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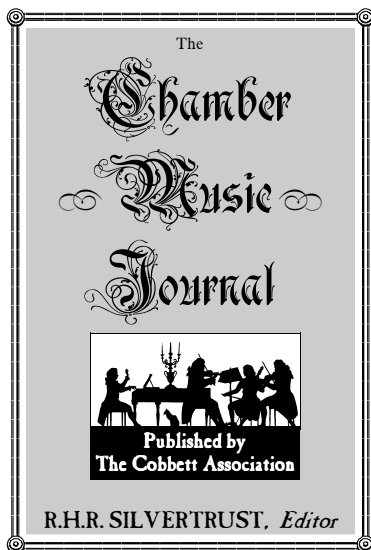
*The Essential Guide  
For Players & Listeners  
To The Wider World  
of Chamber Music*

***Henry Holden Huss' Piano Trio  
The Wind Quintets  
Of Franz Danzi—Part II  
Alexander Glazunov's Late  
String Quartets***

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# The Sounding Board-Letters to the Editor



## Glazunov Quartets Are Being Played

After reading Moise Shevitovsky's article on Glazunov in the Summer 2008 issue of *The Chamber Music Journal*, David William-Olsson, President of the Mazer Society—a Swedish chamber music organization thought we would be interested to know that some quarteters are, in fact, playing Glazunov's string quartets, at least in Sweden. Here follows a letter from one such group, kindly translated by Mr. William-Olsson.

We are a string quartet that has played 4 quartets of Glazunov. We started with the G Major Opus 26, "Quartet Slav" in 2005. It was such fun to play and to work on that we continued in the following year with No. 5 in D Major, Opus 70. After that we tackled No. 4 in a minor, Opus 64. Recently, we have played No. 2 in F major, opus 10. And now we have given ourselves a project, to play all of Glazunov's quartets. Next in line is his Novelettes, Opus 15.

The thing that appeals to us in Glazunov's music is the beautiful melodies, with the doleful tones that one associates with Russian male-voice choirs. The cello and the viola always have interesting parts, full of variety, and with beautiful solos. We have had to work a great deal on our intonation, given the chromatic nature of the works, and the broad sound.

We meet twice a year, on a chamber music course in Sund in Norway for a week in July, and on a course over a weekend in Sigtuna in Sweden in January. The Sund course is arranged by the Norwegian Chamber Music Society, and the Sigtuna course is arranged by The Mazer Society, a Stockholm chamber music club. The instructors at the Sund course are the Maggini quartet, and we have received enormous help from them. On the Sigtuna course we have received wonderful instruction from Lennart Fredriksson and Ottar Hauge.

We call ourselves "The Frontier-Frees" (it sounds a bit better in Swedish, "*De Gränslösa!*") because our first violin comes from Germany, the second violin comes from the North of Norway, and our cello and viola come from Sweden. We have to thank our first violin for introducing us to Glazunov. She is a pupil of Boris Tsoukkerman in Holland, who first gave us the tip about Glazunov.

Marie-Theresia Wolter, Marie-Anne Jervidalö  
Anna-Karin Sköld & Ilona Olah

## Praises for Danzi's Quintets

I don't know how the fine wind quintets of Franz Danzi escaped our notice but please accept our warm thanks and appreciation for bring them to our attention. I hope Mr. Kowalski will also discuss his later quintets.

Bill Peterson  
Dallas, Texas

*Mr. Kowalski's article on Danzi's quintets continues in this issue.*

## Not Impressed by The Piano in Chamber Ensemble

While I found Mr. Brickman's article well-written and interesting, this reference work is almost entirely a compilation of information to be found in other, more detailed and better resources. For example, a huge part of the information to be found in this book comes virtually word for word out of *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*. I suppose some credit must be given to Professor Hinson for having sat down and done the tedious task of paging through Cobbett's, Grove's and other sources to put together his reference book. Nonetheless it remains almost entirely derivative and, as Mr. Brickman correctly notes, hopelessly incomplete when it comes to the wider chamber music literature.

Allen Morton  
Seattle, Washington

## Franz Mittler's Chamber Music To Be Published By Edition Silvertrust

A recent recording (CPO CD#777 329 to be reviewed in our next issue) of *String Quartet Nos. 1 and 3*, by the Viennese composer Franz Mittler (1893-1970) stimulated a great deal of interest among Cobbett Members with several requests for parts. However the works were never published. I am pleased to announce that Edition Silvertrust will publish the World Premiere edition of the quartets and his piano trio. *String Quartet No.1* will be available later this year, the other two works in early 2009—editor

## Cobbett Member Morton Raff

We regret to report that we have learned that long time Cobbett Association Member Morton Raff has recently passed away. Mr Raff was a great enthusiast of the wider literature and was particularly intrigued by the chamber works of the composer whose last name he shared: Joachim Raff.

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

# Henry Holden Huss' Piano Trio

by R.H.R. Silvertrust



A few years ago, I came across a CD entitled *American Romance*. (Albany Troy #692) On it were works for piano trio I had never heard of by three American composers unknown to me: Mortimer Wilson, Adolph Foerster and Henry Holden Huss. The works were performed by The Rawlins Piano Trio. I was particularly taken by Huss' **Piano Trio in d minor, Op.23**. After hearing it, I immediately wondered how I might get the parts to the trio so that I could play it. Having had the same reaction frequently upon hearing other works, and then having attempted, mostly in vain, to obtain the music, I was not particularly optimistic I would ever get the parts to this piano trio. A close reading of the fairly detailed notes, which accompanied the recording, disclosed that the work had never been published. This would have meant the performers had played it off of a copy of the manuscript, the location of

which was not disclosed by the jewel box notes. Obviously, the place to start the search was by attempting to contact the performers. Surprisingly, contacting performers yields results far less often than one might suspect. It is true it has become easier to contact performing groups than in the past, since many have websites with email addresses. Yet, more often than not, one receives no response or a vague answer. For example, not that long ago, I attempted to locate a particular work which not only I, but several other people, wished to obtain. I emailed the performers and eventually received a rather opaque answer. They could not remember where they had found the manuscript, nor did they seem to know where their copies of it were, because it had been "quite a while" since they had recorded it. In this instance, it was all of 3 years since the recording had been made.

However, in the case of the Huss Piano Trio, the fates smiled upon me. Shortly after sending an email to John Thomson, the violinist of the Rawlins Piano Trio, and explaining to him that I

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Alexander Glazunov's Last Four String Quartets-Part 2

By Moise Shevitovsky

*The first part of this article presented an overview of the composer's life and discussed his first three string quartets.*



Glazunov's first two string quartets were written during the time he was studying with Rimsky-Korsakov and in many places certainly reflect this fact. His Third String Quartet, *Quartet Slav*, was composed nearly a decade later and, though partially programmatic, already shows characteristics which could be said to be his and not his teacher's. I omitted a discussion of his Five Novellettes, Op.15. I will discuss them and his other occasional works in the final

part of this article.

**String Quartet No.4 in a minor, Op.64** was composed four years after No.3 and was published around 1899. It was dedicated to his friend, the prominent music critic Vladimir Stasov. The opening movement, *Andante-Allegro*, begins with a series of very sad chords (see right), which are made more dramatic by a surprise accent and downward chromatic passages. Glazunov related that when he played the work for Stasov on the piano, his friend exclaimed, upon hearing the opening chords, "What has happened to you? These are cries of despair." It is

*Andante. ♩ = 84.*

1st Violin  
2nd Violin  
Viola  
Cello

*f* *dim.* *f* *dim.* *f* *dim.* *f* *dim.*

*p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

*(Continued on page 9)*

## The Wind Quintets Of Franz Danzi—Part II

by Krzysztof Kowalski

Franz Danzi (1763-1826) was not a wind player. He was a cellist and later a music director. Yet, his best known chamber music compositions are for winds. And among these are his three sets of wind quintets, Opp. 56, 67 and 68. Danzi came to try his hand at composing for this ensemble when he became aware of the tremendous popularity of works for this combination of instruments by the Austro-Bohemian composer Anton Reicha. The Opus 56 set of three quintets, discussed in the first part of my article, were by no means the first time Danzi had written for wind instruments. He had, for example, written works for flute and strings, bassoon and strings and for piano and winds. But the Op.56 quintets were his first wind quintets. Danzi dedicated the Opus 56 to Reicha, who was living in Paris, and had the works published in that city, where such works were very popular, rather than in Germany. In the event, the Opus 56 quintets were very popular indeed, perhaps even more popular

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## At The Doublebar



It's always exciting to come across appealing new works. Nowadays, this usually happens by hearing a CD and not in the concert hall. The excitement pales, however, when one thinks about somehow playing music. Mostly the these works have either

never been published or have been long out of print. Sometimes, there is a happy ending as in the case of Henry Holden Huss' Piano Trio, or Albert Nepomuceno's string quartets or Franz Mittler's chamber music. But, more often than not, one comes to a dead end, especially in the case of previously unpublished music.

In one instance, I tracked down the manuscript to a piece I wished to play. It was moldering away in a university library in Europe. Perhaps I might have obtained a copy had I not mentioned that I wished to publish it and make it available to the public. I thought making mention of this would help get the copy—sometimes it does—but in this instance, it had the opposite result. Despite the fact that the music was in the public domain and that the library had no plans to see it published, they immediately refused my request for a copy. In another case, again from a recording, I learned of the chamber music of a little known German composer (who was born in the late 1880's and died in 1970—I have omitted his name because there is still some small chance I may get the music). The recording was almost 20 years old and virtually unobtainable when I came across it last year. I contacted the author of the jacket notes, a professor living in a large city in the former DDR and expressed my interest in the works, again stating I would like to make them available to the public. The professor was delighted and enthusiastic. He told me that he had a graduate student who was doing a doctoral thesis on some of the composer's works and perhaps intended to make a score of the two in which I was interested. I contacted the student, and dollar signs must have flashed before his eyes for he refused to make me a copy but would sell me a hand written score for an outrageous price, a price I could not expect to recoup in my lifetime.—Ray Silvertrust,

## Franz Danzi's Wind Quintets

(Continued from page 3)

than Danzi had hoped. This no doubt encouraged him to produce further works in this genre.

Two years later, in 1823, he was ready with two sets of three quintets, his Opp. 67 and 68. Because the Op.56 Quintets had become quite popular in the German lands, Danzi did not take the precaution of having them published in Paris, as he had for Op.56. Instead he turned to the famous firm of Johann Andre, situated in Offenbach. They had gained fame by publishing many of Mozart's works and had already published many of Danzi's other works

It would be unreasonable to expect that these remaining six works would somehow show advancement over the earlier quintets. In the first place they were composed not that long after the first set. Secondly, Danzi was not great innovator like Beethoven or Schubert. His style did not greatly change during the last half of his life. And lastly, since the Op.56 quintets had been extremely popular, why would one wish to tamper with a successful formula? Hence what we find are enjoyable, tuneful works which present no extraordinary technical demands and yet are written well enough to be performed in the concert hall. One can clearly sense, however, that these works are "Hausmusik" in the best sense of the word. Each of the Op.67 has four movements and in each case, the first movement is nearly as long as the last three together.

**Op.67 No.1 in G Major** opens with an *Allegretto* which while unassuming nonetheless flows along quite effortlessly. After a short very short introduction, the main theme is presented by the oboe and then quickly passed from voice to voice.

The thematic material of second movement, *Andante con moto*, (example on right) is the most memorable. The first theme, more or less presented by all of the voices, though stately, is characterized by forward movement. The second theme, given in alternation to the flute and oboe, breathes unexpected excitement into the mix.



The musical score is for the first movement of Op.67 No.1 in G Major. It is written for a wind quintet: Flöte (Flute), Oboe, Klarinette in A (Clarinet in A), Horn in D, and Fagott (Bassoon). The score is in 3/4 time and G major. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a tempo marking of *Allegretto* and a dynamic of *dolce*. The second system shows the main theme being introduced by the oboe, with dynamics of *f* and *p*. The third system shows the theme being passed to other instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *f*. The fourth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The fifth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The sixth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The seventh system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The eighth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The ninth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The tenth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The eleventh system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The twelfth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The thirteenth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The fourteenth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The fifteenth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The sixteenth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The seventeenth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The eighteenth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The nineteenth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*. The twentieth system shows the theme being played by all instruments, with dynamics of *f p* and *p*.

A *Minuetto Allegretto* follows. Though pleasant, it is unremarkable. The trio section provides no special contrast and the whole thing is over almost before it begins.

The finale, *Allegretto moderato*, is a kind of playful rondo (Example on right). The thematic material is stronger but the melody is primarily to be found in the flute part, while the others are only occasionally given a snippet. Toward the end, the bassoon is given several long runs.

All in all, this is a pleasant work but not quite on the same level as the Op.56.

**Op.67 No.2 in e minor** though it is marked *Allegro vivo*, does not sound *vivo* to begin with because it is mostly written with long values. The first strain is presented in a massed choral fashion. However as the movement develops, the pace quicken because Danzi switches to notes of shorter value and the style changes to pure concertante with short dashing solos being given to each instrument.

Minuetto allegretto ♩ = 66

The second movement, *Larghetto*, begins softly in the lower three voices. The melody is ordinary, the tempo probably is best played *moderato*. It is only with the second theme, a lovely solo in the oboe, that the music rises above the ordinary.

As if to surprise us, Danzi tosses off a really fine *Minuetto, allegretto*. The appealing main theme, given only to the flute (example on left) carries the music forward with a real sense of excitement. In the trio, which provides good contrast, each voice is given a solo.

The finale, *Allegretto*, does not disappoint. It begins with a sprightly tune in the oboe (example on right). The development is very fine and brings all of the voices in together.

Allegretto ♩ = 66

While this work is written in the minor, one could in no way style it as dark or mournful. It is almost as bright as the G Major Quintet. However, I think given the nature of the sound character of a wind quintet, it is easier to write stronger material in a minor key than in the major. At least it appears so in the case of Danzi.

The finale quintet of the set, **Op.67 No.3 in E flat Major** begins, somewhat surprisingly, *Larghetto*. However, it turns out that this is merely a lengthy introduction. The use of downward scale passages gives the feeling that something, though probably nothing portentous, is going to happen. What eventually happens is an *Allegro moderato* which, it must be admitted, has a threadbare main theme (on right) and although the part writing is fairly equally distributed and there are lots of interesting flourishes, in the end, we are left with music which, despite Danzi's best efforts, cannot in any way be called impressive. While clever compositional touches can often heighten the overall effect of good music, rarely can they alleviate the effects of weak thematic material. Making matters worse, this movement is as long as the others combined. Perhaps he could have slipped it past us if it had been half as long as it is. To add insult to injury, the ineffectual introductory *Larghetto* is brought in as a coda to conclude things.

25 Allegro moderato  $\text{♩} = 76$

31

The *Andante moderato* which serves as the second movement appears to be much better although in reality it is only slightly better than ordinary. In format, it resembles the slow movement to Op.67 No.1. It begins with a stately main theme that is of processional tempo and then gives way to a short oboe solo which is quickly taken over by the flute and never relinquished.

Flöte

Oboe

Klarinette in B

Horn in Es

Fagott

Nothing more plainly indicates that Danzi's melodic gifts had, at least temporarily, deserted him than this *Minuetto allegro*. You can draw your own conclusions from the example on the left. Thankfully, the whole movement, including the trio, is just over 50 measures.

After such a movement, one's hopes are not particularly raised in expectation of a good finale, but this is exactly what Danzi produces. The *Allegretto* which concludes this quintet has for its main theme an engaging melody. The part-writing and development is rather good, although the clarinet is placed in "roodle-doodle" mode on a number of occasions. This movement is as good as anything in Op.56 but given the other three movements, I cannot see it being performed in concert, nor would I make it my first choice for an evening of wind quintets at home.

The Op.67 quintets have not appeared in concert or on disk as frequently as the Op.56 simply because they are not as strong as those works. I will discuss Danzi's final three wind quintets in the next issue of *The Journal*.

# Henry Holden Huss' Piano Trio *(continued from page three)*

would like to publish it, I received a helpful answer. He was not only delighted that I, too, found the trio a wonderful work, but also was prepared to make copies of the manuscript for me. Not long after, I received a thick bundle in the mail—a copy of the copy off of which the Rawlins Piano Trio had recorded the work.

It turned out to be a huge manuscript, complete with copious markings and crossing outs which the composer, and most probably various performers, had made. I handed it over, along with the recording, to my son Skyler to begin work on it. I would have been hard pressed to find someone better-suited to this task. Skyler is not only a fine violinist who plays the piano, but is also an expert in the use of the music notation software program Sibelius, having previously used it to create several other world premiere editions for us. As work progressed, we saw that the manuscript often had several options for a passage, none of which were crossed out nor in any way indicated to be the one the composer seemed to prefer. Even the recording failed on occasion to shed any light on a solution due to the density of the scoring. And since the performers had made such a convincing performance, it only seemed logical to see if they would be prepared to help us solve some of the problems posed by the manuscript. Again, they graciously agreed. After two months of work over the summer of 2007, we sent off draft copies of the parts to John Thomson and his colleagues in the Rawlins Piano Trio, who at present are in residence at the University of South Dakota. Because of their heavy teaching loads and concert performance schedule, we did not receive the parts back until May of 2008. The choices made by the trio were then integrated into the parts and Edition Silvertrust was able to present the world premiere edition of this first rate work at the end of June 2008.

Henry Holden Huss (1862-1953) was born in Newark, New Jersey and grew up in New York City. His father was an organ and piano teacher, who had emigrated from Germany in the revolutionary year of 1848. Henry began to study piano and harmony with his father when he was six. In 1882, his father sent him to Munich to study at the Royal Bavarian Music Academy. There, he had piano, organ and composition lessons, the latter two with Josef Rheinberger. Huss graduated with honors and returned to the United States in 1885. For some years thereafter, he toured as a concert pianist, often performing his own piano concerto—perhaps his best known work—with such orchestras as the Boston Symphony and the New York Philharmonic as well as several others across the country. At the time, critics regularly included him among the leading piano virtuosi before the American public. All the while, he continued composing. No less an authority than John Knowles Paine (1839-1906), then considered the dean of American composers and the leading teacher of composition in the U.S., regarded Huss as the best young American composer. Despite his success and the high opinion in which he was held by the music authorities of the time, Huss found it difficult to get his works played and published. Then as now, those responsible for programming the works to appear on concert series almost always opted to go with the “tried and true” compositions of the famous. Huss’ star declined further after the First World War, when composers of Romantic era music were increasingly regarded as old-fashioned by comparison to the new music being written by composers such as Stravinsky, not to mention those of

the Second Vienna School. Unable to find publishers for most of his music or a sufficient number of concert bookings to sustain a performing career, Huss was forced to earn his living as a piano teacher, although he continued composing throughout his life. His biographer, Gary Greene (*Henry Holden Huss: An American Composer's Life*), lists two string quartets, several instrumental sonatas and another piano trio among Huss’ chamber music compositions.

Piano Trio in d minor, Op.23, dates from 1886, the year after Huss returned from Germany. Dedicated to his famous teacher Josef Rheinberger, the trio has been subtitled *The Munich*. Greene believes the trio received perhaps as many as a dozen concert performances, usually with well-known string players such as Franz Kneisel. Its last known public performance was said to have occurred 1892. After hearing the work, I found this to be truly incredible, given its excellence. It almost certainly would have seen the light of day had Huss been a German composer and it might even have entered the front rank of the romantic trio literature. Of course, readers of *The Journal* no doubt understand all too well how something like this could happen.

In four movements, the massive opening *Allegro molto appassionata* has for its main subject a theme of destiny which carries everything before it in a dramatic and tempestuous fashion.

The image shows the first movement of the Piano Trio in d minor, Op. 23, by Henry Holden Huss. The title is "Allegro molto appassionata". The score is in 3/4 time and begins with a piano (p) dynamic. The first system shows the piano part with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand, with an octave sign (8) below. The second system continues the piano part with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand, with an octave sign (8) below. The third system shows the piano part with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand, with an octave sign (8) below. The score is presented in three systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

*(Continued on page 8)*

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The beautiful second theme is quite lyrical, while the passionate coda is one of the most thrilling you will find anywhere.

Musical score for measures 223-230, marked **Presto**. The score is in 3/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic texture with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The piano part has a prominent bass line with frequent octaves.

Musical score for measures 231-240, marked **Più mosso**. The tempo is slower than the previous section. The piano part features a more melodic and harmonic texture, with a focus on sustained chords and moving lines.

Musical score for measures 241-250. The piano part continues with a rich harmonic texture, featuring many chords and a strong bass line.

The second movement, *Intermezzo, romance*, has an exceptionally beautiful melody for its first subject, originally presented by the cello. Full of tranquility, there seems to me to be an undeniable American quality to this melody, having as it does, a sense of optimism and bounty.

Musical score for the first subject of the *Intermezzo*, marked **Larghetto molto tranquillo**. The tempo is slow and the mood is peaceful. The piano part features a simple, elegant melody with a clear harmonic structure.

It is harmonized wonderfully. In the middle section, the opening theme to the first movement returns in the guise of a dramatically toned-down march. It lends an aura of yearning and tension which is dissipated by the peaceful ending.

The third movement, marked *Scherzo*, is more of a cross between an upbeat march and an intermezzo.

Musical score for the beginning of the *Scherzo*, marked **Allegro molto vivace**. The tempo is fast and the mood is lively. The piano part features a rhythmic, march-like texture with a strong bass line.

Musical score for measures 10-17. The piano part features a melodic line with a clear harmonic structure, while the cello part provides a rhythmic accompaniment.

Musical score for measures 18-27. The piano part continues with a melodic line, while the cello part provides a rhythmic accompaniment.

Only of moderate tempo, the trio section is a bit slower and creates a valedictory mood.

The huge last movement, simply marked *Finale*, opens with an introduction in which the main theme from the second movement reappears.

It gives way to a buoyant *Allegro vivace*, full of the spirit of 19th century American "can do" sentiment.

Musical score for the beginning of the *Finale*, marked **Allegro vivace**. The tempo is fast and the mood is lively. The piano part features a rhythmic, march-like texture with a strong bass line.

Musical score for measures 22-37 of the *Finale*. The piano part continues with a rhythmic, march-like texture, while the cello part provides a melodic accompaniment.

But gradually, we hear many of the other themes from the earlier movements. The finale, in fact, is a very fine example of cyclism which was then popular, especially among composers such as Wagner and César Franck and their followers. The exciting and grandiose conclusion to the trio is entirely fitting for a work of this magnitude.

Naturally, we believe that this is a work which deserves to be heard in concert and would certainly be an adornment to the repertoire of any piano trio presenting it to the public. Experienced amateurs will not find it beyond them and we think will derive great enjoyment from playing it. Parts are available from Edition Silvertrust ([www.editionsilvertrust.com](http://www.editionsilvertrust.com)).



*Allegro.*  $\text{♩} = 108.$

almost impossible to determine where the Andante leaves off and the Allegro begins, but the Andante contains the seeds of both the main theme to the Allegro as well as the second subject.

The main theme (left) is both powerful and passionate, while the second theme more lyrical. As the music progresses the heavy mood and character of the music changes as it shifts from minor into major.

unquestioned claim for inclusion into the standard repertoire. The parts are available from M.P. Belaiev.

**String Quartet No.5 in d minor, Op.70**

appeared in 1900. It opens with a doleful introduction, *Andante*.

The main theme (above) is presented in the form of a fugue and first stated by the viola. The mood and quality of the writing reminds

one of Tchaikovsky. The second subject (on right), marked *dolce*, is initially entrusted to the first violin. The movement is completed by a magnificent stretto which carries all before it.

The slow movement, an *Andante*, is a fine example of Glazunov's mature style. Though it starts with an aura of blissful peace, as the movement progresses there are waves of surging energy followed by releases which softly die away. Frequent changes of tempo and dynamics also create a sense of unease.

Next is a brilliant and exciting *Scherzo vivace*, very Russian in flavor, it is a kind of *perpetuum mobile*.

*Vivace* ( $\text{♩} = 120$ )

The *Scherzo allegretto* which follows provides a tremendous contrast to the preceding Allegro. The playful main theme (above) brings

to mind the Scherzo of Beethoven's Op.18 No.4. And, though simple, it is nonetheless handled with great cleverness. Initially presented by the first

violin, the development section gives all four voices a chance to participate equally. The trio section (left), with its rich melodic content, provides a very effective contrast to the scherzo.

The third movement is an *Adagio*. It is contemplative and quiet and Glazunov takes great care to preserve the tranquil and poetic quality of the music from start to finish.

The short trio section has a lovely melody, also quite Russian, given to the cello. Played by itself, this movement would make a tremendous encore. It really is perfect in every way.

The finale, an *Allegro*, begins with a series of desolate chords, which though not an exact quote, are very similar to those of the opening of the first movement. The intent seems clearly to create a cyclic work, though perhaps not so strictly as Cesar Franck. The gloomy mood quickly gives way to a series of flowing and bright melodies, some energetic and dance-like, others lyrical and poetic.

The finale, *Allegro*,

as the introduction to the first movement, introduces the gay main theme in fugal form. Again one suspects that the theme is taken from a folk dance. The music is bright in mood, even playful, however, it must be admitted that it requires very clean execution to be effective.

String Quartet No.4 has none of the defects we find in the first three works. It is truly an inspired creation which can make an

The Fifth Quartet is, in my opinion, equally as fine as the Fourth, and certainly meriting concert performance. Parts from Belaiev.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

Twenty years were to pass before Glazunov was to compose another string quartet. And these were, of course, eventful years in Russia. First were the turbulent years of the stormy failed revolution of 1905, followed by constant unrest, then the outbreak of the First World War which culminated in the Russian Revolution. By 1920, Lenin was leading the newly constituted Soviet Union. These were hard years for everyone then in Russia. Glazunov was still at the Conservatory and was generally regarded as the foremost living Russian composer. Some years before, a group of players had formed a quartet taking Glazunov's name as their own and dedicating themselves to performing his works. It was to the Glazunov String Quartet that the composer dedicated his **String Quartet No.6 in B flat Major, Op.106** which was composed in 1920-21. Although in this work we find the tonalities are sometimes slightly more advanced than before, mainly through the use of chromaticism, by and large, it represents no real advance over his previous two quartets. The opening *Allegro* has for its main theme a happy, somewhat bombastic, melody whose plodding advance is lightened by quick downward chromatic passages which interrupt the proceedings. Of particular note is a stunning cello solo which creates the dramatic climax of the movement. Perhaps the most striking and memorable movement is the second, *Intermezzo in the Russian Style*. The intermezzo integrates two very Russian themes. The first is march-like while the second recalls the opening of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. For the most part, Glazunov uses a light touch much in keeping with the traditional intermezzo. Particularly telling use is made of pizzicato throughout. A slow movement, *Andante piangevole*, follows. The sad and lethargic main theme is presented in fugal form. Here the use of chromaticism is particularly prominent and some of the more advanced—at least for Glazunov—tonalities are created through its use. The subdued mood, throughout this movement, is never lightened. The finale is a *Theme with Variations—Allegro*. Composers who have attempted to end their works with this kind of structure rarely make an unqualified success of it. It seems that theme and variations are better suited to middle movements. It can even be argued that Beethoven in Op.74 and Schubert in D.887 did not entirely succeed. In any event, this is a massive movement. The theme, while not threadbare, on the other hand, cannot be styled as particularly memorable. And unfortunately, the variations, up until almost the very end, do not present a great deal of contrast. While different techniques, which might have served to create good contrast, are employed, because most of the variations are of moderate tempo, their effect is muted. It is only toward the end of this movement, which takes a quarter of an hour to play, that Glazunov hits his stride with a lively scherzo-like theme which he turns into a coda. In sum, this is not at all a bad work. The melodic material is sufficient to support the composer's efforts, but it must be admitted that a certain inspiration and appeal, so obvious in Nos. 4 and 5, are missing here.

After leaving Russia and finally settling in Paris, Glazunov wrote two more works for string quartet. The first, in 1928, was a one movement *Elegy in Memory of M.P. Belaiev* and the second was **String Quartet No.7 in C Major, Op.107**. This was composed two years later in 1930. Each of the four movements has a programmatic title: Remembrance of the Past, Breath of Spring, In a Mysterious Forest, and Russian Festivity. While all this sounds quite promising, sadly, this is a disappointing work, a definite

step backward from No.6 not to mention Nos. 4 and 5. Many of the same problems which were apparent in the first two quartets are to be found here, despite Glazunov's best efforts. Remembrance of the Past (translated by the Soviet State Music Publishers as *Recollection of the Past*) begins with an *Adagio* introduction, not particularly slow, tinged with sadness. It is presented as in many of his other works in the form of a fugue, this time with the cello given the lead.

Perhaps the mood could be described as the feeling one might have waiting at a bus station after having had a nice time at a party, and feeling a little sad that it could not still be going on. The main part of the movement, *Allegro giocoso*, though brighter and with a lively melody, nonetheless fails to impress because of the ordinariness of the material.

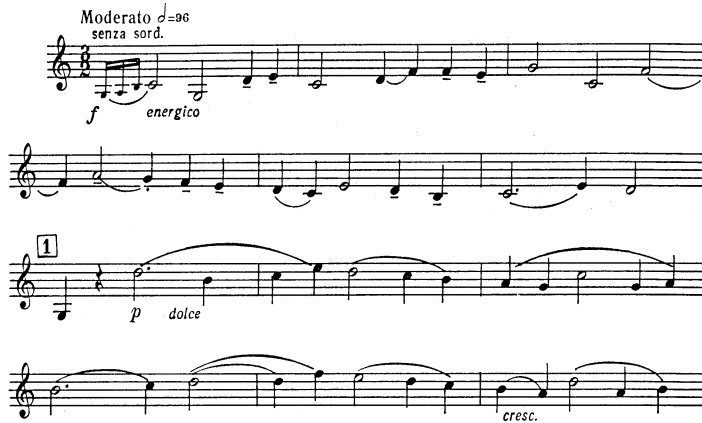
There are brief episodes where the music builds in volume and density of scoring, becoming orchestral, much in the way that *Quartet Slav* does, but because the material does not convince, the effect is not fetching. Shortening this lengthy movement would have made these faults less egregious.

The second movement, *The Breath of Spring, Andante affetuoso*, has for its main theme a sweet, somewhat cloying, melody which appears to wander aimlessly without leading to any kind of climax. Though not obvious and not so named, it appears to be a set of variations.

An *Allegro scherzando, In a Mysterious Forest*, comes next. As one would expect, it is livelier but in no way captivating, except for the opening measures of the theme,

which unfortunately, despite a mood evoking dancing forest sprites, soon becomes quite monotonous.

The finale, *Moderato, Russian Festivity*, unfortunately falls far short of the effect created by a similar finale in *Quartet Slav*. Again the culprit is to be found in the melodic material. The opening theme, which for a while is played in unison, is dignified but unmemorable.

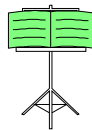


Heavy scoring, particularly in the lower voices, is employed with a mixed effect, creating a loud, unfocused sound some what like an organ. To sum up, although the execution and development of the thematic material is far superior to his first two quartets, the lackluster melodies and a certain weariness mar the outcome.

In conclusion, I recommend Quartet Nos.4-5 to professionals and amateurs alike without reservation. They belong in the concert hall and will be a joy to players and listeners alike. They stand at the acme of his accomplishments. *Quartet Slav* (No.3) is almost as good and deserves serious investigation. Some of you will find No.6 to your taste. It is by no means a bad work but suffers by comparison following as it does on the footsteps of Nos. 4 and 5. The first two quartets are more problematic. I find No.1 more appealing, with its youthful *joie de vivre* compensating for many of its faults. No.2, I cannot in good conscience recommend.

Glazunov wrote a number of other fine works for string quartet such as his Op.15 Novellettes and Op.35 Suite, not to mention individual movements for combined works. I will deal with these in the last part of my article in the next issue of *The Journal*.

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## New Recordings



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

### String Quartets

Johann Georg ALBRECHTSBERGER (1736-1809) 6 Quartets, Op.7, Hungaroton 32495 / Jon ASGEIRSSON (1928-) No.3, SMK 32 / Lennox BERKELEY (1903-89) Nos. 1-3, Naxos 8.570415 / Luigi BOCCHERINI (1743-1805) 6 Qts, Op. 2, Stradivarius 33758 / Frank BRIDGE (1879-1941) Nos.3-4, Lyrita 302 / Elliot CARTER (1908-) Nos.1 & 5, Naxos 8.559362 / Luiz de FREITAS BRANCO (1890-1955) Qt Lyra, Numerica 1152 / Heinrich von HERZOGENBERG (1843-1900) No.2, Op. 42 No.1, Audite 97.504 / Herbert HOWELLS (1892-1983) Fantasy Qt, Op.25, Lyrita 292 / Franz MITTLER (1893-1970) Nos.1 & 3, CPO 777 329 / Nikolai MYASKOVSKY (1881-1950) Nos. 4-6 & 7-8, Northern Flowers 9951 & 9952 / MANUEL PONCE (1882-1948): String Quartet, 4 Miniatures for String Quartet, Urtext JBCC 149 / Ferdinand RIES (1784-1838) Nos.2 & 20, CPO 777227 / Anton TITZ (1742-1810) 4 String Qts, Profil 06032

### Strings Only-Not Quartets

Luigi BOCCHERINI (1743-1805) 6 Quintets, Op.20, Brilliant Classics 93566 / MANUEL PONCE (1882-1948) String Trio, Petite Suite dans le style ancien for

String Trio, Urtext JBCC 149

### Piano Trios

Frank BRIDGE (1879-1941) No.2, Lyrita 302 / Muzio CLEMENTI (1752-1832) 9 Sonatas for Piano Trio, Opp.27, 29,& 35, Brilliant Classics 93654 / Robert FUCHS (1847-1927) 7 Phantasiestucke for Vln, Vla & Pno, Acte Prealable 166 / Giorgia GHEDINI (1892-1965) 2 Ricerari, Stradivarius 33395 / Hans HUBER (1852-1921) Sonata for 2 Vlns & Pno, Acte Prealable 159 / Bohuslav MARTINU (1890-1959): Sonatina for 2 Vlns and Piano, Harmonia Mundi 907444 / Arnold MENDELSSOHN (1855-1933) Trio for 2 Vlns & Pno, Op.76, Acte Prealable 159 / Darius MILHAUD (1892-1974) Sonata for 2 Vlns & Piano, Op. 15, Harmonia Mundi 907444 / Moritz MOSZKOWSKI (1854-1925) Suite for 2 Vlns & Pno, Op.71 Acte Prealable 159 / Sveinbjorn SVEINBJÖRNSSON (1847-1927) Trio Nos. 1 & 2, Naxos 8.570460

### Piano Quartets, Quintets & Sextets

Jon ASGEIRSSON (1928-) Quintet, SMK 32 / Frank BRIDGE (1879-1941) Phantasy Quartet, Lyrita 302 / Louise HERITTE-VIARDOT (1841-1918) 3 Qts, Opp.9, 11 & WoO Spanish, ARS38468 / Louis Ferdinand HOHENZOLLERN (1772-1806) Qt in Eb, Op.5, Musicaphon 56980 / Herbert HOWELLS (1893-1983) Qt in a,

Op.21, Lyrita 292 / Hans HUBER (1852-1921) Quartet in E, Op.117 & Quintet No.1, Op.111, MGB CD 6257 / Vincent d'INDY (1851-1931) Quintet Op.81, Timpani 1C1119 / Friedrich KIEL (1821-85) Quartet Nos.1-3, CPO 777 076 / Bohuslav MARTINU (1891-1959) Quartet, Dorian 93261 / Vitezslav NOVAK Quartet in c, Op.7, Dorian 93261 / Josef SUK (1874-1935) Quartet in a, Op.7, Dorian 93261 /

### Winds & Strings

Herbert HOWELLS (1892-1983) Quintet for Cln & Str Qt, Op.31, Lyrita 292

### Winds, Strings & Piano

Muzio CLEMENTI (1752-1832) 9 Sonatas for Fl, Vc & Pno, Opp.21, 22,& 32, Brilliant Classics 93654 Johann Nepomuk HUMMEL (1778-1837): Septet in D Minor for Pno, Fl, Ob, Hn, Vla, Vc and Kb, Op.74, Pavane ADW 7517

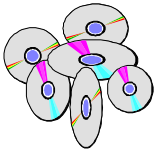
### Piano & Winds

None this Issue

### Winds Only

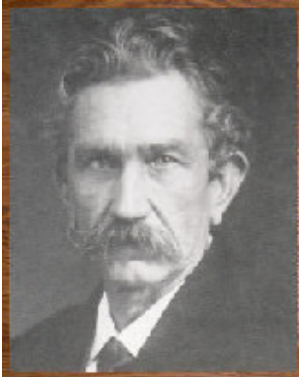
Jon ASGEIRSSON (1928-) Quintet No.2, SMK 32 / Vincent d'INDY (1851-1931) Chanson et danses for Flute, Oboe, 2 Clarinets, 2 Bassoons and Horn, Op. 50, Timpani 1C1119 / Ignaz PLEYEL (1757-1831) 2 Wind Sextets & 2 Wind Octets, MD&G 304 0460

Diskology: Hear Sound-bites to These CD Reviews On Our Website—[www.cobbettassociation.org](http://www.cobbettassociation.org)



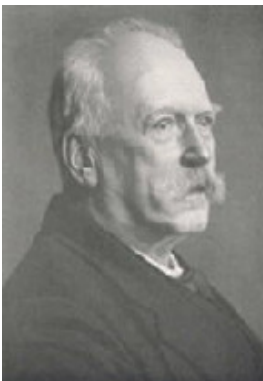
## Three Trios for Two Violins and Piano by Hans Huber, Arnold Mendelssohn and Moritz Moszkowski

Trios for 2 violins and piano are far and few between, especially first rate ones. Thus those who are fond of this combination should take note of **Acte Prealable CD #159** on which three really excellent works for this combination are recorded.



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

inspired at first by Schumann and Brahms and then later by Liszt and Richard Strauss. He was widely considered Switzerland's leading composing during the last quarter of the 19th and first decade of the 20th century. He composed in virtually every genre and many of his works were, for long years, part of various repertoires and the only works by a Swiss composer that were regularly performed outside of Switzerland. His **Op.135 Trio in B flat Major**, known as **Sonata for Two Violins and Piano** dates from 1913 and is without doubt one of the finest Romantic era works for this combination. It opens with a brief *Maestoso* introduction which leads seamlessly to the calm and lyrical main section *Allegro tranquillo*. After an interlude in the minor, a joyous and triumphant second theme appears. An extraordinarily fine *Menuetto* in the minor comes next. It retains its dance-like quality, while at the same time exploring the new tonalities of the late Romantic period. The third movement, *Romanze, adagio ma non troppo*, begins in a highly romantic vein with a warm, affectionate melody. The second theme though just as romantic provides a very fine contrast. The finale, *Allegro non troppo*, begins with a brief whirlwind introduction before it is swept away by a gorgeous main theme which rushes forward with a sense of joy and purpose.



The second work on disk is by Mendelssohn, that is **Arnold Mendelssohn** (1855-1933), a distant relation to Felix. His early schooling took place in Berlin and Danzig. His formal music training was at the Royal Church Institute of Berlin where he studied organ, piano and composition with Friedrich Kiel. He subsequently worked as an organist at churches in Bonn and Bielefeld, eventually teaching at the Cologne Conservatory where Paul Hindemith was among his many students. He composed nearly

300 works in virtually every genre from opera to chamber music, although he was perhaps best known for his church music. He was widely respected as a composer of the Neo-Romantic Style

and his music was frequently performed until it was outlawed by the Nazi Regime, after which it lay forgotten for many years and is only now being rediscovered. The **Trio for 2 Violins and Piano in a minor, Op.76**, composed in 1917, is an excellent example of the Neo Romantic Style. The opening *Allegro* virtually thrusts forth with an explosion of sound before the dramatic, but more lyrical theme is fully fleshed out. The second movement, *Adagio*, begins with a long series of somber chord progressions in the piano which do not prepare the listener for the bright question and answer duet which the violins introduce before settling into a lovely romantic *pas de deux* that is developed with an unusual neo-romantic harmonic accompaniment in the piano. The third movement, *Un poco vivace*, is a clever, rhythmically interesting scherzo. The superb finale, *Sostenuto, piu allegro*, is clearly the high-point of the trio. It begins with a neo-baroque, slow introduction. The allegro opens in a declamatory fashion and leads to an exciting theme with considerable forward motion. The lyrical second melody is introduced in masterly fashion and keeps things moving right along.

The third and final work on disk, **Suite for 2 Violins and Piano in g minor, Op.71**, is by **Moritz Moszkowski** (1854-1925). Moszkowski was born in Breslau, Prussia (now Wroclaw, Poland). He studied music in Breslau, Dresden and Berlin. Not only was he a brilliant and prominent concert pianist, but also was a respected conductor, a fine composer and a first-rate teacher. Among his many students were Thomas Beecham, Frank Damrosch, Josef Hofmann and Joaquin Turina. The Suite for 2 Violins & Piano was immediately hailed by critics



as a spectacular and brilliant work and for many years it remained one of Moszkowski's best known works before sadly disappearing. Recognizing its excellence, Moszkowski received requests from all quarters to also make a version of the suite for standard piano trio. This he did, which helped it reach a wider audience. The nature of the work can be gleaned right from the opening measures of the first movement, *Allegro energico*. Gorgeous chordal double stopping in the strings creates a volume of sound hardly imaginable from two instruments. The main theme, romantic and highly attractive, carries all before it. A second theme, just as lovely is more wayward and has a yearning quality to it. The second movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins in the form of a lyrical waltz, charming and elegant. A slow movement, *Lento assai*, comes third. After a brief piano introduction, the strings enter with a lovely, but somewhat sad melody. The music is at once reflective and at the same time graceful. The high-spirited finale, *Molto vivace*, begins with a buoyant and playful subject. The music races along effortlessly until the appearance of the slower and very romantic second subject.

All three of these works would do well on the concert stage and certainly can be recommended to competent amateur players. Parts to each of the trios are available from Edition Silvertrust. A highly recommended CD.

## Georg Ritter: 6 Qts for Bassoon & Strings / Alexander Pössinger: 3 String Trios Two String Quartets (Nos. 1 and 2) by Reinhold Gliere

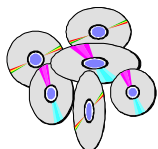
**Georg Wenzel Ritter** (1748-1808) was a bassoon virtuoso as was his father before him. He subsequently succeeded his father as principal bassoonist of the Mannheim Orchestra, then the best in Europe. He made a name for himself as performer, Mozart and J.C. Bach among others wrote with him in mind. His compositions are almost exclusively for his own instrument. His Six Quartets for **Bassoon, Violin, Viola & Cello, Op.1** date from 1779 and were recorded on **Naxos CD #8.570500**. The style reflects the Mannheim school and the works are exclusively in concertante form. Interestingly, each quartet consists of only two movements. The first movement is always an allegro of some sort, while the second is generally titled Rondeau but is not as lively as the first movement. While the string parts, in particular the violin, are not without interest, it is fair to say that these works are mini concertos for the bassoon. But they are not *quatuor brillants*, that is to say they are not show-off pieces for the bassoon. They are chamber music, but like so many other works from this period which combine one wind instrument with either a string trio or quartet, the wind instrument has the bulk of the melodic material. The melodic writing is pleasant and while perhaps not particularly memorable, certainly not pedestrian. These works are enjoyable to hear. Recommended.

You will find little or nothing in English about the Viennese composer **Franz Alexander Pössinger** (1767-1827). When I went to find out more about him than what was provided in the very scanty notes to **Capriccio CD# 67162** I hit a stone wall. Nothing in *The New Grove*, ditto *Grove's 3rd Edition*, ditto the *Oxford Companion to Music*, or the *Harvard Biographical Dictionary* etc., etc. Nor is there any listing for him in English in Wikipedia. There is a short entry in German. Despite this, I had heard of him, which was one of the reasons I bought the CD. Dr. James Whitby, of our Board of Advisors, put me on to him many years ago and I actually own a first (and most likely only) edition of Pössinger's marvelous arrangement for string quartet of Rossini's opera *Tancredi*. Very little of his music has been reprinted which is too bad because the little I have heard is pretty good. Pössinger was born in Vienna and like Schubert lived his entire life there. He made his living as a violinist in the Court Orchestra. He studied composition with Georg Albrechtsberger. Although he wrote several concertos, the bulk of his oeuvre are for chamber ensembles. Widely considered the finest arranger of his time, his arrangements of entire Rossini operas, aria by aria, for flute and string trio were tremendously popular and made his name. In 1807, Beethoven engaged Pössinger to make an arrangement of his Fourth Piano Concerto, before it was even published, for two violins, two violas, cello and piano. There have been no other recordings entirely devoted to his work, although there are at least two other CDs which have one of his many trios on them. The notes, as I said, give virtually no information about the trios, however, I was able to glean the fact that the music was played off copies of parts in the Austrian National Library in Vienna. All three works—**Trio Concertante in E flat Major, Op.36 No.1, Trio Concertante in D Major, Op.36 No.2** and **Serenata in Trio Concertante, Op.10**—as you will note have the word concertante in them, but these are not, by any means, entirely written in a concertante style. And while it is impossible

to date these works with any certainty, my guess, judging from the writing is that the Serenata most likely dates from 1780 to 1790, while the Op.36 trios were composed sometime between 1790 and 1805. The structure and clarity of the writing point to the late classical era but there are also hints of the coming Romantic movement in some of the daring harmonies and fuller writing. Opus 10 is a typical period work of no particular distinction, but the Op.36 trios are very interesting and of a different caliber. While the melodies are by no means extraordinary, Pössinger's treatment of them and his development are very noteworthy. Compared to quartet writing of the same period, trios tended to spread the thematic material more evenly between the voices. Pössinger makes the most of this and does so in a rather unique way that few if any others did. There are frequent changes in register which herald in a reversal of roles. For example, the cello will be suddenly yanked out of the bass clef and find itself playing in the lead, but very high in the violin's register, while the latter assumes the function of the bass on its g string. This results tonally in a very closely set, high arrangement and creates a very unusual instrumental timbre. And quick changes in register often make for a separation of more than two octaves between the voices. It appears that the recording was made on period instruments which I think, in this case, detracts rather than adds. Nonetheless, I would warmly recommend this CD.



If you like Russian chamber music from the Romantic period, then you can hardly do better than the works **Reinhold Gliere** (1875-1956) wrote before the Russian Revolution. A while back, we reviewed a CD of his Third String Sextet and his String Octet, both excellent works. No less fine are his first two string quartets, recorded on **Hungaroton CD 32401**. Gliere was born in Kiev where he began his first musical studies with the famous violin teacher Otakar Sevcik. Later he attended the Moscow Conservatory where he studied with Sergei Taneyev, Anton Arensky and Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov. His superb compositional technique was quickly recognized by his teachers and he won several prizes for his early works, including his First String Sextet which took the prestigious Glinka Prize from a jury consisting of Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazunov and Liadov. Gliere, himself, taught at the Moscow and Kiev conservatories for nearly 40 years. Among his many successful students were Khachaturian, Prokofiev and Minkus. **String Quartet No.1 in A Major, Op.2** dates from 1902. It full of rich melodies, tonally beautiful and plays well. The opening, *Allegro*, is brimming with bold harmonies and almost has an operatic quality to it. A scherzo, *Allegro*, which comes next, is Russian from start to finish. The Theme and Variations, *Andantino*, which comprise the third movement, are not only interesting but extremely well executed, each providing superb contrast. The finale, *Allegro*, is also unmistakably Russian. The second theme is memorable for its dance-like quality. **String Quartet No.2 in g minor, Op.20** was composed four years later. Its opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, is interesting both in the way it is constructed and the development of its



## Two Piano Trios by Arthur Butterworth

### Trios for Clarinet, Cello & Piano by Robert Kahn and Paul Juon

themes, the second of which is based on a lovely Russian folk melody. The *Andante* which follows is very fine quartet writing and highly melodic. (It takes Borodin as its point of departure.) The third movement is a very Russian-sounding *Scherzo*, while the finale, marked *Orientele*, with its exotic melodies evokes the caravansaries and bazaars of Central Asia. Parts to No.1 are available from International, Belaiev, and Edition Silvertrust. No.2 is only available from Edition Silvertrust.



The English composer **Arthur Butterworth** (1923–) (no relation to George Butterworth also a 20th century English composer) was born in Manchester. He studied trumpet, composition and conducting at the Royal Manchester College of Music. He began his career as a trumpet player with several orchestras, eventually turning to conducting. He was music director of the Huddersfield Philharmonic from 1964-93. His early works showed the influence of Hindemith and Vaughn

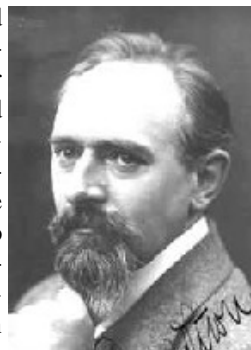
Williams. Critics have found influences of Bax and Sibelius in his works written after 1960. Until 1983, the year in which he composed his **Piano Trio No.1, Op.73**, he had concentrated on orchestral compositions. This work was commissioned by the Cheltenham Music Festival to mark the composer's sixtieth birthday. Butterworth writes, "*The trio in three contrasting movements was inspired by the contemplation in winter of springtimes and summers of the past. In particular, it recalls a radiant summer evening crossing the Baltic. The three movements are linked together, their harmonic language having some affinity with the modal inflections and spirit of Sibelius' Sixth Symphony.*" **Piano Trio No.2, Op.121** was composed in 2004. Butterfield describes the work: "*As in the first trio, there are three contrasting movements, the third being connected without break to the slow second movement. The overall mood is perhaps not so reflectively lyrical as the earlier work but, especially in the last movement, is imbued with a robust energy suggestive of some exhilarating 'cor de chasse'*" I like both trios very much and think them an excellent example of appealing modern chamber music. The second trio is livelier and to my mind makes a strong impression. I would be happy to play these works but so far have been unable to find out who publishes the music. Both were recorded on **Epoch Dutton CD# 7164**—a highly recommended CD.



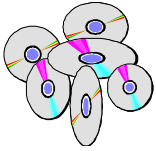
**Robert Kahn** (1865-1951) was born in Mannheim of a well-to-do banking family. He began his studies at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin. There, he got to know and became friends with Joseph Joachim who was the director. It was through both Joachim and his own family that he had a chance to get to know Brahms, who was so impressed with Kahn that he offered to give him composition lessons. However, Kahn was

too overawed to accept. Nevertheless, Brahms did help Kahn informally, and while Kahn's work does, to some extent, show the influence of Brahms, he is an eclectic and independent composer whose music has its own originality. After finishing his studies in Berlin, Kahn, on Brahms' suggestion, went to Munich to study with Joseph Rheinberger. After completing his own studies, he worked for a while as a freelance composer before obtaining a position at the Hochschule in Berlin where he eventually became a professor of piano and composition. His **Trio in g minor for Clarinet, Cello and Piano, Op.45** dates from 1906. Publishers generally, when given a work for this combination, routinely asked the composer to also produce a version for a more common ensemble, such as the standard piano trio. Kahn's publisher made such a request and Kahn complied. Unlike some works which are given an alternate string part for the clarinet---such as those by Brahms---Kahn's trio sounds equally good, though of course different, without the clarinet as with it. The opening *Allegro* has a mellow, but darkly subdued melody given out by the clarinet. But when the cello enters, the passion, which has hidden just below the surface, breaks out. The middle movement, *Allegretto quasi andantino*, is a genial, somewhat dreamy intermezzo. The finale, though marked *Presto*, has many different tempi within it. It begins with a brief, restless introduction before the powerful and dramatic main theme bursts forth. The second subject is calmer and more lyrical. This is a very appealing work.

**Paul Juon** (1872-1940) has been called the link between Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky. In his early music, one can hear the influence of his Russian homeland and schooling. His second period is more cosmopolitan and is in tune with the contemporary Central European trends of the early 20th century. Ultimately, it is hard to characterize his music as Russian or German-Romantic, Modern or Folkloric, because one can find all of these elements in his music. He was the son of Swiss par-



ents who emigrated to Moscow where he was born. Educated at the Moscow Conservatory, he studied violin with Jan Hrimaly and composition with Anton Arensky and Sergei Taneyev. After graduating, he went to Berlin for further composition instruction from Woldemar Bargiel. Juon served as a professor of composition at the prestigious Berlin Hochschule für Musik between 1906 and 1934. The **Four Trio Miniatures** date from 1901 and were originally taken from a series he had written for the piano. Juon recognized the emotional content of these works could be better expressed by wind and string instruments rather than a solo piano and hence rewrote them as a small suite for a piano trio of clarinet or violin, cello or viola, and piano. The first, *Reverie*, is dreamy and reflective, expressing a yearning for things past. The second, *Humoresque*, is a perky dance with a hornpipe middle section that is quicker yet. The title to the third, *Elegy*, gives notice of the sad, but not tragic mood. The last, *Dance Fantastique*, begins as a slow, melancholy waltz, the middle section is quite lively and gay. Both are recorded on **Hera CD 02113B**. Highly recommended Parts to both can be had from Edition Silvertrust

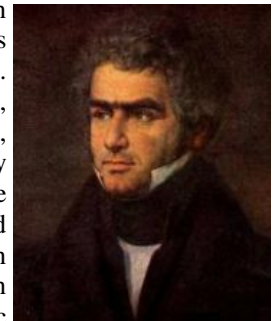


## Hermann Berens' Three String Trios—Op.85 Nos.1-3 Two Piano Trios by Ferdinand Ries: Opus 2 and Opus 143

**Hermann Berens** (1826-1880), is yet another composer for which there is little to be found in English. The jacket notes to **Intim Music CD# 107** provide more information than all other standard sources in English combined. Born in Hamburg, he studied with Carl Reissiger in Dresden before finding employment and settling in Sweden. Berens composed five piano trios, four piano quartets, a string quartet and three string trios. As late as the 1950s, there was no entry for Berens in *Groves* and even the usually reliable Bernhard Päuler, of the Amadeus Verlag, did not see fit to include any biographical information when bringing out a new edition of these works in the late 1970s. (Amadeus Nos. GM648a-c) I wrote an article on them that appeared in *The Journal* back in 1997. Rather than reinventing the wheel, I have reproduced my thoughts, though in an abbreviated form. In the first trio, **Op.85 No.1 in D Major**, Berens does not seem to have got the measure of the medium for which he was writing and in the two outer movements, one feels that the music best belongs on the piano and not with a string trio. In the opening *Allegro vivace*, the problem is given away at once: the violin has too much thematic material while the viola and cello, for the most part, come away with rather thin accompaniment. The *Andante Maestoso*, a Schumannesque funeral march that follows, stands in sharp contrast. This is an excellent movement. The string writing is very good and the composer brings forth rich deep sonorities from the two lower voices. Pizzicato is also used to telling affect. The third movement, *Menuett, Allegro non troppo*, is a charming, chirpy kind of up-dated Mozart with a contrasting trio of slightly darker hue. Although the finale, *Rondo-Allegro non troppo*, is a considerably stronger movement than the first, it is chock-a-block full of fast downward-plunging and upward-rocketing passages that are meant for the piano. The ensemble demands are considerable and the viola part is especially difficult to fit in cleanly. The final 30 measures, though exciting to hear, are fiendishly difficult for a trio to bring off, though probably 'a piece of cake' on the piano. **Op.85 No.2 in c minor** is superb. From the first notes of the opening *Allegro agitato*, which are filled with emotional tension, the composer is able to maintain our interest. The string writing throughout this big, exciting movement is masterful. Especially noteworthy is the soft Mendelssohnian ending, reminiscent of the *Hebrides Overture*. This is followed up by a lovely, primarily pastoral *Andante con moto*. Again we have a very effective movement which is not really slow, although there is a kind of Brahmsian drag to it. The overall pensiveness further reminds one of Brahms. The third movement, *Allegro patetico*, while certainly not overly fast, is full of forceful forward propulsion. The naive trio, provides a striking contrast and features a sweet country dance melody. The exciting finale, *Allegro vivace*, never fails to please the audience, but it makes considerable, though not unviolinistic, technical and ensemble demands on the players. The *Allegro* which opens the last of the set, **Op.85 No.3 in F Major**, is massive both structurally and in thematic material. Though the players are given what, on paper, looks to be the same sort of downward and upward charging passage work found in Op.85 No.1, these are quite suitable and effective for strings. Perhaps a bit long, this movement, filled with melodic yearning, has enough thematic material to clothe an entire trio! Again what follows is not really

a slow movement. Marked *Andante*, the sheer profundity of the writing and the richness and depth of the tonalities give it a somber, brooding and mournful sense of grandeur. The *Allegro scherzando*, which comes next, has a Halloween, witches and goblins, quality, while the finale, *Allegro vivace e con brio*, is a "barn-burner". Played well, it brings down the house, but it requires fairly good players. The technical demands on the violin almost rise to the level of a concerto, while the viola and cello are called upon to react, lightning like, to finish small snippets of phrases as if they were the left hand of the pianist. As convincing as this movement can be in performance, one has to admit that Berens did, for several measures as a time, forget that he was writing for three string players and not a pianist. Still, this is a very fine work which can be recommended not only amateurs but also for professional trios seeking something from the mid-romantic period.. This excellent performance of all three of Berens' trios is the first and I highly recommend this CD.

Ferdinand Ries (1784-1838) was born in Bonn, the eldest son of one Beethoven's earliest teachers, Franz Ries, a violinist. Ferdinand was taught violin by his father, cello by Bernhard Romberg and later, when he came to Vienna, piano by Beethoven. He gained a considerable reputation as a piano virtuoso and toured widely. From 1813 to 1823 he lived in London and for the rest of his life in Frankfurt. He was also a prolific composer and though the bulk of his work is for piano, he did write a considerable amount of chamber music. **CPO CD# 777 033** presents two of his piano trios. The first, **Op.2 in E flat Major**, is from his early period, presumably before 1810. It is a transitional work, showing all the characteristics of the late Classical period with some early Romantic tendencies. The opening *Adagio con moto-Allegro* sounds a great deal like Beethoven's Op.1 piano trios. The melodies are appealing. The piano trios of Hummel are also called to mind as the elegant but, at times, florid piano part contains the bulk of the material. The second movement, *Andante un poco allegretto*, is particularly striking. Here, the strings are given the lead in presenting the haunting main theme. The light-hearted and fleet finale, *Rondeau-allegro*, recalls late Mozart, although Ries makes better use of the cello. **Op.143 in c minor** is thought to come from Ries' London period. The turbulent opening *Allegro con brio* brings to mind Beethoven's Archduke Trio. Here, the strings are given much more of the thematic material than in Op.2. The middle movement, *Adagio con espressione*, though calm, is highly lyrical and leads without pause to the exciting finale, *Prestissimo*, which presents a wild ride though several lovely melodies. At times, the piano is unleashed, but this does not spoil the overall effect of the music. That both of these works are Beethovenian perhaps should come as no surprise. But, to some extent, this harms the case for whether they are original or striking enough to merit performance in the concert hall. However, I think an occasional performance of either of these trios would be justified. I certainly enjoyed hearing them and recommend this CD.



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