



THE  
**CHAMBER MUSIC**  
**JOURNAL**

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

***The String Trios of  
William Shield***

***Emil Sjogren  
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***A Brief Survey Quintets for  
Clarinet and String Quartet***

**Volume XXX No.1 / 2019**

**ISSN 1535 1726**

# A Short Survey of the String Trios of William Shield

Andrew Pindar



William Shield (1748-1829) was born near Stalwell, county Durham, and trained as a violinist. Later, he studied composition with Charles Avison in Newcastle upon Tyne. In 1772, he was employed as principle violist at the Covent Garden Opera. He knew most of the important composers resident in or passing through London, including Haydn. Shield's works include a large number of operas and other stage works. He was known for his light operas. His Op.3 string quartets, composed in the 1780s, were considered the finest written by a native English composer in the 18th century.

He wrote two sets of three string trios each which appeared without opus numbers, the first in 1792, the second in 1796. They are mostly written in concertante style. The melodies are more memorable and make a lasting impression. All of the trios are relatively short works, but are well-written with a string player's understanding of what each instrument can do. While it would not be fair to compare them to Mozart's K.563 Divertimento, it is fair to say that they are certainly as good, if not better, than the trios of Haydn. Of note is the fact that the lower voices are given better parts than Haydn gives them. Altogether pleasant works, well worth hearing and playing. A brief survey of some of these trios follows.

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## Emil Sjögren Works for Violin and Piano

By Kerstin Callenby



Emil Sjögren (1853-1918) was born in Stockholm. He studied piano and organ at the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm between 1869-1874. Then in 1879 he traveled to Berlin where he studied composition with Friedrich Kiel and August Haupt. He obtained a position as organist at the French Reformed Church in Stockholm in 1880 and later taught at the Richard Andersson School of Music also in Stockholm. In 1891 he obtained the prestigious position of organist at St. John's Church in Stockholm, and worked there until his death. He was

elected a member of the Royal Academy of Music in 1892

Sjögren was long regarded as very radical by his Swedish contemporaries. Towards the end of the 1890s, he was generally considered Sweden's foremost composer and became the most well-known representative of Swedish music. Particularly noteworthy is his career in Paris, where he and his wife Berta lived from 1901 to 1914, and where many concerts with only his music on the program were arranged. Musicians of the highest international level, such as violinists Jacques Thibaud and George Enescu and organist Alexandre Guilmant, played his works during this time. His violin sonatas, in particular No. 2 in e-minor along with his suite for piano Erotikon became quite popular and achieved a considerable amount of fame internationally before the First World War.

Sjögren mainly composed songs with piano accompaniment and vio-

## An Overview of Some Works for Clarinet and String Quartet

by R.H.R. Silvertrust

When it comes to works for Clarinet and String Quartet, the bulk of which travel under the title Clarinet Quintet, listeners and players generally are aware of only two—those of Mozart and Brahms, which there is no need for me to discuss since they are so well-known and there is little for me to add. Excellent though these two quintets are, there are many others which you may find interesting or rewarding to hear or play. So, let us begin. I will discuss these in alphabetical order.

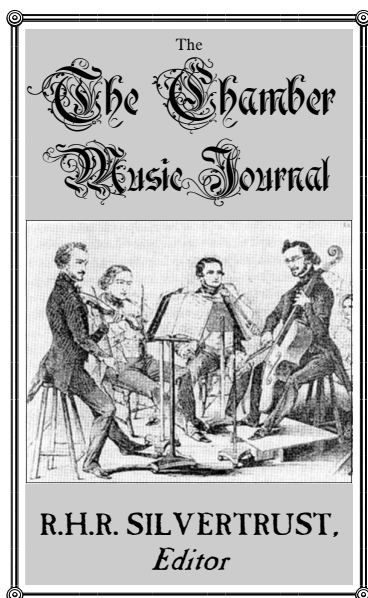


### Heinrich Baermann

(1784-1847) was born in the Prussian town of Potsdam just outside of Berlin. He studied clarinet and composition in Berlin and became one of the most important

clarinet virtuosos during the first part of the 19th century and is generally considered the father of modern clarinet technique. Although he composed several substantial works, today he is remembered as the inspiration for more

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famous works by the likes of Carl Maria von Weber, Felix Mendelssohn, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Franz Danzi and Peter Lindpaintner among others. As most works from this period, this is a for the clarinetist. While the first movement of his 1821 **Clarinet Quintet No. 3 in E flat Major** begins with a tuneful Allegro which is quite appealing, it is the middle movement with its beautiful Adagio, which was for more than a century attributed to Richard Wagner that is the reason that this quintet is one of the few chamber works of his which survived into the 20th century and received new editions. The finale is a clever, bouncy Rondo. The work sounds quite like Carl Maria von Weber.



**Samuel Coleridge-Taylor** (1875-1912) was born in London, the product of a mixed race marriage, his father being an African from Sierra Leone and his mother a white Englishwoman. His musical talent showed itself early and he was admitted to study the violin at the Royal College of Music where he eventually concentrated on composition when his gifts were ascertained. His **Clarinet Quintet in f# minor, Op.10** for the A clarinet, which dates from 1895, was composed as the result of a challenge issued by his composition teacher, Sir Charles Stanford.

After a performance of the Brahms clarinet quintet at the Royal Academy of Music, Stanford is reputed to have said to his class that no composer could now write such a composition without escaping the influence of Brahms. Within 2 months, Coleridge-Taylor did just that and, in the process, had produced what is an undeniable masterpiece. Those who have heard or played it generally acknowledge it is as fine as either the Brahms or the Mozart clarinet quintets. That it has never really had its chance on the concert stage is unconscionable. In describing the piece, it could be said that if Dvorak had written a clarinet quintet, it might not have been far different from this. The opening highly rhythmic, upbeat Allegro energico at first begins in a dark vein but its energy prevents the music from brooding. One especially hears Dvorak's influence in the lovely second movement, Larghetto affectuoso, which recalls the slow movement of the New World Symphony. A scherzo, Allegro leggiero, follows. The first theme is optimistic and characterized by its rhythm, while a dreamy second theme provides a fine contrast. Again in the exciting finale Allegro agitato, we hear the influence of Dvorak--this is created by the choice of rhythm and not so much by the melody which is not Slavic.



**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. Rob-

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ert Fuchs' magnificent **Clarinet Quintet in E flat Major, Op.102** was not, unfortunately, published until 1919 almost ten years after being composed. In this highly polished work, brimming with invention, Fuchs's command for form is masterly. The work is clearly in the tradition of Brahms and might almost be a tribute to him. The opening movement, Allegro molto moderato, is written on a big tonal canvas. The very plastic opening theme, immediately brings Brahms to mind not only with its melody but also its characteristic accompaniment. The impressive main theme of the second movement, Allegro scherzando, is fleet. An excellent contrast is provided by the trio section, an updated musette. An Andante sostenuto follows. It breathes in the same wonderful air of Beethoven and is further enhanced by its magical tonalities. Fuchs, as did Brahms, follows Mozart's example of using a theme variations for his finale. They are first rate. I recommend this work to professionals for concert performance and, of course, to amateur groups as well.



**Alexander Glazunov** (1865-1936) was born in St. Petersburg, the son of a wealthy book publisher. He began studying piano at the age of nine and started composing not long after. In 1879, he began studies with Rimsky-Korsakov. Glazunov's progress was so fast that

within two years, Korsakov considered Glazunov more of a junior colleague than a student. Between 1895 and 1914, Glazunov was, during his lifetime, widely regarded, both inside and out, as Russia's greatest living composer. His works include symphonies, ballets, operas and seven string quartets in addition to various instrumental sonatas. **Reverie Orientale** for Clarinet and String Quartet dates from 1886 and was published soon thereafter by Belaiev. It is in one substantial movement, highly emotive, it recalls the exotic nature of the East as experienced by European Russians---places like Bokhara and Samarkand. The mood is dreamy with a sense of the remote. This would make a fine encore or short work for clarinet quintet ensembles and presents no technical difficulties for amateurs.

**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 **Clarinet Quintet, Op.27 No.1** Clarinet Quintet shows skill and ingenious effects. It is in two movements, the first marked Cavatina, Andante affetuoso is in the form of an elegy. The second movement, which comprises the better part of the quintet, is a Theme and Variations. The theme is presented by the string instruments alone. It has the quality of a ländler or country folksong. Of the 11 variations, with the exception of Nos. 9 and 11, all quote the theme exactly. The first variation is playful Caprice, vivace, then comes a Romance, andantino, then a Gigue, then an Elegy followed by a Serenade and then a March, maestoso, a Galop, presto. The interesting 8th variation is subtitled Tom bowling, Larghetto. No.9 is a Hornpipe, vivace, No.10 is marked Capriccio, molto allegro and the finale, variation No.11 begins as a Fugue, presto and after many tempo changes concludes with an exciting molto allegro. An excellent choice for concert performance. As an aside, there is some confusion as to the two clarinet quintets which Holbrooke composed. Both bear the opus number 27. And Op.27 No.1, sometimes called Op.27a was printed as Quintet No.1 when in reality it was No.2. Both date from 1903.



**Stephan Krehl** (1864-1924) was born in Leipzig. He first studied painting then art history and finally piano and composition with the famous teacher Johann Rischbieter, whose nickname was "counterpoint incarnate", which in no small part accounts for the excellence of his compositonal technique. After completing his studies, he taught composition at the conservatories in Karlsruhe and Leipzig. Krehl's music was of the language of the late romantics. He rejected the new directions that Bartok and Schoenberg were taking and his music, like that of so many other fine composers, disappeared from the concert stage after

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the First World War, when new tastes rejected romanticism and all but the most famous romantic composers such as Brahms. Krehl's Clarinet Quintet will inevitably remind the listener of Brahms and his quintet. This is perhaps no accident as it was written for and dedicated to Richard Mühlfeld, the famous clarinetist for whom Brahms had composed his quintet, clarinet trio and sonatas. In addition, Krehl's musical aesthetic could be summed up as delicate and elegant. These qualities are in the forefront of his **Clarinet Quintet in A Major, Op.19** which appeared in 1902. Despite certain rhythmic complexities, the quintet is not beyond good amateurs, who will find no great technical difficulties here. The main theme to the first movement, Moderato, is dreamy yet conveys a sense of yearning. It is followed by a very expressive second subject. The rhythmic subtleties in no way obscure the clarity of the development. Next comes a Lento, which is rather like a romanza, with its beautiful string color. A quicker section is both dramatic and effective. The third movement is in two parts. It begins as a Intermezzo in rondo form. The second section is a jovial Vivace. The finale, a theme and set of seven variations. It begins with a Lento introduction in the form of a recitative. The theme is based on a simple folk melody. These variations are beautiful and particularly fine.



**Alexander Krein** (1883-1951) was the son of a well-known Klezmer musician. He entered the Moscow Conservatory at fourteen, taking composition lessons from Sergei Taneyev. Subsequently, he joined the Society for Jewish Folk Music and began to weave Hebraic melodies into the format of orthodox chamber works.

The **Three Sketches on Hebrew Themes for Clarinet Quintet, Op.12** is the first of a set of two, both from 1914. Here, Krein sets himself the task of introducing Jewish folk melody into a formal chamber music setting. In three movements, the opening Lento, has an elegiac quality and takes familiar, almost stereotypical, Hebraic material as its subject matter. The very impressive second movement, Andante, begins with the cello and then the clarinet playing over the tremolo of the other strings. Suddenly, a klezmer melody thrusts its way forward. Krein's treatment is imaginative. The final movement, Allegro moderato, begins like something out of Fiddler on the Roof, with a fidgety dancing melody sung by the first violin and then the clarinet. Krein avoids sinking into cliché by introducing a warm cello

melody and an exciting coda. The **Two Sketches on Hebrew Themes for Clarinet Quintet, Op.13** is the second of a set of two, both from 1914. In these works, Krein sets himself the task of introducing Jewish folk melody into a formal chamber music setting. In two movements, the opening Andante con moto immediately captures the listener's attention with its dramatic beginning as the clarinet enters over a restless, moving accompaniment in the strings. It is a long, sad plaint with Hebraic tinges. The second movement, Allegro non troppo, is an exotic dance, clearly based on Jewish folk melody



**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 even the United States.

According to several contemporary sources he was regarded with Haydn as the leading composer of string quartets and as a serious rival of Beethoven. Krommer was a 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, an enthusiastic quartet player. He was the last composer to hold this august title and one of his duties was accompanying the Emperor on his various campaigns so that he could relax in the evenings playing quartets. There are more than 300 compositions which were at one time or another published, much of which is chamber music. He wrote more than 70 string quartets, 26 quintets, perhaps as many as 15 string trios, but also several works for winds and strings. His **Quintet for Clarinet & Strings, Op.95 in B flat Major** was published around 1820. Here, we definitely have a work which was not intended as a solo piece for clarinet with simple string accompaniment. Though still the leading voice, the clarinet is much better integrated into the ensemble. Originally for clarinet, violin, two violas and cello, a version for standard string quartet and clarinet appeared during Krommer's lifetime. The opening Allegro moderato is exciting, tuneful and full of the little original flourishes that are Krommer's alone. In the Adagio which follows, the clarinet presents a theme as attractive as any of Schubert's. It is

rather like a dramatic aria—a gorgeous movement. The quick Minuetto, Allegretto, is almost, but not quite, a scherzo. The vigorous finale, Allegro, is, as one would expect with Krommer, tuneful and filled with little surprises—fresh and original. A fine period work, well worth playing and hearing.



**Joseph Küffner (1776-1856)** was born in the Bavarian city of Würzburg where his father was the court music director. Küffner studied violin and served as a member of the Ducal Orchestra as well as a soloist. Besides the violin, he was proficient on the harpsichord, piano, organ, clarinet, basset horn and guitar. He later was appointed Military Music Director of Bavaria. His works for military band were so well thought of that for several decades the Armies of the Bavaria marched to his music. He wrote over 300 works in all genres, of which the bulk were for chamber ensembles and which were extraordinarily popular during his lifetime. Today, he is exclusively remembered for his compositions for the guitar and for wind instruments. Although primarily a violinist, like Paganini, Küffner's reached a very high level of proficiency on the guitar because he not only included it in his chamber music compositions, but also wrote etudes for it. **Introduction & Variations for Clarinet and Strings, Op.32** dates from 1817. It was scored for Violin, 2 Violas, Cello and Clarinet. While today, this is a highly unusual combination, back in Küffner's time, several quintets, for strings or other combinations, by various composers featured only one violin and two violas. Op.32, more or less, is a showcase for the clarinet. A slow introduction presents the theme. It is followed by six contrasting variations and an exciting coda. Edition Silvertrust makes a version for clarinet and standard string quartet.



**Henri Marteau (1874-1934)** was born in the French city of Reims. It was said that as a boy of 5, he was presented with a toy violin by Paganini's only student, the virtuoso Sivori. He took private lessons from Hubert Leonard, head of the violin department at the Paris Conservatory and soon

became one of the leading soloists of his time. Later he taught at the Geneva Conservatory and was appointed as Joseph Joachim's successor at the Hochschule for

Musik in Berlin. Besides his solo work, Marteau was a strong advocate of chamber music, frequently taking part in chamber music concerts and a great number of his compositions are for chamber ensembles. He was friends with many of the leading personalities of his time, including Brahms, who introduced him to the famous clarinetist Richard Muhlfield, for whom he had written his own clarinet quintet as well as a number of other works. Later, Marteau's friendship with Reger, who was also on close terms with Muhlfield, led to Marteau and Muhlfield giving joint concerts together. Marteau, as Brahms before him, was captivated Muhlfield's wonderful tone, and decided to write a clarinet quintet for him in 1907. Muhlfield was to premiere it but died before the concert could take place. Marteau believed that moderate tempos best showed off the clarinet's soft, 'Romantic' tone and singing quality. Hence melody and charm prevail in his quintet. Reger's influence can be felt in the work in the sophisticated part-writing as well as many modulations. The introduction to the opening movement, Andante molto sostenuto, the clarinet is given a long, singing solo which toward its end creates a strong sense of suspense as to what is to come. The Moderato molto assai which appears is a bustling modern affair in which all five voices take part equally. The music combines a bit of French impressionism with modern melodic trends from Germany and is by turns restless, gentle and calm, but always interesting. The second movement, Allegretto moderato, combines a bright melody with considerable chromaticism which gives the music a sort of wayward tonal quality. The third movement, Andante sostenuto, is neither slow nor fast, but of a relaxed walking tempo which, in fact, the cello's pizzicato accompaniment to the clarinet's melody amply conveys. The tonal picture brings to mind a walk in country through meadows and forest on warm, sunny day. The spirit is gentle and intimate. The finale, Andante sostenuto—Allegro molto, in the slow Andante introduction starts off sounding like music from the Renaissance. But the appearance of the Allegro with its playful, lively theme dispels any sense of the archaic. The is wonderful modern music full of twists and turns, changes of tempo and key, leaving the listener waiting for the next lovely surprise, and there are many.

**Giocomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864)**, originally Jakob Beer, was born in a small village just outside of Berlin. Upon his maternal grandfather's death in 1811, he added his grandfather's first name to his last name and then while studying in Italy, changed his first name to

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the Italian form. Meyerbeer, one of the most famous 19th century opera composers, and chamber music are rarely if ever mentioned in the same sentence. However, Meyerbeer, who was a close friend of the German clarinet virtuoso Heinrich Bärmann, wrote a **Clarinet Quintet in E flat Major** in 1813, which he dedicated to his friend. Those who are familiar with Carl Maria von Weber's Op.34 Clarinet Quintet will find considerable similarities between Weber's quintet and Meyerbeer's. This is almost certainly no accident. Consider this: Both Weber and Meyerbeer were studying with the Abbe Vogler in Darmstadt at the same time, both became very close friends, both were close friends with Heinrich Bärmann, both wrote quintets for Bärmann, and both quintets date from almost exactly the same time, although most likely, Meyerbeer's was completed first. Like Weber's quintet, Meyerbeer's is also a vehicle for the clarinetist which is treated at times as a soloist, but the strings are not mere accompanists. Just how many movements the Quintet has is the subject of some dispute. The work was not published during Meyerbeer's lifetime. A handwritten copy of the score was found among the papers of Bärmann's son Carl upon his death in 1885. It only had two movements--an Allegro moderato and a Rondo, allegro scherzando--although it could be argued that the second movement was two movements in one in that there is a lengthy adagio section to be found in the middle of the allegro scherzando. The work was published in the fashion. In the 1980's, the famous clarinetist Dieter Klöcker claimed to have found "the missing middle movement", an andante and set of variations, in the form of a set of parts on which Carl Bärmann had written that the music had been composed by Meyerbeer for his father. The work was subsequently published with this new movement. However since then, a number of scholars have disputed Klöcker's claim for several reasons, the chief among these being that it is unlikely an entire movement would have been completely left out of a score and that it was quite possible Meyerbeer had intended this music as a separate work. Weber had done something similar.

**Sigismund Neukomm** (1778-1858) was born in Salzburg. He studied composition with Michael Haydn. There were further studies in Vienna with Joseph Haydn. He held a number of positions including music director at St. Petersburg's German theatre. He traveled widely throughout Europe and even visited Brazil, where he popularized the works of Joseph Haydn and



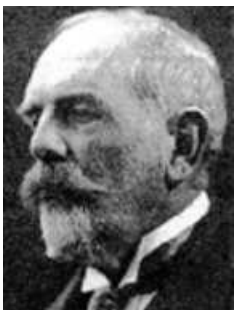
Wolfgang Mozart. Neukomm's compositional output is large. He wrote several operas, masses, oratorios, songs, works for piano solo as well as chamber music works. During his lifetime, he and his music were widely respected and he was regarded as being in the front rank of those composers from the

Classical era after Haydn and Mozart. Despite the fame he achieved during the first half of the 19th century, his name and works fell into obscurity because he outlived the classical era by 50 years. This is a fate which might well have happened to Mozart had he lived so long. Certainly had Neukomm died before 1815, his reputation would have remained intact. Neukomm's **Op.8 Quintet for Clarinet and String Quartet in B flat Major** dates from around 1815. The work is in four movements and opens with an introductory Adagio followed by a long and at times stormy Allegro. A charming Menuetto comes next. The most interesting movement is a Theme russe and set of variations. The Russian theme is taken from the Ukrainian folk song "Schöne Minka" (Pretty Minka) which was part of a collection of Russian folk melodies published in Vienna by Iwan Pratsch in 1800. Beethoven used several of these melodies as themes for his Rasumovsky String Quartets. "Schöne Minka" became quite popular in Vienna around 1814-15, so much so that a competition was sponsored by a Viennese music publisher for the best set of variations on the theme. While it is not known who won, it is known that several important composers entered. Among the works were Johann Nepomuk Hummel's Op.78 Trio for Flute, Cello & Piano and Variations for Piano Solo by Beethoven and Carl Maria von Weber as well as Neukomm's Clarinet Quintet. Schöne Minka is a sad song, the words were by the German poet Christoph August Tiedge and begin "Lovely Minka, I must part—" a Cossack saying good-bye to his girl. In Germany, the song was known by the French title, Les Adieux du Kosak. The work concludes with a lively Rondo.



**Max Reger** (1873-1916) was born in the small Bavarian town of Brand. He began his musical studies at a young age and his talent for composition became clear early on. His family expected him to become a school teacher like his father and to this end passed the necessary examinations for certification. However,

er, before he landed his first teaching job, he met the eminent musicologist Hugo Riemann, who was so impressed by Reger's talent that he urged him to devote himself entirely to music. Reger studied with him for nearly five years. By 1907 Reger was appointed to the prestigious position of Professor of composition at the Leipzig Conservatory. In addition to this he was widely regarded as one of the best living conductors and organists. Reger's **Clarinet Quintet in A Major, Op.146** is the last of his chamber compositions. It was completed just 10 days before his sudden death of a heart attack. Unlike either Mozart or Brahms, Reger quite unobtrusively embeds the clarinet into the contrapuntal complex of the strings, obviously trying to restrain the idiomatic style of playing to which the clarinet is inclined. He tried to match the tone of the strings very closely and took especial pains not to allow the quintet to degenerate into a concertino. The entry of the main theme in the first movement, *Moderato ed amabile*, makes this quite clear. It is shared between the clarinet and first violin, without either instrument taking the lead. Formally Reger keeps to classical models. The opening movement follows sonata form but has three themes, the receives considerable attention and is used again in the third movement. The four movements are very closely linked by thematic material. In the second movement, *Vivace*, the theme resembles that of the first theme of the previous movement. The slow movement, *Largo*, with its plaintive sighs and dense scoring is particularly impressive. For the finale, Reger, as did Mozart and Brahms before him, chooses a theme with variations. In this case, there are eight variations. For the most part serenity is maintained throughout this autumnal work.



**Arthur Somervell** (1863-1937) was born in the English town of Windermere. He studied composition with Charles Villiers Stanford at Cambridge University and Hubert Parry in London. Subsequently, on Stanford's recommendation, he went to Berlin where he continued his studies with Friedrich Kiel, who had taught Stanford, and Woldemar Bargiel, who became a close friend of Brahms by virtue of being Clara Schumann's younger half brother. Somervell pursued a dual career of composer and teacher, serving as a professor at the Royal College of Music in London. Most of his works are for voice in one form or another and his **Clarinet Quintet in G Major** is his only chamber work. It is hardly surprising, given that his teachers

were all admirers and friends of Brahms, that Somervell's **Clarinet Quintet**, written in 1913, shows Brahms' influence, but this said, it must be emphasized that it is quite original rather than merely imitative. In four movements, the opening *Sostenuto—Allegretto*, quasi *andante*, *grazioso*, is absolutely first rate; wonderful tunes for all and wonderfully executed. The clarinet blends in so seamlessly. Next comes a lovely *Intermezzo* infused with a Brahmsian languidity. The middle section is an updated *musette*. This is followed by a *Lament*, *Adagio non troppo* that begins more as a solemn hymn rather than a dirge. But as the music is developed in variation format, it transforms into a rather quiet and reflective funereal march which is succeeded by a series of striking and exotic episodes. The finale, *Allegro vivace*, begins in a sprightly, celebratory fashion but then slowly calms down and receives a serenade and march-like development. An abrupt and quite short coda brings the work to a close. The excellent clarinet writing must in part be due to the fact that Somervell, though he received no formal training, could play the clarinet quite well. This is a late romantic masterpiece.



**Louis Spohr** (1784-1859 also known as Ludwig) was born in the German city of Braunschweig. From early childhood, he showed a great aptitude for the violin. He studied with the virtuoso violinist Franz Anton Eck in St. Petersburg. It was at a concert in Leipzig in December 1804 that the famous music critic Friedrich Rochlitz first heard Spohr and pronounced him a genius not only because of his playing but also because of his compositions. Literally overnight, the young Spohr became a household word in the German-speaking musical world. During the first half of the 19th century he was regarded as one of the great men of music. Spohr wrote in virtually every genre, not the least being chamber music. He composed some 36 string quartets, 7 string quintets, five piano trios, four double quartets and several other chamber pieces. His **Fantasy & Variations for Clarinet and String Quartet**, which dates from 1813, came about as a result of the request of the German clarinetist, Johann Hermstadt who was trying to establish himself as soloist. The theme which Spohr used was from an opera by Franz Danzi but it was also used by several other composers including Franz Schubert. It is clearly a work for the clarinet which is of-

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ferred a virtuoso part, however, the strings are not ignored.



The musical reputation of **Carl Maria von Weber** (1786-1826) rests almost entirely on his famous operas *Die Freischütz* and *Oberon* and a few other works such as his clarinet concertos. But Weber's music by and large is unknown to present day players and listeners, which is a pity since

it is uniformly well-written, particularly for wind instruments. Chamber music, however, comprises only a very small part of his oeuvre. There are only three works which qualify as chamber music—his *Piano Quartet*, his **Clarinet Quintet in B flat Major, Op.34** and a trio for Flute or Violin, Cello and Piano. Weber studied with Michael Haydn in Salzburg and the Abbe Vogler in Vienna, two of the leading teachers of their day. He pursued a career as a conductor and music director holding posts in Breslau, Prague, Berlin and Dresden. Weber's impetus for writing his *Clarinet Quintet* was his friendship with the clarinet virtuoso Heinrich Baermann which began in 1811. Weber worked on the quintet off and on for four years completing it in 1815. Baermann was a touring soloist and though most likely he might have preferred a concerto,

quite often soloists found that it was quite impossible to find a decent orchestra in some of the smaller cities where they concertized. Soloists who were also composers, such as Louis Spohr, solved their problems by writing quartets or quintets known as "brilliant" indicating they were a vehicle for the soloist. A kind of mini-concerto. The soloist need only find 4 or 5 good musicians, which even most small towns could supply, and a concert could be had. Weber's *Clarinet Quintet* was designed to fill this bill and it provides all of the drama, thrills and pathos of a concerto. And as an opera composer, Weber had no difficulty creating dramatic operatic effects. While the work requires a clarinetist of high technical ability, it is not simply a 'show off' piece devoid of musical worth. To the contrary, the lovely melodies and fine handling of the themes make it a compelling piece of music. The work is in four movements and begins with a dramatic *Allegro*. The second movement is entitled *Fantasia*. Here, Weber creates a work worthy of his best operatic efforts. It is dramatic and deeply felt. Next comes a lilting *Menuetto, capriccio presto*, which takes the place of a scherzo but in no way can it be styled a classical minuet. The finale is the piece de resistance, a rollicking *Rondo allegro gioioso*, which bounces forward effortlessly, like a horse racing the wind.

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## The Chamber Music of Volkmar Andreae

By Urs Klosters



Volkmar Andreae (1879-1962) was born in the Swiss capital of Bern. He studied at the Cologne Conservatory under Carl Munzinger and after a short stint at Munich working as an opera coach, he moved to Zurich where he lived for the rest of his life, becoming one of the most important figures on the Swiss musical scene. From 1906 to 1949, he was conductor of the renowned Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra and headed the Zurich Conservatory from 1914 to 1939. He conducted throughout Europe as was regarded as one of the foremost interpreters of Bruckner. In addition to his work as a conductor and teacher, he devoted considerable time to composing. While his works received praise from contemporary critics, like those so many other modern composers, his works were not given a place in the standard repertoire. He was not a prolific composer and has only five chamber works to his credit. The

earliest work is his *Although* his **Piano Trio No.1 in f minor** bears the opus number of 1, it was by no means his first work. It was the first work that he chose to publish and though it is full of youthful vigor, it is also that of a mature composer. It made a deep impression upon its release in 1901 and received many fine reviews but sadly was ignored for after the First World War. The musical language is that of the very late Romantic or post-Romantic, much in the way that Dohnanyi's early works. It begins with a powerful *Allegro*. The composer takes us to a remarkably expressive tonal world, fresh sounding and original. The music is given an expressive sense of forward motion which is in part created by the compelling development section. The middle movement, *Adagio*, is of the sort Brahms might have written had he lived another ten years. The beautiful opening theme bears a distant relationship to the opening theme of the trio, heard in the *Allegro*. The middle sections is a very original

scherzando. The hand of Brahms can be felt in the finale, Allegro ma non troppo. Though it is unhurried, nevertheless, there is an undercurrent of urgency. A lovely second theme provides excellent contrast. This first rate work, which never got the hearing it deserved. For its time and type it is a masterwork.

His next work appeared in 1905, the **String Quartet No.1 in B flat Major, Op.9**. It definitely deserves concert performance, but experienced amateurs will also appreciate this fine work. The very fresh and original first movement, Ziemlich bewegtes Zeitmass (Allegro moderato) begins in the style of a fanfare. It has a lyrical main subject. The second theme full of feeling is also very effective. The development is masterly. The second movement, So rasch als möglich (as quick as possible), is a scherzo with two trios. The main theme is a wild chase, but the second theme has a march-like quality. The trio section in which both violins present the melody over the accompaniment in the lower voices is highly original. The second trio with its wayward harmony is plaint, with deep feeling. The next movement, Langsames Zeitmass (Slow), though not immediately apparent, is a very loose form of a Theme and Variations. Again there is a deeply felt melody with very intricate tonalities. The finale, Lebhaft bewegt (Vivace), has for its main subject a magnificent march-like melody. A joyful second theme is followed by a fugue. All this is followed by a superb, lyrical theme toward the end. This is a first class work which should have entered the modern repertoire, in explicable by-passed, perhaps Andreae, being a Swiss, was never able to get the attention the work might have achieved if he had been an Austrian or German.

The next chamber work chronologically speaking was his **Piano Trio No.2 in E flat Major, Op.14** first appeared in 1908. In four movements, its big opening Allegro moderato shows a new receptivity and influence from the French impressionists. What is particularly striking is that each of the voices, for great stretches at a time, works quite independently of the others. In the slow movement, Molto adagio, which follows, a dark meditative stillness descends. After the theme is given out, an impressive set of variations follows. A scherzo, Presto, with its tremendous tempo, gives the music a gossamer-like quality. The trio could not be more different, very slow and reflective, it completely washes away the light, nervous mood of the scherzo. This is a highly original and very inventive movement. The expansive and exciting finale, Allegro con brio, is music

of movement. The main melody, a hunting theme, is played over a strong rhythm in the piano. The second subject creates a very fine contrast. Like the first trio, this trio is first rate and it is a very great shame it has not taken its place on the concert stage and on the stands of amateurs.

His **String Trio in d minor, Op.29** came out in 1919. It was hailed by critics as one of the finest string trios of the early twentieth century. The beautiful the first movement, Allegro moderato, is with its lovely main theme presented in canonic fashion against an energetic accompaniment. It is especially effective when it makes its appearance at the end of the trio in the coda. The following movement, Allegretto, is a piquant scherzetto. The cello pizzicato provides a perfect accompaniment to the elegiac main theme, while the middle section in the minor provides excellent contrast. The third movement consists of two parts. It begins with a serious, somewhat doleful Molto lento, and is played attacca to the following Molto vivace, with its lyrical, dance-like theme that has an aura of melancholy. This is a very valuable addition to the string trio literature, which presents no great technical difficulties. It is a candidate for the concert hall but also can be recommended to amateurs.

Andreae's final chamber music work was his **String Quartet No.2 in E Major, Op.33** which was completed in 1921. It is lighter in mood and shorter than the First Quartet. The first movement, Andante moderato, has pleasing melodies, the second theme is particularly attractive. The muted second movement, Allegretto mosso, is quite original. The dance-like main section is humorous and tonally is quite appealing. A slow movement, Molto lento is a warm, deeply felt elegy which is interrupted by a stormy middle section. The spirited finale, Allegro molto, is quite pleasing with its fine themes and dance-like rhythm. This quartet plays quite well and does not present any great technical problems. In the concert hall it is sure to make a strong impression. This a quartet which certainly should not be undervalued.

The Chamber Music Journal is  
Published under the auspices of  
Edition Silvertrust

# A Brief Survey of the String Trios of William Shields

(Continued from page 2)

**String Trio No.1 in E flat Major** is in three movements and concertante style, showing the influence of the Mannheim school of the Johann and Carl Stamitz as well as his friend Haydn. The work opens with an Allegro followed by a Largo. The title to the final movement is quite interesting and shows that Shield was attracted to, what was then, the exotic. The marking is *Giucoco, alla Sclavonia-Tempo straniera con variazione*—roughly, playful in the foreign Slavonic manner. Actually, it is a modified Polacca. **String Trio No.2 in D Major** is in three movements and concertante style. The work opens with a bright Allegro followed by a deeply felt *Molto adagio* and closes with upbeat *Rondeau allegro*. **String Trio No.3 A Major** opens with an Allegro followed by an lively *Andante grazioso* and closes with stately dance *Un Giucoco*. **String**

**Trio No.5 in C Major** is in two movements and concertante style. The work opens with an atmospheric *Largo e sostenuto* and followed an inventive *Tempo di Ciaccona*. Shield wrote a fair amount of chamber music including 9 string trios in two sets. The first was a set of 6 dating from 1796 and brought out by the English publisher Longman in London. The second set of three followed some 15 years later. During this time, Shield had traveled widely on the continent. And in these trios, one can hear what Shield learned while abroad. For example, in **String Trio No.8 in G Major**, he uses a *Siciliano* in the second movement, if not the first, certainly one of the first uses by an English composer. Then, in **String Trio No.9 in A Major** the last movement is a waltz. Although by 1811, the waltz had been become popular in Vienna and parts of Germany, it did not make its appearance in England until 1812 at which

## Emil Sjögren's Works for Violin and Piano *continued from page 2*

Sjögren mainly composed songs with piano accompaniment and violin sonatas. Both are of high quality and his affinity for melody and art songs gained him the reputation as a Swedish Schubert. He embodies an individually romantic type in his sweet, often astonishingly lyrical music with its interesting modulations and harmonies. The music exhibits a rare and highly expressive, shimmering sound, often along with a spiritual mood. I will first discuss his violin sonatas.

**Violin Sonata No.1 in g minor, Op.19** was composed in 1884. Franz Liszt, upon hearing it, was so impressed that he secured its publication, which in no small part put Sjögren on the musical map. In three big movements, the opening *Allegro vivace* immediately creates a highly dramatic mood as the violin enters with a lyrical theme over a piano tremolo. A second theme is calmer but equally as lyrical. The middle movement, *Andante*, could well be subtitled romance for the gorgeous themes are highly romantic in nature. The vocal quality of the music is quite apparent from the violin's role. The finale, *Presto*, bursts forth with irrepressible energy and forward motion. The second theme, more reflective and less frenetic, provides a fine contrast. Certainly, this sonata is a worthy candidate to be included on any violinist concert program.

**Violin Sonata No.2 in e minor, Op.24** was composed in 1888 and dedicated to Tor Aulin, Sweden's leading concert violinist. It is in four movements, the opening *Allegro moderato* begins quietly with hints of darkness but quickly builds in tension only to dissipate into a lovely lyrical second theme. In the *Allegretto scherzando* which comes next the lyrical main theme is continually interrupted by bouts of rhythmic episodes which serve as a contrasting second theme subject. The third movement, *Andante sostenuto*, is essentially a dramatic and highly romantic aria for

the violin. It amply illustrates why Sjögren was such a fine composer of vocal music. The finale, *Con fuoco*, begins with a restless theme which rises to high drama and is suffused with passion and much energy. This is another sonata which ought to be heard in concert and would certainly be a welcome addition to the repertoire.

Six years were to pass from the time Sjögren completed his Second Violin Sonata to the time he began work on **Violin Sonata No.3 in g minor, Op.32** in 1894. And then, it took him six years to complete the work. By 1900, when he had finished, his style, although still dominated by the highly romantic, had nonetheless changed. Like the second sonata, it is in four movements, but unlike the earlier works, it does not burst forth in dramatic fashion but begins somewhat darkly but then quickly builds tension. The main theme, though quite lyrical, is continually interrupted by harsher outbursts. A second theme is less intense and more lyrical. The second movement, *Allegro vivace*, is bright, lively and playful—a cross between a scherzo and an intermezzo. The beautiful *Molto Andante* which comes next is a lazy, romantic love song. In some ways, the finale, *Allegro assai*, harks back to his earlier works, opening as it does with a highly restless piano accompaniment over which the violin introduces a troubled melody. The second theme is both more optimistic and less frenetic. This sonata belongs in the recital hall and would be an adornment to any violinist's repertoire.

Another six years were to pass before he composed **Violin Sonata No.4 in e minor, Op.47**. He began writing it in 1904, working slowly as always, it took another two years to complete. Like all of his other sonatas, except the first, it is in four movements. The opening movement, *Andante espressivo--Allegro*, is just brimming with ideas. It begins with short, somewhat dark introduc-

tion and then without warning a march-like melody appears only to be quickly replaced by a more lyrical second subject which holds center stage until a yet another subject, quite daintily, replaces it. This intern is followed by a scherzando. The second movement, Scherzo vivacissimo, though a proper scherzo, combines lyricism, wit and playfulness, almost sounding like a morsel from Fritz Kreisler. Next comes an Andante con moto, a dreamy, quiet, and reflective affair, though not without a measure of Sjögren's romanticism. The finale, Allegro vivace, an upbeat and modern sounding, with just the slightest hint of folk-music. It is lovely and joyous.

Sjögren's last sonata for violin and piano, **Violin Sonata No.5 in a minor, Op.61**, dates from 1913. Although several years had passed, the style is similar to that of his Fourth Sonata. The first of its four movements, Andante sostenuto ed espressione--Allegro con anima, begins with a sad, relatively short, slow introduction which leads immediately to the very dramatic, dark-hued Allegro. The second movement, Scherzo vivacissimo, relies on its rhythm to create a light, playful mood. A highly romantic middle section provides interesting contrast. The beautiful main theme of the Andante con mobile, which follows is tinged with a reflective sadness. The finale, Allegro giocoso, though full of bustle retains a sentimental, autumnal air for quite sometime. Only later does the music become more jocular. Like his four other violin sonatas, No.5 is also a first class work, worthy of inclusion on recital programs.

In addition to these sonatas, he wrote several shorter works for violin and piano, all of which are excellent and deserve the attention of players and listeners. I will discuss them in brief.

His **Two Fantasy Pieces, Op.27** were composed in 1885 and were intended as short recital pieces. Sjögren's ability to write fine vocal music is on display here in the way he treats the violin and the piano. The themes are based on Swedish folk melody. The Two Fantasy Pieces were composed in 1885 and were intended as short recital pieces. Sjögren's ability to write fine vocal music is on display here in the way he treats the violin and the piano. The themes are based on Swedish folk melody. The **Poème for Violin and Piano, Op.40** dates from 1903. In the tradition of such works, it exhibits many moods. At times it is highly romantic and idealized, then playful and light-hearted. The writing for the two instruments is seamless and handled superbly. It is of medium length, about a third the

size of a sonata and makes a fine recital work. The **Morceau de Concert, Op.45** was composed in 1905 while Sjögren was sojourning in Paris. It is based on a folk song and a dance which were well-known in Swedish circles. It was intended as a recital vehicle for the then well-known Swedish violinist Sven Kjellstrom. In it, Sjögren shows how imaginatively he could handle the thematic material, creating a work which might well be subtitled Rhapsody. The **Four Lyrical Poems, Op.3** were completed in 1880 and are among Sjögren's earliest compositions. Sjögren, whom many considered the equal of Hugo Wolf when it came to art songs--lieder--shows why this was in these extraordinarily lovely and highly romantic works which might just as easily have been sung as played on the violin. Any of the poems could be played as a short recital piece or all four in the place of a sonata.

Several of his best known songs were with at his request transcribed for violin and piano by his good friend Tor Aulin, Sweden's leading violinist at the time. Among these are **Three Songs for Violin and Piano, Op.12** were originally from the song cycle based on Julius Wolff's (not Richard Wagner's) Tannhäuser which was composed in 1885. Aulin made transcriptions of three of the songs which were published together to make a mini-collection. The songs were known as "You look at me with unasked questions", "I would like to keep you with me all year long", and "I want to linger over hill and valley." **Four Songs for Violin and Piano, Op.16** were originally from the song cycle An Eine composed in 1886. Aulin made transcriptions, four of the songs which were published together to make another mini-collection. The songs were known as "Beautiful girl, I've searched so long for you, Look upon Me with your dark eyes, Warm my cheek with yours, and Lulla. The **Three Songs for Violin and Piano, Op.22** were originally from the song cycle based on poems by Jens Peter Jacobsen. The cycle appeared in two different versions. Aulin transcribed three of the songs, one of the songs from the better known version and two from the lesser known cycle. These were published together to make a yet another mini-collection. The songs were known as "O say, you beautiful single ladies, In Seraljens' pleasure garden and Now comes a sad moment. Lastly, there is his **Two Lyrical Pieces** which are without opus number They were composed in 1897 and intended as short recital pieces. Sjögren's ability to write fine vocal music is once again on display here in the way he treats the violin and the piano.

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