These were mostly songs and his *Trio for Piano, Clarinet and Horn* (1900). Given the fact that few German composers of Brahms' time, none of whom were his students, escaped the great man's influence, it would be unreasonable to expect that someone who studied with Brahms for as long as Jenner did could have done so. Although Jenner writes with great originality and one finds many ideas which Brahms would never have thought of, nonetheless, Brahms' influence is often felt in Jenner's music. The opening movement of the *Piano Quartet*, a massive *Allegro*, begins with a spacious, optimistic theme. A more deliberate march-like rhythm quickly follows and leads to a lyrical development. The gorgeous second theme is gentler and redolent *fin de siècle* Viennese melody. The careful listener will realize that the dreamy, somewhat languid main theme to the second movement, *Adagio*, is a quote from Schubert's *First Piano Trio*. Here it is worth remembering Brahms' famous retort to a concertgoer who complained that he had stolen a theme from Mendelssohn: "Any fool can hear that, but look what I did with it!" Certainly, Jenner could have said the same of his ingenious treatment of this lovely melody. Next comes an energetic, muscular *Scherzo*. It's heavy accents in the base line of the piano and cello create an unusual effect. The soft and gentle trio strikes an altogether different note. The finale, *Vivace non troppo*, is brimming with ideas. It may well have been a tribute to Brahms. The opening theme is happy and buoyant, characterized by a tricky rhythm. A second subject strongly suggests Brahms' own *First Piano Quartet*. A third theme blends lovely Viennese melody while yet another has a snappy dance-like quality. As one prominent critic wrote, "This is what Brahms would have written had he lived ten years longer."



Joseph Jongen (1873-1953) was truly born to be a musician. On the strength of an amazing precocity for music, he was admitted to the Liege Conservatory (in Belgium) where he spent the next sixteen years. It came as no surprise when he won the *First Prize for Fugue* in 1891, an honors diploma in piano the next year and another for organ in 1896. In 1897, he won the prestigious *Grande Prix*

de Rome which allowed him to travel to Italy, Germany and France. He began composing at the age of 13 and immediately exhibited extraordinary talent. By the time he published his opus one, he already had dozens of works to his credit. Jongen's *Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op.23* dates from 1902. The work was premiered in Paris to great success and hailed as a masterpiece. It established his reputation as a composer of chamber music of the first rank. It shows the influence of Franck in that it is a cyclical work, but in all other respects, it is highly original. The vast opening movement, *Large-Animé*, begins with a lengthy introduction. Here the piano is made to sound like a harp as the strings very slowly build tension, increasing the tempo as they do so. This eventually leads to the presentation of the warm, romantic main theme in the cello. The second movement, *Assez vite*, takes the form of a *scherzo*. It is a lively dance begun by the piano. In the trio section, the second theme from the first movement unexpectedly reappears. In the slow movement, *Pas trop lent*, the viola gives the lead in to the main theme which is a transformation of the melody of the *scherzo*. Later, we hear the two themes of the first movement, but in varied form. When the main theme returns in the finale, *Assez animé*, Jongen demonstrates his mastery of technique by ingeniously altering it time and again, always maintaining our interest. It certainly can be placed among the front rank of piano quartets.



Paul Juon (1872-1940) was the son of Swiss parents who emigrated to Moscow where he was born. Educated at the Moscow German High School, he entered the Moscow Conservatory where he studied violin with Jan Hrimaly and composition with Anton Arensky and Sergei Taneyev. After graduating, he went to Berlin for further composition instruction from Woldemar Bargiel (we have published Bargiel's *Piano Trio No.1*). In

1906, after holding various posts in Russia, Juon was invited by Joseph Joachim, head of the prestigious Berlin Hochschule für Musik, to become a Professor of Composition, a post which he held until 1934 when he returned to Switzerland, where lived for the rest of his life. Juon was widely regarded as a first rate composer and his works were given frequent performance throughout Europe during his lifetime. Chamber music plays a large part of his output which numbers more than 100 works. The *Rhapsody for Piano Quartet*, sometimes referred to as his *Piano Quartet No.1, Op.37*, dates from 1907-8, just after he had taken up his professorship in Berlin. Juon had recently read the popular novel, *Gosta Berling's Saga* and was deeply impressed by it when he sat down to write the *Rhapsody*. Many commentators believe Juon attempted to express the feelings he had experienced reading the novel. *Gosta Berling's Saga*, by the Swedish Nobel Literature Prize winner Selma Lagerlöf, is about a fallen pastor who is forced out of his ministry and must make a new life for himself. It is set in the Sweden of the 1830's and is at one and the same time highly romantic and also mystical. The atmosphere is a cross between Henrik Ibsen and Jack London, combining the eccentric upper-class nobility of Sweden with magical snow scenes involving wolves. While the *Rhapsody* is not really programmatic music, it is at least worth knowing the source of the romantic outpouring which has made the *Rhapsody* one of Juon's most personal and emotional works. One thing the music is not, is Nordic-sounding. If anything, it is tinged with Slavic, and in particular Russian folkdance melodies, no doubt the result of his having

lived the greater portion of his life there. The opening Moderato begins with a emotionally charged and dramatic statement in the cello which the others soon take up. Surprisingly, as the piano enters with a jazz-like interlude, we hear what sounds like Gershwin (who was only 10 at the time!). The second theme is a kind of tense and nervous music of forward motion with a sense of impending disaster. Written on a large scale this movement boldly travels across a huge emotional canvas, perhaps in this sense like a Norse Saga. The main theme to the second movement, Allegretto, introduced by the piano is clearly a Russian folk dance melody. It sounds vaguely Hebraic. Yet when the strings enter, we briefly hear a traditional, even Schubertian, German romanticism. The second theme is a very romantic song of love. Next comes a scherzo-like interlude which features a dance from the Caucasus. (Juon taught there in Baku for a year). The huge finale, Sostenuto-Allegretto, as the movement marking suggests, alternates between slow and fast sections. The mood is constantly changing from the reflective sostenuto, to a gay, almost care-free some Viennese-sounding dance (our sound-bite begins here) and before a more dramatic and serious element is welded on the preceding dance. This is a superb and powerful work. A must for concert, and within the range of technically assured amateurs.

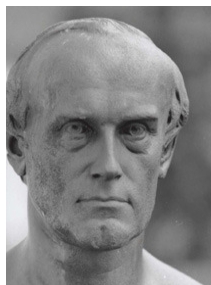
Piano Quartet No.2 in G Major, Op.50 dates from 1912. It was dedicated to his first wife who had recently died, and is also a personal work. It was clearly meant to be autobiographical. The opening movement, Moderato, is tender and dreamy, a statement of his initial infatuation. The second movement,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



Robert Kahn (1865-1951) was born in Mannheim of a well-to-do banking family. He began his studies at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin. There, he got to know and became friends with Joseph Joachim who was the director. It was through both Joachim and his own family that he had a chance to get to know Brahms, who was so impressed with Kahn that he offered to give him composition lessons. However, Kahn was too overawed to accept. Nevertheless, Brahms did help Kahn informally, and while Kahn's work does, to some extent, show the influence of Brahms, he is an eclectic and independent composer whose music has its own originality. After finishing his studies in Berlin, Kahn, on Brahms' suggestion, went to Munich to study with Joseph Rheinberger. After completing his own studies, he worked for a while as a free lance composer before obtaining a position at the Hochschule in Berlin where he eventually became a professor of piano and composition. **Piano Quartet No.1 in b minor, Op.14** dates from 1891. The opening Allegro ma non troppo opens dramatically with a sense of urgency and much forward motion. The development is dark with a sense of striving and struggle. The lyrical and rather romantic second theme provides superb con-

trast. The lovely string writing evokes a sense of longing for things past. A marvelous slow movement, Andante, begins with a sense of calm and peace. One hears faint echoes of Schubert. Gradually the tempo picks up and the mood changes and we find that the music has turned into an intermezzo. The fiery finale, Allegro molto, wastes no time in grabbing the listener's attention with its frantic, restless, and highly rhythmic main theme. A second theme is softer but there is still an undercurrent of unrest.

Piano Quartet No.2 in a minor, Op.30 dates from 1899. The opening movement, Allegro energico, opens with a splendid first subject makes an instant appeal, while the heroic second theme has a Brahmsian tinge. The second movement begins with a gorgeous Larghetto in which the principal melody is given out at first by the strings alone. Kahn ingeniously intersperses a bright and lively scherzo which appears twice between the Larghetto sections. Next comes an Allegretto grazioso which for all intents and purposes is an intermezzo. However, the lighter second subject projects an energy lacking in the first. The finale, Vivace ma non troppo, instantly attracts attention by virtue of its bright and unusual rhythm. It is followed by a charming and mellower second theme. **Piano Quartet No.3 in c minor, Op.41** was completed in 1904. The opening movement, Allegro moderato, is powerful and dramatic. The main theme almost breaks the bounds of chamber music while the second subject is calmer and more lyrical providing a respite from the orchestral main section. Next comes a scherzo, Vivace con brio, has a bumptious hunting theme while the slower trio section has Hungarian tinges. The finale, Allegro molto, is fleet and dance like. These works belong in the repertoire and need not fear being worsted by those of Brahms for they are every bit as good, and not only are they within the range of amateurs, but can be put together easily than the Brahms quartets.



Friedrich Kiel (1821-1885), was born in the Rhenish town of Puderbach. Kiel was taught the rudiments of music and received his first piano lessons from his father but was in large part self-taught. Something of a prodigy, he played the piano almost without instruction at the age of six, and by his thirteenth year he had composed much music. Kiel eventually won a scholarship which allowed him to study in Berlin with the renowned theorist and teacher Siegfried Dehn. By 1866, Kiel obtained a teaching position at the prestigious Stern Conservatory and was elevated to a professorship three years later. In 1870 he joined the faculty of the newly founded Hochschule für Musik which was shortly thereafter considered one of the finest music schools in Germany. Among his many students were Noskowski, Paderewski and Stanford. Kiel's extreme exceptional works never received the recognition they deserved largely because his modesty kept him from promoting them and because Joseph Joachim, director of the conservatory at which he taught chose to promote the works of his friend Brahms and to ignore those of Kiel. He produced a number of chamber works which need fear no comparison with those of any of his contemporaries. Friedrich Kiel's **Piano Quartet No.1 in a minor, Op.43**, along with his two others, is among the best and the most important works for this ensemble. It dates from 1867. The magnificent first movement, Allegro moderato ma con spirito, begins with a lengthy, diffident and leisurely introduction, which takes its time building tension and interest before the heroic main theme, sung high in violin, is produced. The

other strings join in while the piano plays a jaunty rhythmic accompaniment. An exotic development in the piano is interspersed between this, but then quickly leads to the triumphal march-like second theme. The second movement, *Adagio con moto*, is in the form of a simple, somewhat religious, song and provides excellent contrast with the preceding *Allegro*. Though mostly quiet, it is not without drama. The *Scherzo*, *allegro con spirito*, which follows, has a Beethovenian feel, especially its rhythm. The superb finale, *Vivace*, is brimming with appealing melodies and clever ideas. The rhythm of the main theme recalls the last movement Mozart's K.515 C Major Viola Quintet, but Kiel gives it a Hungarian treatment! Next comes a melody which is the half-sister to a theme from Schubert's D.956 Cello Quintet, but after a few seconds, Kiel turns it inside out, twists it and sends it galloping off at breathless speed. The sure touch of a master composer is everywhere in evidence. **Piano Quartet No.2 in E Major, Op.44** was composed immediately after his First. Both were published in 1867. The big, spacious, *Allegro moderato ma con spirito*, which begins the work starts quietly and in a calm fashion. It is only after much searching that we are presented with the heroic main theme. The lovely string writing recalls Schubert. The second movement, *Intermezzo*, *allegro*, is a very interesting kind of scherzo in which the tempo is hard to pin down, at times slow and almost lumbering, at others nimble. The trio section is a lovely waltz. The slow movement, *Largo ma non troppo*, begins with the piano alone, giving off a very solemn theme. When the strings diffidently enter, we here echoes of Late Beethoven. In a way, this short, ominous movement is nothing but a long introduction to the finale, *Rondo*, *allegro grazioso*. The charming main theme has a fleet elegance. There is much excitement and lovely melody throughout. Unlike the other two, **Piano Quartet No.3 in G Major, Op.50**, which dates from 1868, is in three and not four movements. It begins with a somewhat solemn *Adagio con espressione* introduction before the entrance of the more buoyant *Allegro*. The lovely middle movement, *Andante quasi allegretto*, has the quality of a Lied or song. A faster trio section in the minor provides a fine contrast. An exciting finale, *Presto assai*, caps this superb work. In the best Schubertian tradition, it races along in 6/8 with barely a moment's rest until the appearance of the second theme.



Theodor Kirchner (1823-1903) was born in the town of Neukirchen near Chemnitz in the German province of Saxony. He showed a prodigious musical talent at an early age, however, his father was reluctant to let him study music. It was only after hearing both Schumann and Mendelssohn highly praise his son's talent that he permitted Theodor to

attend the Leipzig Conservatory, where he studied with Mendelssohn, among others. It was upon Mendelssohn's recommendation that Kirchner in 1843 obtained his first position as organist of the main church in Winterthur in Switzerland. He was a friend of both Robert and Clara Schumann as well as Brahms. Kirchner's compositional talent was widely respected and held in the highest regard by Schumann, Brahms, Liszt, Wagner and many others. Kirchner found that he was especially good at writing miniatures. He would often write several at a time and then publish them together, each with a different mood and feel and each perfect in its own way. Hence, he generally did not devote himself to writing longer works, however, his **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op.84** is one. Despite the fact that it is a late work, dating from 1888 when

Kirchner was 65, there is great vitality and freshness about it. The opening movement, *Maestoso*, *Allegro molto*, begins with a heavy fanfare-like introduction and then leads to the dramatic main sections. The second movement, *Poco adagio* is a highly expressive "song without words." This is followed by a highly rhythmic and accented *Allegro* which serves as a scherzo. The lovely and lyrical trio section is entrusted to the strings over a flowing piano accompaniment. The finale, *Animato*, begins in a subdued fashion and has a mazurka-like quality reminiscent of Chopin. But quickly things change as pounding scale passages create a sense of urgency. This is a decent work, not unpleasant to play or to hear, but by comparison to his miniatures and smaller works, it lacks inspiration and seems rather ordinary by comparison.



Iwan Knorr (1853-1916) was born in the village of Mewe near the town of Marienwerder in what was then West Prussia. His first lessons were on piano from his mother. He attended the Leipzig Conservatory where he studied with Ignaz Moscheles, Carl Reinecke and Ernst Richter. After graduating he obtained a teaching position at the Russian Imperial Conservatory in Kharkov, in what is now Ukraine. Brahms thought highly of

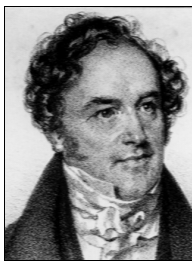
Knorr's compositions and recommended him for a position at Frankfurt's prestigious Hoch Conservatory; then under the directorship of Clara Schumann. Eventually, Knorr became its director. He was an important teacher, among his many students were Ernest Bloch, Hans Pfitzner, Ernst Toch, Hermann Zilcher, Walter Braunfels, Bernhard Sekles and Roger Quilter. The **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op.3**, in four movements, was published in 1887 but was composed a decade earlier. It shows the influence of his friend Brahms who is said to have performed it as did Clara Schumann with Joachim. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins in leisurely fashion with a broad and stately theme. The tonalities are rich and full-blooded and one can hear why Brahms was impressed. The second movement is a lively *Scherzo*. Its continuously accented third beat creates considerable interest. Its use of trills and springing intervals recalls Brahms Horn Trio. Next comes a calm and peaceful *Andante*, however its middle section is quite passionate. The high spirited finale, *Allegro*, also brings Brahms at his best to mind. The sparkling music races along to a satisfying conclusion



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

turned to and taught in Vienna and Salzburg, serving as director of the Mozarteum. Kornauth composed extensively and won a number of prizes. His **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op.18** was completed in 1922. Though tonal, it is tonal in the way that Max Reger's music is tonal. It is not an easy work to play and probably beyond all but the most accomplished amateur players. This is especially true of the piano part. The opening movement, *Sehr energetisch*, is a powerful and stormy affair. A slow movement, *Ruhig und innig*, is quite romantic and atmospheric. The finale, *Im Marschzeitmass*, sports several first rate and appealing

themes. It is original and first rate and can be warmly recommended to professional ensembles seeking a post Brahmsian tonal work.



Conradin Kreutzer (1780-1849) is another one of those men writing in the early romantic period whose charming music has been neglected. He was born in the town of Messkirch in Baden. He moved to Vienna around 1800 where he completed his studies with Albrechtsberger and got to know both Haydn and Beethoven. His music shows a clear gift for melody and his instrumental writing shows knowledge of the instruments. I would not call any of his works shoddy or second rate. His style shows similarities to other better known early romantic composers such as Hummel, Weber and middle Schubert. The **Piano Quartet in e minor** was published in Vienna in 1834 as *Grand Quatuor Concertante*. Scholars believe it was composed in 1817. As the title implies, the writing is concertante style with piano and the violin getting most but by no means all of the melodic episodes. The approach here is similar to that of Moscheles and perhaps to a lesser extent to that of Hummel. The opening *Allegro risoluto* is dramatic, full of energy and captivating melody. Though fairly lengthy, it holds one's interest entirely. In the *Andante grazioso*, the strings take over as the piano weaves a beautiful filigree obbligato. This is a superb movement full of lovely writing for all! In the finale, also *Allegro Risoluto*, Kreutzer uses the instruments much as Schumann, pitting the piano against the strings led by the violin. For its kind, it is quite appealing would be successful in concert.



Franz Krommer (1759-1831) was one of the most successful composers in Vienna at the turn of the 18th Century. His reputation was attested to by the fact that his works were frequently republished throughout Germany, England, France, Italy, Scandinavia and the U.S. According to contemporaries, he was regarded along with Haydn as the leading composer of string quartets and as a serious rival of Beethoven. Krommer was a Czech violinist of considerable ability who came to Vienna around 1785. For the following 10 years he held appointments at various aristocratic courts in Hungary. He returned to Vienna in 1795 where he remained until his death, holding various positions including that of Court Composer (Hofmusiker) to the Emperor, Franz I. There are more than 300 compositions which were at one time or another published, much of which is chamber music. Krommer's life spanned the Mannheim, Vienna Classical and early Romantic periods and his music evolved over time. In his **Piano Quartet in E flat Major, Op.95**, which dates from 1815 the piano is given so much of the thematic material, that the work qualifies as a quatuor brillant. Of its kind, its okay, however, the thematic material is only average. Krommer wrote a great deal of really fine works more deserving of revival than this one.



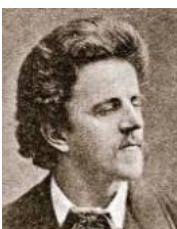
Friedrich Kuhlau (1786-1832) often called the "Beethoven of the Flute" is well-known to flute players, if few others, for the many fine pieces that he composed for that instrument. Though it is generally assumed, by those who have heard of him, that he was a flute virtuoso ironically, he never played the instrument. Born

in the Saxon town of Luneberg, after being blinded in a freak street accident, he studied piano in Hamburg. In 1810, he fled to Copenhagen to avoid conscription in the Napoleonic Army, which overwhelmed the many small principalities and duchies of northern Germany, and in 1813 he became a Danish citizen. Outside of several lengthy trips which he took, he resided there until his death. During his lifetime, he was known primarily as a concert pianist and composer of Danish opera, but was responsible for introducing many of Beethoven's works, which he greatly admired, to Copenhagen audiences. Considering that his house burned down destroying all of his unpublished manuscripts, he was a prolific composer leaving more than 200 published works in most genres. Beethoven, whom Kuhlau knew personally, exerted the greatest influence upon his music. Interestingly, few, if any, of Beethoven's contemporaries showed greater understanding or ability to assimilate what the great man was doing than Kuhlau. Certainly with regard to form, Kuhlau was clearly able to make sense and use what Beethoven was doing in something as advanced as his Middle Period. Thus, for those encountering his chamber music for the first time, there is always a surprise at how fine the music is structurally and also how well he handles the instruments. Beyond this, he definitely had, like Mozart, Schubert or Hummel, a gift for wonderful melodies which bubble forth from his music effortlessly. **Piano Quartet No.1 in C Major, Op.32** dates from 1820. The opening *Allegro*, to this three movement work, is on a grand scale and is probably longer than the remaining two movements which follow. The writing is certainly as advanced as Beethoven's in say *The Geistertrio, Op.70*. As Spohr, in his music, was fond of chromatic runs, Kuhlau is said to have been partial to scale passages. Here they are prominently featured. The *Adagio*, whose first theme is a simple folk melody, is extraordinarily beautiful and full of lyricism. The concluding *Allegro* is a rondo which begins in c minor and is full of dramatic rhythmic drive leading to a very original and bright finish. Though the piano is given some bravura passages and even a cadenza in the first movement, it must be emphasized that the writing for the strings is good and for the whole ensemble extremely effective. **Piano Quartet No.2 in A Major, Op.50** was completed in 1822 two years after the first and at the conclusion of four months of study in Vienna. It seems that, both in form and style, this quartet shows the marked influence of the Vienna Classics, especially Schubert. In four movements, it begins with an *Allegro* which showcases the piano rather more than the earlier work although the writing is still quite good for the strings. The movement starts off sounding rather classical but quickly switches into a dramatic, Romantic idiom. The *Adagio* is strikingly beautiful, filled with Schubertian perfume. The rhythmically driving *Scherzo*, it must be said, anticipates what Schubert did in his piano trios. The short and contrasting trio section with its use of a Ländler also foreshadows what the Viennese master was later to do in his most mature works. The finale, *Allegro di molto* flits along lightly at a very good clip, again scale passages are featured prominently. It is a strong, concise and effective last movement. First rate works from the early Romantic era.



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

Through the efforts of Bizet and Lalo, both of whom admired his music, his compositions were performed in Paris. Though Lacombe's music was well appreciated among fellow composers and musicians, it never gained a widespread popularity as he was not willing to leave his hometown of Carcassonne for Paris. A prolific composer with more than 150 works, including a fair amount of chamber music, which was composed during two distinct periods. The first from the late 1860s into the mid 1870s reflects the influence of Mendelssohn and Schumann. The second period from the late 1890s through the first decade of the 20th century shows him to be au courant with the recent developments of the impressionist movement. In 1887 he was awarded Prix Chartier for his chamber music by the Académie des Beaux-Arts, of which he subsequently became a member. He was made a Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur in 1902. Lacombe's **Piano Quartet in c minor, Op.101** is a work on cyclic lines, but free from any pedantic complexity. It gives an exact idea both of the creative power and of the strong, yet refined technique of the composer. dates from 1904 and was dedicated to his friend Vincent d'Indy. The opening movement is an engaging Allegro, full of yearning and a sense of striving. It is written on a large scale. Next comes a reflective and somewhat introspective Lentement which is then followed by a charming Allegretto. The finale, Allegro deciso, has an upbeat, heroic quality to it and brings this very worth while piano quartet to a satisfying close.



Josef Labor (1842-1924), 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. Although his **Piano Quartet in C Major, Op.6** dates from 1893 it harks back to the era of the Vienna classics but written in the idiom of the late Romantic. A highly appealing work which can be warmly recommended not only for the concert hall but also to amateurs. The first movement, Allegro, is a shining example of Labor's outstanding compositional ability and technique. It is full of lovely, flowing melodies. A warm-blooded Adagio ma non troppo serves as the second movement. A beautiful, sentimental intermezzo, Quasi allegretto, follows and has within it a scherzando section. The finale, Allegro, ma non troppo, begins with a strongly rhythmic march-like theme. It is full of power and forward motion.



There are not very many composers who would be remembered had they lived but 24 years. This is almost certainly the main reason why the Belgian composer **Guillaume Lekeu (1870-1894)** is so little known. But not so in his own time. Debussy remarked that Lekeu was, at the very least, as gifted as his teacher Cesar Franck, who himself recognized Lekeu's extraordinary gifts. Lekeu's formal musical education did not begin until he was 18 when he began to study with Franck. When Franck died

18 months later, D'Indy, who regarded Lekeu as a genius, took it upon himself to further the boy's musical education. In the 7 years between 1887 and his death, Lekeu composed over 50 works in virtually every genre, unfortunately many of these have been lost. Beethoven was Lekeu's god and the great man's music had the strongest influence upon him. But the music of Franck as well as Wagner also influenced his ideas. He began his **Piano Quartet** at the behest of Eugene Ysaye, who was one of the composer's strongest admirers. He completed the first and most of the second movement. Already it was nearly 30 minutes in length. D'Indy completed the second movement only to the extent that it could be performed in concert. One immediately understands the scale upon which Lekeu was planning this work by the length of the opening movement, *Très animé. Dans un emportement douloureux*, which takes more than 16 minutes to play. The highly dramatic opening calls up the image of a ship in the midst of a terrible storm. One imagines movie music, but Gallic movie music. A fair amount of unisono writing along with several other very fine effects give the music a more quality. One hears a clear relationship to the work of the French impressionists and to some of Ysaye's work. The second movement, *Lent et passionné* begins with a subdued and darkish theme sung in part by the viola. Again the music has an affinity with the perfumed air of the French impressionists. Even in its two movement form, it is a work of genius and makes a very deep impression.



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

rather than under the letter H. A professional soldier, who died during a battle fighting Napoleon's invading army, Louis Ferdinand was also trained as a musician, studying piano and composition with several different teachers. He was a gifted pianist, reckoned a virtuoso with few peers by those who heard him, and his compositions have always been regarded as the work of a professional composer. Musicologists generally consider him an early Romantic whose music anticipated Schubert and Schumann, but one can also hear the influence of Mozart as well as early Beethoven. Military and court life left little time to compose and he has but a few works to his credit, mostly chamber music. These include 3 piano trios, 2 piano quartets and a piano quintet. All three of his works for piano quartet were completed during Prussia's wars against Napoleon, during which he was eventual killed. The first was his **Andante and Variations, Op.4**. It appears to have been a warm up for his two full piano quartets. The piano part is quite brilliant although the strings are given their innings. The variations are surprising effective and show the Prince to be a competent composer. **Piano Quartet No.1 in E flat Major, Op.5**, published during the prince's lifetime, was completed around 1804. The piano, as one might expect from a virtuoso pianist, has a brilliant part, much the sort that Mendelssohn wrote for himself in his piano quartets. The opening movement, Allegro espressivo, is classical in structure. Two themes are presented and the development of each is given extensive treatment. The highly romantic Adagio which follows begins mildly but becomes tinged with gloom as the movement progresses. The main theme of the Tempo di menuetto, which serves as the third movement,

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