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*The Essential Guide
For Players & Listeners
To The Wider World
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***Beyond the Famous Four
Piano Quintets***

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Anton Arensky***

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Some Interesting Piano Quintets beyond the Famous Four

James Talbot

First off, let me be clear—this article is about works for 2 violins, viola, cello and piano, i.e. the standard string quartet plus piano. There are other piano quintets, for example, those which subtract a violin and add a bass, and, of course, there are piano quintets for various combinations of winds and piano as well as winds, strings and piano. But I shall confine myself to the so-called standard piano quintet.

When is the last time you went to a concert and heard three works for piano quintet performed on the program or an all piano quintet concert. Most likely, the answer is never. Piano quintets are rarely performed in concert. The reason is quite straightforward. First off, there are few if any permanent piano quintet ensembles. And while there are many permanent touring string quartets, to offer a piano quintet, they must en-

gage and rehearse with a pianist. This all takes time and costs money. So, when a piano quintet is found on a program it is usually just one which is sandwiched between two string quartets. And what piano quintet might one find on the program. As Raymond Silvertrust writes in his indispensable *Guide to the Piano Quintet and Sextet Literature*, you almost certainly will hear one of four works and no other. What I have titled the Famous Four. These are the piano quintets by Schumann, Dvorak, Brahms and Shostakovich. The argument given by professionals as to why this is the case, other than the added expense and time of rehearsing with a pianist, is the demand of the box office, i.e. those chamber music concert societies who present and pay for the concerts. The reasoning goes, since piano quintets are so rarely performed, you

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The Chamber Music Of Anton Arensky

By Feodor Evashevsky



Anton Arensky (1861-1906) was born in the Russian city of Novgorod. His father was an avid amateur cellist and his mother was a good pianist. His mother began giving him piano lessons at the age of six. Family records indicate that he was already composing by this age, including a chamber work for violin, cello, flute and piano. His family moved to St. Petersburg, where Anton completed his secondary education and began his musical studies at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. There, he studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov. After graduating from the conservatory in 1882,

Arensky received an offer from the director of the Moscow Conservatory, to teach there. Seven years later, he was elevated to the position of full professor. He was responsible for teaching composition and instrumentation. But he was also given time to pursue a career as a piano soloist and for a while he toured both inside and outside of Russia. Arensky became widely known for his "wild" and riotous lifestyle.

In Moscow, Arensky became friends with Tchaikovsky and the latter's influence had a tremendous effect on the formation of Arensky's creative style. In addition, Tchaikovsky did a lot to promote Arensky's operas, programming them often in concerts where he served as conductor. Tchaikovsky's praise was often lavish. For example, speaking of Arensky's opera *Dream on the Volga*, Tchaikovsky remarked that it exceeded all his expectations. "The entire opera was written from beginning to end by a real artist, with great deliberation and skill. Many scenes brought tears to my eyes, a sure sign that

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Leonhard von Call's String Quartets

by R.H.R. Silvertrust



Who was Leonhard von Call you ask. If you are a guitar player, you may have heard of him. Leonhard von Call (1767-1815) was born in the town of Eppan in South Tirol, then part of the

Austrian Empire, and since 1919, now in northern Italy, although it is an autonomous German-speaking region. Although he studied music as a boy and became a virtuoso on the guitar, mandarin and violin, he never pursued a career as a touring virtuoso. Rather concentrated on composing and teaching although he also frequently performed to illustrate his teaching methods and to popularize his compositions. But these things were done in his spare time.

He pursued a military career and served as an officer in the Austrian army during the war against the French Republic and was ennobled for bravery. After retiring from the army, from about 1806 until his death, he worked as an official in the Imperial Treasury in Vienna.

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Since 1990**

The Chamber Music of Anton Arensky *continued from page 2*

Dream on the Volga was written by strong talent. Arensky, in my opinion, has a brilliant future if he is encouraged. He has a real composer's temperament, a real creative talent!" As might be expected, Arensky, returned the favor, often programming works by Tchaikovsky when he conducted and making arrangements of the bigger works such as the Nutcracker Suite for piano.

Arensky died in Finland in 1906 of tuberculosis. Little is known of Arensky's personal life. We know he graduated from the St Petersburg Conservatory, winning the prestigious gold medal, which resulted in the offer of a teaching position in Moscow. We know what other positions he held. We know that he enjoyed considerable success and fame during his lifetime both as a composer, conductor and performer, but we know little of how he lived his life. Much of what we do know comes from Rimsky-Korsakov writing about Arensky, among others, in his Memoirs. At one point the two were friends and Korsakov had been so impressed with his student that he trusted him to edit his manuscripts. He likely was responsible for Arensky receiving the gold medal as well as the Moscow offer. But later as Arensky's fame grew, Rimsky became jealous and clearly disapproved of the life his famous student was living.

Not long after Arensky's death, Korsakov wrote a rather unflattering biographical portrait of Arensky in the Russian Musical Chronicle. "My former student, who after graduating from the St. Petersburg Conservatory became a professor at the Moscow Conservatory, lived in Moscow for many years. According to all those who knew him, he lived a dissolute life full of drinking to excess and inveterate gambling. This did not stop him from his prolific activity as a composer. Some said that for a while, he suffered mental illness, however, from which he apparently recovered without lasting effect. After leaving the professorship of the Moscow Conservatory in the 90s, he moved to St. Petersburg and succeeded Balakirev as manager of the Court Chapel. And in this position he continued his dissolute habits, albeit to a lesser extent. Upon leaving the Court Chapel, Arensky found himself in the enviable position: of being receiving a sinecure as some kind of official for special assignments at the Ministry of the Court. From this sinecure, he received the substantial sum of five to six thousand rubles of annual pension, allowing him complete free time to study composition. This he did, but he returned to his old habits of playing cards, drinking and so forth. Dying of tuberculosis, he traveled to Nice in the vain hope for a cure, but ater died ina Finnish sanitorium."

Of course, we must separate the artist from the man. Many an artist has lived an exemplary life but was nonetheless a third rater producing nothing worthy of remembering. Then we have a Wagner whose life was far from exemplary, but whose music lives on. Anyway, whatever the case with regard to Arensky, it can be said with assurance that his chamber music, which I will discuss here, was superior to that composed by his better known contemporaries including Rimsky Korsakov, Glazunov, Liadov, Gretchaninov and Balakirev. Leaving out his sonatas and works for one instrument and piano, I will confine myself to five works—his two string quartets, his two piano trios and his piano quintet. A word to the reader—as a pianist, I am far more familiar and have played the two piano trios and the piano quintet. Obviously, I have not

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played the strings quartets which do not call for a piano. I have only heard his quartets and my discussion of them is based solely upon these hearings.

String Quartet No.1 in G, Op.11 dates from 1888. The Allegro opens with a very dramatic, almost virtuosic, first theme. A slight Andante is full of contrapuntal writing. The canonic Minuetto allegretto which follows sounds like a salon piece of the sort that might have been composed for Belaiev's Les Vendredis. The finale, Variations sur un thème russe, is clearly the most striking and exciting of the movements with many extraordinary effects in the succeeding variations. Few composers have been able to successfully write a finale that was a set of variations. Here, Arensky did.

Composed some seven years later (1895), the repeated opening chords to **String Quartet No.2 in a minor, Op.35** sound suspiciously like a Russian Orthodox funeral service. This Moderato is at once quite striking and reminiscent of a similar movement in Tchaikovsky's third string quartet. A dramatic second theme, while not exactly 'happy,' relieves the earlier somber mood which ultimately returns and closes this long but very finely-wrought movement. The theme to *Thème moderato et variations* is again somber; this time like a hymn from the Volga boatmen. Roughly half the length of this three movement work, the variations are quite elaborate with each instrument given the lead while the composer explores all of the tonal and textural possibilities of which four string instruments are capable. The mood lightens and at times wanders considerably from the original theme: here a scherzo, there a lyrical song, and at last a somber plaint. Certainly this is as fine a movement of chamber music as Arensky wrote. The relatively short finale *Andante sostenuto-Allegro moderato* begins in the same somber mood where previous movement left off. But this dirge-like heaviness is soon relieved by a robust church anthem tune which brings the quartet to rousing finish. The original version of this quartet called for violin, viola and 2 cellos. You can imagine the thoughts of his would be publisher, i.e. that it would never sell in this version. Hence, he demanded not suggested, that Arensky make a version for standard string quartet. This he did but it does not have the dark richness of the two cello version.

Arensky wrote two piano trios, but only the first, Op.32, published in 1894, ever achieved any popularity. A second trio, Op.73, written a year before his death

in 1905, has all but vanished.

Piano Trio No. 1 in d minor, Op.32 was dedicated to the memory of the legendary Russian cellist, Karl Davidoff, director of the Petersburg conservatory during Arensky's time there as a student. Later, the two became friends. The trio is in four movements and of substantial, though not mammoth, size. The opening, Allegro moderato, is a big movement and perhaps the center of gravity for this work. It is built around three themes and opens with a very dramatic subject, clearly influenced by Tchaikovsky, featuring triplets in the piano to a singing melody in the violin, which immediately captivates the listener. It appears throughout the movement including in the coda at the end when it is played adagio as a valedictory. The second subject, presented first by the cello, has the quiet, yet effective elegance of a simple song and a mood of hope. The development section comes after the introduction of the third subject and uses the first two themes. It is masterfully done and the reappearance of each theme always comes as an unexpected but pleasant surprise. The third subject is somewhat faster, but only, as the composer indicates—*piu mosso*. What it has, that the other two themes lack, is a deliberate quality which conveys a sense of forcefulness. It makes the best impression played in a rubato fashion. The heavily accented piano part is meant to drag slightly while the running 16th notes in the strings serves as a release of tension

In the second movement, Scherzo-Allegro molto, the strings are given a sparse, though telling, theme which is played against a rather florid and running part approaching virtuoso proportions in the piano. The violin is called upon to execute a ricochet bowing, which creates a percussive effect. However because it is not in the violin's lower registers, it lacks any real weight. Hence, it creates a playful "toy soldier" effect rather than any real martial quality. The piano is given quick scale passages which provide an excellent contrast while the pizzicati of the strings complete the picture adding a touch of elegance. The contrasting trio features a superb waltz, Slavonic in nature, and one of many which this composer wrote. It became known as a typical example of "The Arensky Waltz." The cello is allowed the opening phrases before the violin joins in. Here, the piano is kept in the background and provides the underpinning of the final two beats of each measure.

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It is in the third movement, *Elegia-Adagio*, that Arensky reaches the heights of lyricism. The lovely sad opening melody is passed from the muted cello, to the muted violin and then to the piano and back again. It is a personal and intimate dialogue between the instruments, evocative of the composer's friendship with Davidoff.

The explosive and dramatic finale, *Allegro non troppo*, makes brilliant use of themes from the preceding *Elegia* as well as those of the first movement. The rhythms here are the most decisive and help to build the dramatic climax which is reached toward the end of the movement. This climax is interrupted by the main theme of the first movement and the *Elegia*—sad memories from the past—each played *adagio*.

Not wishing to end the work on a somber note, Arensky returns to a faster and more energetic main theme in the fourth movement, ending in a triumphant mood. There is no denying this is a very great piano trio which ought to be heard in concert far more often than it is.

Piano Trio No.2 in f minor, Op.73 was composed in 1905, the year before Arensky died. Even within Russia, it has remained virtually unknown. Many critics seem highly puzzled by this fact. But since it is almost never performed. However this puzzlement is most likely because they have never actually heard or played the music and have only looked at the cold, dead page on their desks. Certainly, either playing or hearing the trio would probably put an end to their puzzlement. The melodies are not as attractive and the thematic material is not as rich or varied as those of the first trio. No better example can be given than the first movement which is the longest and the weakest by far. The main theme to the massive *Allegro moderato* is dark and brooding but not particularly tuneful. Here, the influence of Tchaikovsky makes itself felt in the constant repetition of the theme, almost *ad nauseum*. And like Tchaikovsky's own piano trio, this movement is far too long for the quality of the thematic material. Worse yet, Arensky repeats the pickup and first measure of the trio dozens upon dozens of times—this is no exaggeration. It becomes extremely annoying.

The second movement is a *Romance*. After a short introduction in the strings, the piano proceeds alone, playing what sounds rather like a Chopin nocturne. When the strings are finally brought into the mix, the writing becomes very beautiful. However, there is no real dramatic climax, no tension, just a gentle, warm breeze against the face, which brings the bouquet of

perfumed flowers on its breath.

The third movement, *Scherzo, presto*, is quite fine. Against the *spiccato* in the violin and the guitar-like strumming *pizzicato* in the cello, the piano is given rippling *arpeggio* passages, which, it must be pointed out, are none too easy. There is a marked similarity between this *scherzo* and that of the first trio, although the material, tonally, sounds a little more modern. In style, it is closer to Korsakov than Tchaikovsky. The theme of the trio section is first given out by the cello. Like the trio to the *scherzo* of Op.32, it is gorgeously lyrical, but perhaps near the borderline of excess.

The finale is a *Tema con variazioni*. As I wrote earlier, it is rare indeed that this form ever provides a truly successful finale. Even Beethoven has failed trying it. While against all odds, Arensky succeeded in doing it in his first piano trio, he was not able to replicate the feat here. The theme is not particularly inspired. Six variations follow, and while they are competently handled, there is nothing very unusual about them. Then at the very end, we hear the first few notes of the oft repeated opening theme yet again. Once more, they are repeated several times as if to engrave them upon the memory. Though better than the first movement, the finale is not particularly distinguished. Although two middle movements are good, especially the *Scherzo*, it is not enough to suggest that this work ought to be heard in concert. And as for amateurs, it may well be beyond the range of all but the very best of amateur pianists

The dramatic opening, *Allegro moderato*, to the **Piano Quintet in D, Op.51**, which was composed in 1900, is in feeling and mood more than a little like the opening to Robert Schumann's piano quintet. Full of flourishes, from the opening bars one immediately hears music of joy and triumph. Arensky gives the piano, as he did in his first piano trio a virtuoso part. In the Variations which follow, the piano takes a lead rôle as the mood lightens. The lyrical piano part almost sounds like Chopin.

A very well-written and brilliant, French-sounding *Scherzo* with contrasting trio comes next.

The finale, *Allegro moderato*, begins as a fugue of almost Baroque rigidity, but the second theme and coda, full of romanticism, totally dismantle the fugue. This is a very nice work which deserves to be heard occasionally on stage in place of the inevitable Schumann or Dvorak.

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The String Quartets of Leonhard von Call

This job was more or less a sinecure and gave him considerably more time to compose and teach. And during the last decade of his life, he became a much sought after teacher. Most of his compositions were for chamber ensembles, the bulk of which involved the guitar. He was a prolific composer and is thought to have produced more than 200 works, many of which were published during his lifetime. And even though he himself was a virtuoso, most of these works were designed for amateurs and home music making rather than virtuoso players and for this reason as well as the fact that he had a gift for writing very appealing melodies, his works achieved tremendous popularity during the first part of the 19th century.

The **String Quartet No.1 in C Major** of Leonhard von Call is the first of a set of three quartets which were published shortly before his death by the Vienna firm of Carl Haslinger, although most scholars seem to think the quartets were composed in the late 1790s but only given to Haslinger at a later date after von Call's chamber music with guitar had become popular. The Quartet is representative of the typical Vienna Classical Style. In four movements, the opening Allegro moderato features a gentle and lovely melody in the first violin and later a dialog between the cello and first violin. The second movement is a theme and set of five variations. Next comes a charming Menuet. The work concludes with a toe-tapping Rondo, moderato.

String Quartet No.2 in G Major is the second of the set of three quartets which presumably was composed immediately after he had finished the first. Also in four movements, the opening Allegro features a dialog between the cello and first violin. The second move-

ment is an appealing Adagio. Next comes a typical Viennese Menuet with contrasting trio. The work concludes with another toe-tapping Rondo, marked allegro.

String Quartet No.3 in F Major, the third and final quartet given over to Haslinger is similar to the first two. It is in four movements, beginning with an Allegro that starts off not terribly fast, but gradually increases. The second movement is a theme and set of six variations. Another charming Viennese Menuetto is placed third, this one with two trios. The work concludes with a pleasing Rondo, moderato.

I was delighted to discover these quartets, easy to play with simple melodies, written in concertante style for the most part. They are historically valuable, and like the quartets of Krommer and the Wranitzky brothers, they give a good idea of what the contemporaries of Haydn and Mozart were producing. But make no mistake, these are in no way masterworks. They were not meant to be. The target audience of much of Call's music was home music makers. They were written for entertainment and they do just that. Amateurs, in particular, will want to have a chance to play these appealing and effective works which present no technical problems..

One last thing, I can well remember as a small child taking part in quartet concerts at my music school. The staples were Mozart's early quartets from the K.150s and charming though some these were, the lower voices rarely if ever were given even a snippet of melody. Not so Call's quartets.

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might as well program one of the most famous. And, of course, one also hears the explanation which can be applied to any work by an unknown or little known composer and that is that few will buy tickets to hear works by composers with whom they are unfamiliar. That being the case, and again as Mr. Silvertrust writes, the only way you are ever going to hear any piano quintets other than those which you might hear in concert is by playing them yourself or by listening to a recording.

So, let us say that on a regular basis, you have assembled a piano quintet. What now? Well, certainly you should start with the above mentioned famous four works. Are there other piano quintets by well-known composers. Yes, there are some but not all of these rise to a level where I can recommend them. I say this, given the realization that even if you have a relatively permanent piano quintet group with which to play, it is very unlikely that you will be able to explore more than a couple of dozen works in your lifetime, and that is if you are very diligent indeed.

What follows is not a comprehensive survey but simply my personal list which I think would be worth your while once you have finished with the famous four. I shall proceed in alphabetical order.

The Piano Quintet in e minor dating from 1865 by the Swedish composer **Elfrieda Andree** (1841-1929) is a solid work showing the strong influence of Schumann and Mendelssohn. It is well suited to amateur players as it presents no unusual technical difficulties. It is tuneful and fun to play.

The Russian composer **Anton Arensky** (1861-1906) wrote a first rate work, his Piano Quintet in D Major, Op.51 composed in 1900, It shows the influence of Robert Schumann's piano quintet especially in the opening movement although it would be misleading to suggest that it sounds anything like Schumann. Later on there are echoes of Chopin to be heard. The piano has a virtuoso part which is something to keep in mind. As far as concert programming goes, this work deserves concert performance.

The Piano Quintet in f sharp minor, Op.67 by the American **Amy Beach** (also known as Mrs. H.H.A. Beach) is a densely written late Romantic effort from 1908. Satisfying, however, this work requires strong ensemble players.

The German **Wilhelm Berger** (1861-1911) wrote what many consider a masterwork, the equal of that of Brahms. His Piano Quintet in f minor, Op.95 from

1904 is unquestionably a great work, the sort of thing Brahms might have written had he still been alive although it is more lyrical. Requires topnotch players.

Sandro Blumenthal (1874-1919) born in Venice but schooled in Germany, in 1900 wrote an outstanding work, his Piano Quintet No.1 in D Major, Op.2. Very lyrical and only of average difficulty. No.2 is not quite as impressive.

Alexander Borodin (1833-1887) never completed his Piano Quintet in c minor which he wrote while vacationing in Italy in 1862. There are only three movements. It is an early work and not exactly his best, but neither is it a bad work. There are lovely Russian sounding melodies and it is not at all hard to play.

The first published work by the Hungarian composer **Ernst von Dohnanyi** (Erno Dohnanyi in the Hungarian form) was his Piano Quintet in c minor, Op.1, dating from 1895 when the composer was all of 18 years old. When it was shown to Brahms, he remarked "I could not have written it better myself." Only of standard difficulty, this is a good choice for amateurs as well as pros. Piano Quintet No.2 in e flat minor, Op.26 is equally fine and presents no undue technical difficulties and as such can also be recommended to amateurs.

The Poem for Piano Quintet from 1911 by the Frenchman **Gabriel Dupont** combines the ideas of French Impressionist with touches of Wagner. Densely scored, it is an interesting work, not easy but not overly difficult either.

Edward Elgar (1857-1934) did not write much in the way of chamber music. One such work was his Piano Quintet in a minor, Op.84 which he finished in 1919. Of standard difficulty, it is not particularly tuneful or filled with memorable melodies and is by no means an outstanding work but perhaps worth a look-see.

Frederic d'Erlanger (1868-1943) had a German father, American mother, was born in Paris where he lived until he was 18 and then spent the rest of his life in London. His very fine Piano Quintet in c minor from 1901 does not sound like a work which either a Frenchman or an Englishman could have penned. Instead, it sounds very Central European, German Romantic. The writing is very fine and not unusually difficult. A good choice.

The 1897 Piano Quintet in a minor Op.38 composed by the American **Arthur Foote** is as good as anything from this period. Absolutely first rate, not to be

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missed. That it did not get the attention it deserved was because Foote was an American and not German or Austrian.

The Scotsman, **James Friskin** (1886-1967) in 1907 wrote a noteworthy Piano Quintet in c minor. A solid effort, of standard difficulty. There are several original touches.

The Piano Quintet in f sharp minor, Op.30 appearing in 1894 is very Brahmsian, so much so, that if you did not know, you might well suspect that was a work Johannes Brahms and not the Austrian composer **Carl Frühling** (1868-1937). Well worth your attention.

Another first rate work, the Piano Quintet No.1 in d minor, Op.35 is by the German composer **Friedrich Gernsheim** (1839-1916). This 1877 work, though firmly in the mid-late German Romantic tradition does not sound like Schumann, Mendelssohn or Brahms. Requires sound ensemble players but is worthwhile. His Piano Quintet No.2 in b minor, Op.63 which came in 1890 is also a very good work, though perhaps not immediately as appealing as No.1

The three movement Piano Quintet in A Major dating from 1850 takes Schumann and Mendelssohn as models, but the Frenchman **Theodore Gouvy** (1819-1898) has written a lively, playful work full of vitality which neither of those two could have penned. A fun work to play with lots of catchy melodies.

The American **Henry Hadley** (1871-1937) composed his very American sounding Piano Quintet in a minor, Op.50 in 1919. If you are looking for an early 20th century American sound, this is a good choice and not overly difficult.

Born in Venezuela but brought to Paris at the age of three where he spent the rest of his life, **Reynaldo Hahn** (1875-1947) composed his Piano Quintet in f sharp minor in 1921. It is an uneven work in that the first movement is absolutely riveting, while the last two movements are a bit of a letdown. Still worth a look see.

After hearing Brahms' Piano Quintet which he did not find to his taste, the Dane **Peter Heise** (1830-1879) thought he could write something just as good if not better. The result was his Piano Quintet in F Major of 1869. Is it as good or better than the Brahms? That is like asking is an apple better than an orange. What I can say is that it is a first class work, superb in every way from start to finish and very different from Brahms and German Romanticism. That it did not be-

come well-known is because it was not published until 2009. Not unusually difficult. An excellent choice.

Ferdinand Hiller (1811-1885) was one of Germany's leading pianists for many years. Born about the same time as Mendelssohn and Schumann, his Piano Quintet in G Major, Op.156 of 1873 is a pleasing solid work, in the repertoire right up until WWI. Not overly difficult, enjoyable.

The Englishman **Joseph Holbrooke** (1878-1958) called his piano quintet Symphonic Quintet in g minor, Op.44. Not sure why he called it that, and while a few parts sound almost orchestral, it is really fine chamber music and though written in 1904, sounding light years ahead with very many original touches. Requires accomplished amateurs, but very worthwhile.

In 1896, the Swiss composer **Hans Huber** (1852-1921) composed his Piano Quintet No.1 in g minor, Op.111. It is a masterwork in every way and very original in its ideas and execution. Not to be missed, it can be recommended to amateurs. His Piano Quintet in G Major, Op.125 was completed in 1907. He subtitled it Divertimento and it is a pleasant work to play but cannot compare to No.1 in excellence.

Salomon Jadassohn (1831-1902) was one Europe's most famous composition teachers of the 19th century. A Mendelssohn acolyte, his 1895 Piano Quintet No.3 in g minor, Op.126, a solid work, good to play and full of appealing melodies which can be warmly recommended to amateurs.

Born in Russia to Swiss parents, **Paul Juon** (1872-1940) studied both in Russia and Germany where he worked for most of his adult life. He wrote two piano quintets, but I can only recommend Piano Quintet No.1 in d minor, Op.33 originally for violin, 2 violas, cello and piano, Juon made a second version for standard with 2 violins and one viola. It is a solid work, well-written, requires good ensemble players.

The German composer, **Friedrich Kiel** (1821-1885) wrote two piano quintets. His five movement Piano Quintet No.1 in A Major, Op.75 is as good as anything from the mid-late Romantic era including the Brahms and Dvorak. It is a masterwork. brimming with appealing melodies and verve. Kiel had so many ideas that after completing No.1, he immediately sat down to write a second, his Piano Quintet No.2 in c minor, Op.76. It is just as good as No.1. I can think of no one who banged out two masterworks one after the other in the same genre. Anyway, either or both of

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these should be at the top of your list to explore.

Franz Lachner (1803-1890) was a close friend of Franz Schubert and a child of the Vienna Classical era. He wrote two piano quintets within a short time of each other and while the first is often the stronger of a composer's two efforts, in this case, I feel his Piano Quintet No.2 in a minor, Op.145 is the better of the two. And though it dates from 1869, this attractive work harks back to an earlier era. Pleasing and a good choice for amateurs.

The French composer **Paul Le Flem (1881-1984)** wrote his only work for this genre, the Piano Quintet in e minor dating from 1910. It is written in the style of what might be called very late French Impressionism. This is a powerful and original work which makes a strong impression but it is not particularly easy to play and does require good players.

Otto Malling (1848-1915) a Danish composer, penned his Piano Quintet in G Major, Op.40 in 1893. Good but not great might be the thing to say about this solid work which will give enjoyment to amateur players.

Just hearing the extraordinarily fine Piano Quintet in C Major, Op.45 which **Giuseppe Martucci** (1856-1909) composed in 1877, you would never guess it was written by an Italian, but rather a German influenced by Brahms. This is a great work with fine writing, requires a good pianist.

The 20th century French composer **Darius Milhaud** (1892-1974) was so impressed with hearing jazz on a London trip that he traveled to Harlem in New York City to hear the real thing. The result was his piano quintet which he titled La Creation du Monde, Op.81b. The first version was for a small string orchestra but he received many requests for a chamber music arrangement and this atmospheric work, not overly difficult was the result. The work very effectively combines elements of jazz and rhythm and blues. By no way beyond amateurs and warmly recommended.

Vitezslav Novak (1870-1949) originally Viktor Novak, was born in Bohemia and during the first part of his career as a composer, who after studying with Dvorak, devoted himself to writing works with Moravian melodies. His Piano Quintet in a minor, Op.12 is a good, but not terribly easy work to play. Though influenced by Dvorak as to the use of folk melody, it does not sound like the music of his teacher.

The German born **Julius Rongen** (1855-1932), spent his adult life as a leading musical figure in Amsterdam. His Piano Quintet No.2 in a minor, Op.100 though written in 1927 is in the late Romantic style and might as well have been composed in the 1890s. This said, it is a good work with appealing themes and can be recommended to amateurs.

The Polish composer **Ludomir Rózycki** (1883-1953) finished his Piano Quintet in c minor, Op.35 in 1913. It is written in a post romantic or perhaps more accurately neo-romantic style. A solid work, not that easy to play but clearly a solid work.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921), generally not associated with chamber music, did write some, including his Piano Quintet in A Major, Op.14 dating from 1853. It is not known what possessed him to write it, only the second at that time ever composed by a Frenchman. It is an interesting work with much to commend it. Requires a good pianist.

The Dutchman **Dirk Schäfer** (1873-1931), generally regarded the greatest Dutch pianist of all time wrote his Piano Quintet in D Major, Op.5 in 1901. It is a superb work and does not require a virtuoso pianist. Fine writing for all with good melodies. An effective work which can be warmly recommended.

Philipp Scharwenka (1847-1917) was born in what was then part of Prussian Poland. He moved to Berlin in 1865 to complete his musical education and lived there for the rest of his life. He wrote a very fine work, his Piano Quintet in b minor, Op.118, in 1910. This is a good work worth your attention.

Giovanni Sgambati (1841-1914) was born in Rome and lived most of his life there. He was one of the few 19th century Italian composers (Giuseppe Martucci was another) who devoted himself solely to instrumental music and shunned opera. He wrote two piano quintets, like Friedrich Kiel, one immediately after the other, probably because his brain was overflowing with ideas. Piano Quintet No.1 in f minor, Op.4 dating from 1866 is an outstanding work, a masterwork, and it sounds Italian. Highly recommended. Piano Quintet No.2 in B flat Major, Op.5 which came the following year in 1867 is also a very fine work though perhaps not quite as powerful as No.1.

The Anglo-Irish **Charles Villiers Stanford** (1852-1924) wrote some fine chamber music, including his Piano Quintet in d minor, Op.25 which he completed in 1886. Stanford wrote that he intended the work as a

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successor to the Schumann and Brahms piano quintets and the influence of both can be heard in this first rate work which besides deserving concert performance can be warmly recommended to amateurs.

The virtually unknown **Petar Stojanovic** (1877-1957) was born in Budapest to Serbian parents. He studied composition in both Budapest and Vienna. His Piano Quintet in c minor, Op.9 dates from 1909. While it is disappointing that it neither sounds Serbian nor Hungarian, it is nonetheless a very good work which presents no undue technical difficulties.

Josef Suk (1874-1935) not only studied with Dvorak but also married his daughter. Widely regarded as Dvorak's successor and as the dean of Czech composers, Suk played second violin in the famous Bohemian String Quartet for several decades. His Piano Quintet in g minor, Op.8 is a huge work which was designed to allow the Bohemian Quartet to present works with piano that had Czech melodies. Completed in 1893 and revised in 1915, this is the work to consider if you are looking for another Czech piano quintet in addition to the Dvorak.

Sergei Taneyev (1856-1915) and his music, though quite well known in Russia, are little known outside of that country. The Russians put him in the front rank of their composers along with names like Tchaikovsky and Rimsky Korsakov. But outside of Russia you are very unlikely to ever hear a work of his performed live in concert. His Piano Quintet in g minor, Op.30, completed in 1911 toward the last part of his life is truly a remarkable work which can withstand comparison with any other piano quintet from the late Romantic era. It is a massive work, some might say overly long, but certainly if given the chance, this is a work worth exploring.

The German **Ferdinand Thieriot** (1838-1919) studied in Hamburg with the same teacher Brahms had done. The two became friends and Brahms helped Thieriot to land his first job. His Piano Quintet in D Major, Op.20 from 1869 is a solid work, richly scored work, not terribly difficult and a good choice for amateurs.

Those looking for an interesting and manageable post-romantic piano quintet might look no further than the Piano Quintet No.2 in D Major, Op.20 by the Austrian composer, **Ludwig Thuille** (1861-1907).

The Spanish composer **Joaquin Turina** (1882-1949) studied in Paris with Vincent d'Indy and his Piano Quintet in g minor, Op.1 does not in anyway sound Spanish as do his later works. Instead, it shows the in-

fluence of d'Indy and d'Indy's teacher Cesar Franck—so much so that one would never guess it was composed by a Spaniard. Nevertheless, it is a fine work, well worth your effort.

Charles Marie Widor (1844-1937) is remembered as one of the greatest organists of all time. Though born in France he studied organ and composition in Brussels. However, upon moving to Paris, though he did not study with Saint Saens, he worked closely with him and was influenced by him. His Piano Quintet No.1 in d minor, Op.7 dates from 1890 and like Saint Saens, he rejected Impressionism. This is an appealing and very fine work.

The Polish composer **Juliusz Zarebski** (1854-1885) wrote his Piano Quintet in g minor, Op.34 in 1885, the year of his death. It is a big work, very romantic and though he was a virtuoso pianist who had studied with Liszt, the quintet is not a showcase for the piano but true chamber music. It is a solid work with much to recommend it.

The superb, post-Brahmsian three movement Piano Quintet in c sharp minor, Op.42 by the German **Hermann Zilcher** was completed in 1918. He rejected atonalism and followed in the footsteps of Brahms and Liszt. A very good work for concert and home.

In closing, I can hear some of you asking, has this Talbot fellow actually tried to play all 45 of the works mentioned. Though you might find it unlikely, the answer is yes, I have. As a pianist with a great love for chamber music, which I began to play regularly more than five decades ago and as the lucky inheritor of a large chamber music library from an uncle who was a chamber music fanatic and finally as a good friend of many willing and like minded string players, I was able to explore this literature as I believe few, if any have. (who knows, there must be someone else on the planet, who has also done this)

I realize that probably few if any reader of my article is going to do this. But that was not my objective in writing this article. Instead, I hope to encourage enthusiasts to look beyond the famous four. I know that you are unlikely to get to more than a handful of these works. But most if not all of these works have been recorded at one time or another and this will help you to choose which ones you want to investigate. Fortunately, the sheet music to most of these quintets is available. I wish you good luck on your journey of exploration and feel certain that you will find several works to your taste.