



**:| At The Double Bar We Acquire Large Chamber Music Library!**

The acquisition of the Maas Library is, of course, a great moment for The Cobbett Association and the grant we have just been offered from the ACMP Foundation was crucial to the accomplishment of this goal. But two months ago, it was not at all certain that this result could be attained when the Foundation Board initially turned down our request for a grant.

That we were able to get the ACMP Foundation to reverse its decision is in great part due to the special efforts of the following Cobbett members who wrote letters and personally telephoned members of the Foundation Board: Ronald Goldman, Nicholas Cunningham, Bertrand Jacobs, James Whitby, Susan Lloyd, Cecilia Saltonstall, Mimi Bravar, Sonya Monosoff Pancaldo, Donald Spuehler and Vincent Oddo. The Cobbett Association thanks you all for making this special effort on our behalf.

Rating surveys were mailed to members in mid-May. Approximately 40% have already been returned to us with many excellent suggestions. We will be publishing the results as well as more information on our evaluation project in our September issue, so if you have not already completed yours, please take a moment and do so now.

Several people have seen our news release in the May issue of *Strad* and have made inquiry or have joined. However, we need more members if we are to accomplish our exciting future projects. Please mention us to other players, especially those of you attending clinics or workshops this summer.

While many of you have already sent us your 1995 suggested contribution [dues], they will be officially collected with the September issue of the *Journal*.

Finally, the members of the Board of Advisors will be announced in the September issue.

On March 30, 1995, in what was to many a surprising decision, the Amateur Chamber Music Players [ACMP] Foundation Board turned down our request for a grant to be used toward the purchase of the Maas Chamber Music Library. At that time, we had raised slightly less than 25% of the purchase price and it rather looked like we might not be able to raise the rest. This certainly would have been a severe setback. But several members of The Association refused to take no for an answer and set to work contacting ACMP Board members in an effort to get the Foundation to reverse its decision. Their efforts resulted in the formal offer, on May 13, 1995, of a conditional grant to The Cobbett Association of \$3,000. Specifically, there are two conditions attached to this grant: 1) The Cobbett

Association must raise the remaining \$3000 of the purchase price, and 2) The Association must obtain a written agreement to house and maintain the Library from an appropriate institution.

The first condition has now been met. The remainder of the purchase price has been raised. As for the second condition, we are in the midst of negotiations with Northeastern Illinois University as to the housing of the Maas Library. As soon as we have completed an agreement, which we hope will be shortly, arrangements will be made to ship the music to Chicago where the University is located. We are hoping to have it by late July or early August. It consists of 900 non standard chamber music works and not the

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**String Quartets of Lesser Known Composers of the 18th & Early 19th Centuries [Part I]**

By Dr. James L. Whitby

The string quartet, as a compositional entity and ensemble, dates from somewhere around 1760. It quickly proved to be very popular, one imagines with amateurs, so that a great number of pieces were published, some going through several editions, before the turn of the century. I have prepared a table [shown on page 7] to illustrate this, and to show how little of the 18th century material we now hear. The concert hall repertory of the professional string quartet is estimated to consist of perhaps 500 compositions, of that not more than 100 could come from the 18th century. In the table, I have extracted all the string quartets for 2 violins, viola and cello listed in the catalogue of chamber music in Vidal's *Les Instruments a Archet* and assigned them to three periods by date of composition: 1) Before 1800, 2) Between 1800-1850 and 3) Between 1850-1875, which is the end of the period reviewed by Vidal. You can see at once that, while there were more composers writing string

quartets between 1800 and 1850 there were more quartets written between 1760 and 1800 than 1800-50. This was partly because it was fashionable to publish these and many other compositions in sets of 6 in the 18th century, by the dawn of the 19th, sets of three became more usual, and by the second half of the 19th century the publication of individual compositions was the rule and there were few exceptions.

Most of the 18th century material was intended for the amateur, who was often also the patron, and for private performance at home. But by the end of that century, while

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## The Sounding Board-Letters to the Editor

### Disagrees With Assessment of Bruch

It is certainly difficult to know how to grade music both for difficulty and quality. The method of grading for difficulty, by comparing the piece being considered with a list of well-known quartets, seems to work well. However, quality is very much a matter of opinion and depends greatly on the players and the circumstances under which the music is played. For example, one naturally compares the work being assessed with the one that has just been played. This might be a masterwork and make the work being assessed seem poor by comparison, or conversely, if the preceding work was boring, the work being assessed will seem better than it really is.

I found this question of quality very relevant when reading your article about the chamber music of Max Bruch. Both my wife and I disagree with your judgment on most of his works, except the Clarinet/Violin, Viola/Cello & Piano pieces, Op.83 and perhaps the Piano Trio. We have often enjoyed playing the Quintet in A minor for two violas and find there is plenty of interest for all players in it. Indeed, it is one of our favourite works for this combination. I do not think that there is any evidence to justify saying that this is an early work. While it is obviously true that there will be different opinions about the quality of a work, I think it is going too far to offer opinions on matters of fact. These should be checked by the usual methods of musicology. Indeed, Christopher Fifield in his biography of Bruch states quite definitely that Bruch's two quintets for two violas were written in 1919.

You did not mention the Piano Quintet which was written by Bruch for friends in Liverpool. This is another work we enjoy playing very much and find that it stands comparison with the well-known works for piano quintets. There is also a Septet [1849], an early work, but again great fun to play.

Alan West  
Leeds, England

*Thank you for reminding me about the Piano Quintet which I had meant to include but accidentally left out. (written between 1876 & 1886 depending upon which source you consult.) Of the Septet, I know nothing. Altmann, who knew the composer and was aware of some of his unprinted chamber music makes no reference to it either in Cobbett*

*or his other writings. I am aware, however, that there are several lost works including another quartet dating from 1862.*

*With regard to when Bruch's Quintet was written, you are quite right, it was an error to express my opinion as fact and I apologize to the readers for doing so. Although Fifield writes that Bruch worked on and completed the a minor quintet, a companion quintet and an octet during 1919-1920, notes from German sources I compiled for the article indicate that these works were probably completed from sketches made in the composer's youth. Having said this, I should not have left out the all important words "in my opinion."*

*I certainly agree that rating chamber music, as indeed rating any art, will present us with considerable problems. I am reminded when, as a young man, I was once sitting in a sidewalk café in Paris thinking myself quite the man of the world. A fellow came up and took an empty chair at the same table and struck up a conversation whereupon he asked me what I was drinking. When I told him it was a Kir, he raised his eyebrows and remarked "à chacun son goût!"*

### Wants to Know How Piano Parts Can Be Easily And Cheaply Bound

I am a pianist and wanted to solicit your views and those of other members on how to bind photocopied pages of chamber music works. the piano parts are often quite long, 40 or 50 pages, and they must be bound so that the music stays flat on the music stand and yet pages can be turned easily and quickly. Does anyone know an easy and inexpensive way to accomplish this?

I would also like to suggest that you consider including two piano music in your library. Much two piano music is out of print and very hard to obtain, and it would be of great service if you made this music available to interested persons.

Eric Marcus  
New Rochelle, NY

*With regard to binding, one solution might be the method used by the Interlochen Music Library. They use a commercial binding punch and then insert circular plastic holders. A leading manufacturer of this punch is GBC. Such a punch can be had for around \$200 from commercial office supply dis-*

*count stores such as Quill. I invite those members with suggestions or other ideas to please write us.*

*I see no reason why the Cobbett Association Library ought not to have two piano music, although, I suppose some might argue that this is not really what is meant by chamber music. Regardless, the fact is that the Maas Library does not have such music in it, most probably because Mr. Maas was a violinist. However, if members have such music, the Association will be pleased to acquire copies for its collections and make them available as requested.*

### Help Find Quartets For A Member Which Are Playable on Flute

As flute players, we have some music outlets not available to string players, such as playing in bands, but we do not have the wide variety of musical literature if we were to stick to music specifically written for the flute. Therefore, we often play violin parts when playing music with string groups. Several years ago, we obtained a list of string quartets in which the first violin part is playable on the flute (minimum of double stops, pizzicati, and rapid passages below the staff) and would like to see this extended to cover both violin parts since two flutes, viola and cello makes a good combination. We most often play flute, violin, viola, and cello quartets. We like to explore little-known music, and would like to try string quartets if the violin parts are readily playable on the flute. We find playing music with instrumentation different from that with which it was written very satisfying.

Bob Martin  
Tucson, Arizona

*I am printing your letter in hopes of generating ideas and responses from the membership as to how we might proceed with this. The question of whether violin parts are readily playable on the flute or other wind instrument is probably not one to which string players have given much consideration. It is my general impression that the requirements you have mentioned will be found most frequently in works which were composed up until around 1830. By the time of the mid and late Romantics one tends to find much greater use of such things as double stopping than in, say, Haydn and his contemporaries*

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## Letters to the Editor, *continued*

### Suggestions On Rating Chamber Music

With regard to your survey, you are off to a good start on a worthwhile project. I have a few comments based on the years I have spent doing surveys for a living. You can get somewhat more detailed and accurate information by providing more categories. For example you can as easily divide the range of opinions into 10 parts instead of four by using a 1 to 10 scale.

1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10  
Very Easy Easy Average Difficult Very Diff't

Raters could put an "x" on the scale. Then record the results down to the nearest 1/2 mark. Thus you could get an average, e.g. 6.3 as to difficulty. But a very experienced player may rate a piece as being less difficult than an inexperienced one.

Therefore, it would be useful to have a simple self-rating for each person to the amount of experience they have. Then you can adjust their ratings relative to their experience level. Perhaps it would be a good idea to find out from people whether they are rating a work in terms of how hard it is, or how hard it is *for them*

John Sonquist  
Santa Barbara, California

*What can I say, except I wish I had consulted you before mailing out the surveys. (Mr. Sonquist's letter was much longer and filled with excellent ideas which we will have*

*to consider along the way) You are certainly right about the question of experience and we will need to try and gage our evaluator's experience level, see below.*

### Who Rates Matters

Perhaps most important is *who* is doing the evaluation. Arnold Steinhardt's (1st violinist Guarneri Quartet) rating would be *vastly* different from the average ACMP "B" rated player's. The big problem is that the difficulty is skewed by the player's ability.

Dr. Frederic Somach  
Sarasota, Florida

*Unfortunately for us, Arnold is not yet a member, but given that we would certainly like the input from one or more of our professional ensembles, your point is a good one.*

### The Bias of The Evaluator

I believe the survey could be improved if the evaluator's bias were taken into consideration. For a viola player like myself, to compare reactions with a "first" violin player reminds one of the proverbial blind men who were called upon to describe the elephant, each feeling an individual part of the animal.

For me, anything Haydn wrote for the viola is simple junk. Yet his compositions have some musical value, and indeed, some are very difficult for the first violin. So when my entry on Haydn is recorded, you may be counting apples with oranges. Another complication may be found in examining quin-

tets for two violas, Brahms for example. The first viola part is much more involved than the second. How is this fit in with the survey as currently structured?

Leonard Levin  
St. Louis, Missouri

*No question but that there is a considerable variation in the difficulty of the individual parts. It should have been made more clear that the rating was an overall one, i.e. how difficult for an entire group. Thus even though say the cello part to a piece might be easy, the cellist could nonetheless discern that it was not an easy piece to put together or perform. Still, your point is well taken and must be incorporated into our actual evaluations.*

*It will probably be a good idea to include comments on the difficulty of any given instrumental part where it is beyond the actual difficulty rating of the piece. For example, the Hummel Piano Trios are of only average difficulty as ensemble pieces but the piano parts are quite difficult. The same goes for some string quartets where it is only the first violin part which is difficult.*

*Letters to the Editor 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.*

## To Sway or Not to Sway?-Body Movement in Performance

By Andrew Marshall

Since some coaching from the Albani Quartet, I have been convinced that a certain amount of body-freedom is essential when playing chamber music. When I moved in *unisono* with the viola player, I was amazed how our overall playing and sound improved.

This swaying was encouraged by the Albani and since then, I have tried to encourage the young quartets which I coach to sway, if only a little, in order to make their playing freer.

However, this belief in the freedom of swaying has recently taken some knocks, and I would be interested in opening up a "swaying debate" amongst *Journal* readers.

Since several of my more statue-like pupils have resisted my pleas for relaxation, movement and freedom, I decided to seek further opinions.

The first came from a member of the Halle Orchestra, a definite swayer, who was giving some master-class teaching in my town. Surely, he'd back me up. Surprisingly, he was firmly against encouraging players to sway. He admitted that he himself is a swayer, but said that his wife is not, in the same orchestra, and she is a fine player. He is of the opinion that if teachers make their pupils sway, then they are taking concentration away from the music.

The London-based Bridge String Quartet was divided. There should be some movement; the first violin should certainly move to lead the quartet. But again it is not recommended to make players sway against their wills. Cellists especially do not like to sway left-right, as that can go against their root-posture: They can however sway backwards and forwards, if they wish. Swaying, the Bridge Quartet felt, should be an internally-felt thing and come from within.

Other musicians I have spoken to have mentioned with much disapproval the excessive swaying that some instrumentalists tend to indulge in. I open the debate to the readership!

# The Cobbett Association Welcomes The Chilingirian Quartet

Having been forced to take a rather circuitous route from Basel, and having spent most of the day in airports, it was, unfortunately, already fairly late by the time I checked into my London hotel one afternoon last September. The only thing left to consider was where to take dinner and whether to see a play. It had been a while since I seen a play in London and I began to look forward to the evening with some relish. But no sooner had I returned to the lobby and consulted the concierge than my hopes were quickly dashed. No plays on Sunday, a weekend night? I couldn't believe it. This was a shock. [Of course, we in the States have become used to having nearly everything open all of the time.]

At this point, I did not want to spend the evening in the hotel lobby watching my fellow tourists. "Were there any concerts?" I asked. "Not really," she replied. But wait, here's one, a charity concert for a musicians fund in a place called Conway Hall with The Chilingirian Quartet. "Say no more!" I interrupted, "Can you get me tickets?" No, she couldn't, she'd never heard of Conway Hall. It wasn't an ordinary concert, no, I would have to go there myself.

I know London as well as the next tourist, if not better, but it was only with some difficulty that I found Conway Hall, worrying if I would be in time to buy tickets. Not only was I in time, but I could have a front row seat for the incredibly small sum of £3. As I took my place, I wondered whether the quartet would remember me as we had had dinner together in a Chicago suburb after a concert they had given the previous October.

Later, in the green room after the concert, Levon Chilingirian admitted that he had recognized me at once, but it had given him quite a start as he hardly expected me to suddenly pop up in England, and then at a little publicized concert. Since last seeing them, I had become a director of The Association and over dinner enthusiastically discussed

plans for the future. Levon was fascinated and noted how The Chilingirian were always on the lookout for new composers to perform. When I had seen Levon last, he was interested in Armenian and Ukrainian composers. (I sent him a tape of Shtogarenko's magnificent *Armenian Sketches* for Quartet-would that I had the parts) They had just finished recording some of John Tavener's music. Further, they were looking to play an Onslow cello quintet and asked if I knew of any in print. Before dessert had arrived, they were members. Levon expressed enthusiasm for the possibility of joining with the Association in recording lesser known works, but

the Royal College of Music in London and gives an annual series of concerts at London's Queen Elizabeth and Wigmore Halls.

Their early broadcasts on the BBC World Service immediately led to invitations to the Edinburgh, Bath and Aldeburgh Festivals and to concerts in Amsterdam, Munich, Stockholm, Zurich and Vienna. Since the Quartet's New York debut in 1976, the Chilingirian has made annual coast-to coast tours of the USA and Canada, and was invited by the New York International Festival to be Britain's contribution to the Festival's quartet series. In addition to tours to the Far East and Japan, extensive touring in Australia, New Zealand, Africa and South America make the Quartet equally well-known outside Europe and the U.S.

Recordings by the Chilingirian currently available include a full selection of classical, romantic and modern repertoire. Their early recording of all three of Arriaga's quartets is, in my opinion, unsurpassed as is their fine recording of Korngold's Quartet Nos. 1 & 3. [See Diskology, this issue on page 9] Their recording of the six Mozart quartets dedicated to Haydn was voted Best String Quartet Recording by critics of the prestigious magazine, *Gramophone*. Most recently

they have recorded Schumann Haydn, Dvorak, Bartok and Prokofiev on the Chandos label, both of Tavener's string quartets coupled with works by Arvo Paert for Virgin records; a Panufnik disc and just released are the premiere recordings of Hugh Wood's Quartets Nos.1-4 on Conifer, with whom they are currently embarking upon a 20th century quartet series.

We warmly welcome the Chilingirian and encourage our American members to see them during February and April of 1996 while they are on tour and New Yorkers to catch them at Carnegie Hall on April 12, 1996 where they will be playing the Brahms Clarinet Quintet, Op.115 with Richard Stoltzman.



Charles Sewart    Simon Rowland-Jones    Phillip De Groot,    Levon Chilingirian

added that The Chilingirian were not interested in only performing music from the past, but very committed to contemporary composers.

The Chilingirian need little introduction and are probably familiar to most of you. Now in their 24th year, they met as students and were coached by Siegmund Nissel of the Amadeus Quartet in their early years. With tours to thirty countries on six continents, performing in major concert halls throughout the world, and with recordings for EMI, RCA, CRD, Nimbus and Chandos Records, they have become one of the world's most celebrated and widely travelled ensembles. The Chilingirian is Quartet-in-Residence at

# When Brahms & Mozart Just Won't Do, A Brief Survey of Some Other Clarinet Quintets

By R.H.R. Silvertrust

A good friend of mine once remarked that one's favorite dish might be Chicken Kiev, yet one would not choose to eat it 3 times a day for 40 years. The same might well be said with regard to music, at least by members of The Cobbett Association. It may be that the Mozart and Brahms clarinet quintets are the finest ever penned, and I, having been fortunate in knowing a fine clarinetist, have had the opportunity to play them, with great pleasure, I might add, often. Yet after playing them for the "umpteenth" time, I began to wonder what else there might be. Finally, I made some effort to find out. What follows is the result of that research. It is not meant to be all inclusive, but a good beginning for the clarinet quintet party seeking to enlarge its repertoire.

What I learned was that this repertoire falls into two categories. The first may be called the "clarinet concerto with four-string accompaniment." The second is that group of works in which the clarinet is fully integrated into the ensemble or is at least not a soloist. On the premise that most string players are probably not going to want to spend their evening playing mini-orchestra to the clarinet, I will deal very perfunctorily with works of this nature.

Perhaps the best known of these is that of **Carl Maria von Weber** (1786-1826) His Op.34 has over the years has enjoyed a certain popularity. Completed in 1815, it has fine writing for clarinet, indeed, it was written for Hermann Bärmann, perhaps the foremost virtuoso of his day. So while it is a pleasure to hear (and somewhat difficult for the clarinet to play) the rest of the parts have little to do and in the end it is not truly chamber music in that the clarinet so dominates that it more like Spohr's Quatour Brilliantes, a concerto for one instrument with a accompaniment. Parts are readily available from several publishers. **Hermann Bärmann** (1784-1847) had the good fortune to have both Mendelssohn and Spohr also write works for him. His own Quintet No.3 Op.23 is tuneful but as one might expect from the "Father of Modern Clarinet Technique," really nothing more than a vehicle for the clarinet. Of interest is the first movement which sports a direct quote from Mozart's overture to the Marriage of Figaro. There is

no modern reprint but there are a number of recordings of it. Sadly, **Ludwig Spohr's** (1784-1859) Op.81 Fantasie & Variations and his Op.34 Andante & Variations are also pieces for a clarinet virtuoso with nothing for the others. They are not in print but are currently available on CD. **Antonin Reicha's** (1770-1836) Op.89 in Bb is a cut above the Spohr and Bärmann and perhaps on the level of the Weber. Tuneful throughout, the strings, and especially the first violin, are given slightly more to do, but the writing sounds as if he had a wind quintet rather than strings in mind. The parts were reprinted by Musica Rara in the 1970s and may still be obtainable. There is more than one recording available.

Moving on to the second category, **Andreas Romberg's** (1767-1821) Op.59 in Eb is definitely worth seeking out. Originally published by Peters, I am not sure there is a modern reprint but it can occasionally be had from antiquarian dealers. It is unusual in that it calls for two violas and only one violin. A violinist, Romberg's string writing is good and while one cannot say he entirely integrates the clarinet into the quintet, he does no worse than Mozart. All of the voices, including the violas and cello, are well treated. In general, melodies are passed around and given to one at a time while the others have obvious but tasteful accompanying parts. In my opinion, this Quintet is a big cut above the Weber. The second movement, *Minuetto*, is especially fine and the conclusion might have been written by Mozart. The work is of the same level of difficulty as Wolfgang's. It is recorded on a Hyperion CD 66479

Although I have neither played nor heard **Franz Krommer's** (Frantisek Krammar 1759-1831) Op.95 in Bb, it is written for the same unusual combination as Romberg's, i. e. clarinet, two violas, violin and cello and for that reason I have included it here, although it probably belongs in the first category. The parts are or were available from Musica Rara. I have played and heard many of his other works including several quartets for clarinet and strings and have found them all pleasant to hear and most worthwhile to play. However, Wilhelm Altmann (in his *Handbuch für Streichquartettspieler*) notes

that although there are beautiful melodies, the clarinet dominates and the others have mere accompaniment. But I suppose if one is going to play the Romberg, it might be handy to have another work available to make an evening of it. It is not currently available on record.

Of **Sigismund Neukomm**, (1778-1858) Cobbett writes, "gifted with fatal fluency." Neukomm is said to have written over 1,000 pieces. Yet Simrock chose to bring out a modern edition of his Op.8, and it is a rather good, if not great work. Classical in nature, the part writing is excellent and its 3rd movement features a very good set of variations based on the Ukrainian folk tune, *Schöne Minke*, which became incredibly popular in Vienna around 1818. Both Beethoven and Hummel wrote variations on it but Neukomm's was better than theirs!



It is not difficult and well worth acquiring. I know of no recordings.

If I had but one choice outside of Mozart and Brahms, I would opt for **Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's** (1875-1912) Quintet in f sharp minor, Op.15 which requires a clarinet in A. It could be said that if Dvorak had written a clarinet quintet, it might not have been far different from this. The clarinet is fully integrated into this exciting four movement work which certainly deserves to be heard in the concert hall and take its place in the first rank for works of this genre. Its rhythmic complexity however, especially in the slow movement, requires experienced players and on the whole the challenge presented may be of greater difficulty than the Brahms. Reprinted by Musica Rara, in the 1970s, the parts can still be found in some shops. Though not on CD, it was recorded on LP Chantry ABM 23

Too little is known of the Viennese **Robert Fuchs** (1847-1927) and his music. Brahms, who was not in the habit of giving out unstinting praise, especially in public, wrote of Fuchs, "Everything is so refined, so skilled, so inventive, we can always take pleasure in

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## A Brief Survey of Clarinet Quintets, *continued*

what we hear.” Fuchs became a celebrated teacher who could count Mahler, Hugo Wolf, Von Zemlinsky, Franz Schmidt and Sibelius among his students. But as Brahms’ criticism makes clear, he was no mere professor. His chamber music is uniformly excellent and the Clarinet Quintet, Op.102 in Eb is no exception. Composed in 1917, the Quintet is written in a late Romantic Viennese idiom and though showing the indelible influence of Brahms is clearly original in conception though no harder to play. Originally printed by Robischek there is no modern reprint though when I was in Vienna last, Robitschek’s grandniece, who now runs the business, told me she has plans to reprint it. This, too, is a major work which deserves regular performance by professionals in the concert hall. There are at least two current recordings available.

Next we come to two works of tremendous charm by the Anglo-Irish composer, **Sir Charles Stanford** (1852-1924). Like Fuchs, here again we have another famous teacher who taught, among others, Frank Bridge and John Ireland. The chamber music I have played of his is uniformly good and one wonders as did Cobbett himself why it was so little played. My guess is that prior to WWI, continental prejudice against English composers buried many worthies. In 1912, Stanford wrote these two wonderful Fantasies for clarinet and string quartet in g minor and F Major. Although they won the Cobbett Prize, strangely, they are missing from his Cyclopedia. The first one, to me the more

striking of the two, is in three movements (played without interruption) featuring a march sounding a bit like Elgar. In the closing *Allegro* there is a hint of an Irish lilt. The second in four movements (also played without stop) is more pastoral. In both, the writing is assured, the development superb and it is easy to see why he took the prize with these works. I know of no modern edition, Stainer & Bell were one of the original publishers and have from time to time made copies for individuals requesting them. It can be heard on Hyperion CD 66479.

Perhaps after Mozart and Brahms, **Max Reger’s** (1873-1916) Op.146 in A Major is the clarinet quintet most often played by the regular clarinet party, if for no other reason than the music is readily available in several editions. Written, in 1915, at the very end of the composer’s life, nowadays unfortunately, one does not hear it in the concert hall, except perhaps in Germany. Reger’s music has justifiably acquired a reputation for being very difficult to put together, however, the Quintet while not exactly easy, is not as difficult as many of his string quartets and is realistically on the same level of difficulty as the Brahms. Many writers for this combination were aware of the difference in timbre between the strings and clarinet, but no one succeeded in solving this problem as well as Reger. Perhaps more than anything else it preoccupied him, and it is clear he strove mightily to write in such a fashion so that the clarinet would not stand out; and in this quintet more than any other I know, the

clarinet seamlessly blends in. Reger entirely dispenses with the instrument’s idiomatic style of playing and writes in such a way that the clarinet matches the tone of the strings very closely. This work, in four movements, while not sounding like Debussy, has about it the mood of the French impressionists, it is restrained for the most part without a heightened sense of drama. Interestingly, and perhaps intentionally (because Mozart and Brahms had done so as well) he concludes the last movement with a theme and variations. It is a masterwork and deserves revival. At one time there were several recording on LP available, now there is a single CD Tudor 724.

Finally, there is **Paul Hindemith’s** (1895-1963) Op.30 which was written in 1923, according to the composer, in 4 days time under great pressure because it, though not actually existing, had nonetheless been scheduled for performance at a prestigious international festival for new music where apparently it was not a success. Thus it was that his publisher, Schott, refused to print it until they were convinced to do so some 30 years later in 1954. The parts remain available. It is in five movements which are to be played without interruption. To be sure, it is a very difficult work, (which most will probably find unpleasant the first time through) but it can nonetheless be tackled by experienced amateurs who are proficient. Though at times quite strident, as at the very beginning, it is not by any means atonal but mostly polyphonic and, in parts melodic. The third movement, a kind of medley of 20th century waltzes, calls for a clarinet in Eb. It is an extraordinary movement which repays the effort necessary to learn it. At present, there are two CDs available (MD+G 3447 and Wergo 6197) and I would strongly recommend listening to it first (something I wish I had done) before trying to play it.

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### We Acquire Chamber Music Library

(Continued from page 1)  
750 we believed it to have.

We expect it to take between 35 to 40 boxes to package and ship the Library. As you might imagine, to do this and then inventory it will take some time to accomplish.

We would like to have a completed catalogue of the Collection by the time we mail the September issue of the *Journal*, but this may be overly optimistic and perhaps realistically it may take until December. But once this has been done, we will make the catalogue, which can be expected to run between 15 to 30 pages in length, available to any member requesting one for the cost of

postage and copying. It will be updated on an annual basis.

The actual procedures for making copies and loaning works will be decided by the Board of Advisors between September and December.

If all then goes according to plan, we will hope to be able to announce in the December issue of the *Journal*, that we are able to start making this music available to you.

From that point on, we will begin a program of aggressively adding to the Library’s holdings. More on this in September.

### Coming Next Issue

- Septets for Winds & Strings
- Ars Antiqua—Old Recordings
- Meet the Miami String Quartet
- Trios for Clarinet, Cello & Piano
- Meet the Cobbett Board of Advisors
- Lesser Known 18th & 19th Cent. Qts.
- And More

# Lesser Known String Quartets of the 18th & Early 19th Centuries

(Continued from page 1)

private music making still went on, public performance of string quartets was the usual way in which they became known..

My main purpose is to suggest some lesser known composers, whose works might give pleasure and to consider the problem of availability.

## 18th Century Composers

**Carl Friedrich Abel** (1725-1787). A distinguished composer, who possibly studied with J.S.Bach. Abel settled in London and together with J.C. Bach initiated the Bach-Abel Concerts. One of his Symphonies was copied out by the young Mozart and thus was, for a while, included in the Köchel catalogue as K.18. His chamber music was composed for amateurs and included 3 sets of six string quartets, his

music is dignified and expressive, with interest in all parts and pleasing moments of concertante activity, and is not technically challenging. One quartet Op.8

No.3 was published in the Collegium Musicum series by Breitkopf & Härtel, and Op.8 No.1, in my opinion, a truly beautiful quartet is listed as published by Hansen in *String Music in Print*.

**Luigi Boccherini** (1743-1805) is an important composer, and quite a lot of his music is available. He wrote approximately 90 string quartets, 110 quintets for two cellos and 24 quintets for two violas. Boccherini and Haydn were aware of each others works but there is little similarity .Boccherini never manages the contrapuntal intricacies and intensity that one finds in Haydn. Overall the music is more gentle, which may account for the well known aphorism “Boccherini is the wife of Haydn.” Formally he often uses an “arch structure” in his first movements where the first subject is recalled at the end of the movement rather than through a more normal recapitulation, he often repeats short phrases several times, and may dwell on a favorite chord. Ornamentation is often quite elaborate

so that it is important not to play some movements too fast. He has a good melodic touch and some of the slow movements are quite beautiful, with intense feeling, but they usually undergo little development. There are, at times, Spanish overtones mostly in the quintets. Nearly 40 of Boccherini’s quartets are now in print and, if one is not to buy and play them all, I would at least recommend the purchase of the collection of 8 published by Barenreiter, in which the fourth quartet in A is particularly fine, but beware of the horrendous misprint in the first bar of the viola part, where the note E should be D. We have had a lot of pleasure from Boccherini’s music. I simply do not agree with Paul Griffiths, when, in his excellent book, *The String Quartet*, he implies (page 72) that Haydn said it all.

**Michael Haydn** (1737-1806) Joseph’s younger brother and a fine composer. Much

complexities of 19th century music. In recent years Krommer's music for wind ensembles has come to be appreciated and recorded, so that one hears it quite frequently on radio programs. Krommer was a fine violinist and wrote a lot of string chamber music: 73 quartets, 27 quintets with two violas, one string trio and 27 duos for two violins. None of this is in print except one duo and one quartet, Op.5 No.1 published by Artia-Musica Antiqua Bohemia, this quartet is worth obtaining. (CD recording *Panton 81 1011*) Krommer certainly wrote better and more challenging quartets later, though the depth of feeling never gets beyond early Beethoven. The quintets are also excellent. Krommer's music needs a good violinist but the other players have plenty to do. The music often has a rustic charm and cheeky chirrupy tunes though the slow movements are more profound and some of them deeply felt. We have enjoyed them very much and,

as they were very successful in their day, there were a number of editions, so you may come across them from

## The String Quartet Repertory 1760-1992

From Vidal (to 1875) & the Schwann Catalogue

|        |       | 1760-1800 |       | 1800-1850 |       | 1850-1900 |       | 1900-1950 |       | 1950-1992 |  |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|--|
| Source | Works | Composers | Works | Composers | Works | Composers | Works | Composers | Works | Composers |  |
| Vidal  | 1910  | 168       | 1405  | 301       | 260   | 148       | NA    | NA        | NA    | NA        |  |
| Schwan | 157   | 17        | 84    | 16        | 77    | 35        | 190   | 78        | 225   | 137       |  |

of his music was not published in his lifetime. One of his symphonies, for which Mozart wrote an introductory Adagio, found its way into the Mozart catalogue as Symphony No.37. His String Quintet in C (originally published under Joseph’s name) is still readily available in an International edition. Three string quartets were published in his lifetime and others are known from contemporary sets of parts. The autographs are lost. From the extant sources, Doblinger has published a set of 6 string quartets, which are not too expensive and should be obtained by anyone who loves 18th century music. They are not quite up to Joseph’s standard but they are well written and have interest for all players. There are also some other quartets published in the same series. (*Ed-There is a CD of six of his quartets: Claves 50-8811*)

**Franz Krommer** (Frantisek Krammárz 1759-1831) straddles the two centuries. I have put him here, because his music relates more to late 18th than to the greater

time to time. If so, they are worth obtaining, otherwise one is dependent on the photocopier. A number of Krommer's other chamber works are in print, such as the clarinet quintet, 2 clarinet quartets and a trio for piano viola & cello. All are recommended.

**Pierre Vachon** (1731-1803) I mention Vachon because some of his quartets have been recently republished by Musisca and, while they are slight and never really get beyond early Haydn, they are well written, with interest in all parts, and make an enjoyable change. Vachon was a successful composer in his day and published 4 sets each of 6, and also some in collections such as Napier's Miscellaneous Quartetto series.

[This article will be concluded in the September issue of the *Journal*]

# You've Played "The Trout," Now What? A Look at Piano Quintets with the Same Instrumentation

by R.H.R. Silvertrust

Playing Schubert's "Trout" Quintet for piano, violin, viola, cello and bass has got to be one of the great joys of the chamber music life. So, it's obviously worth the effort to line up the pianist and bassist (univite the other violinist—in the nicest possible way, of course) and arrange for the great evening. At last it arrives, and when the final notes of the last movement fade away, a feeling of satisfaction wafts over the players. But the night is young, what now? No one has anything else for the group to play. Do we do it again, and after that yet again? Surely, there must be something else for this combination. Well relax, there is. But at the outset, let it be said that the Schubert is clearly the "ne plus ultra" of its type, but happily, the "something else" which exists is well worth exploring and perhaps just as important, the parts are available to each of these works in a modern edition thanks to the efforts of Herr Walter Wollenweber and his publishing company. All three of these works were written by pianists, but with quite different results.

To my mind, the most effective is **Johann Nepomuk Hummel's** (1778-1837) **Quintet in Eb, Op.87**. Rudolf Felber, who wrote the entry on Hummel in Cobbett's Cyclopedia, calls it a masterpiece. From a listener's point of view, I entirely agree. As a player, one notices the pianist must be absolutely first rate to make it go, and as a string player, the piano has too much, but it is always tastefully done with exquisite beauty. From the opening chords of the *Allegro e risoluto assai*, the composer seizes the listener's attention. The part



writing for all of the instruments is assured and the themes as beautiful as Hummel ever wrote. While there are long and difficult passages, requiring the deftness of touch and dexterity a pianist must have to play Hummel, one is never left with the impression, except perhaps in the last movement, that the instrument is being given a virtuoso's role. There is an excellent minuet, marked *Allegro con fuoco*, then a very short *Larghetto* in which the piano has a brief cadenza and lastly an effective finale, *Allegro agitato* in which the



piano breaks loose, but the strings do get a very lovely middle section almost entirely to themselves before the recapitulation to an

exciting conclusion. Available from Wollenweber No.20 or Music Rara 2091. Several excellent recordings of it exist.

The lush and brooding opening measures of the *Andante sostenuto* introduction to **Herman Goetz's** (1840-76) **Quintet in c minor, Op.16**, (in which the piano is tacit) at once announces a masterpiece



and for nearly four movements, Goetz is able to keep the thematic writing at this high level. The part writing is throughout very fine. The piano is never allowed to dominate and for long stretches it is so well integrated into the quintet, one is unaware of it as a separate entity from the strings. The conclusion to the introduction gives way



*attacca* to the main movement, *Allegro con fuoco*. Dramatic and powerful, this movement need fear no comparison with anything written for piano quintet. It is followed by a lovely *Andante con moto* in which the Bass is given an opportunity to shine. A march like *Allegro moderato, quasi minuetto* is also first rate, in the trio, only the cello has the melody which is not strong enough. It is in the finale, *Allegro vivace*, one feels a let down, as Goetz, whose music sits squarely between Schumann and Brahms, seems to have run out of thematic inspiration. While what follows is not necessarily a bad movement, it is very average and sticks out like a sore thumb after such fine writing. Still strongly recommended,. parts can be had from Wollenweber No.24. Not on CD but recorded on Genesis LP 1037-8.

**Jan Ladislav Dussek** (1761-1812) was a well-known piano virtuoso who travelled throughout Europe. His **Quintet in f minor, Op.41**, while not on a level with either the Hummel or Goetz, given the combination, is well worth an airing. The main criticism of this three movement work is the piano part dominates, although it is not as difficult as Hummel's. With the exception of the Bass whose role is meager indeed, the others are occasionally given brief solos and other thematic tidbits. The *Allegro moderato ma con fuoco* is pretty much all piano, while the following, *Adagio*, makes better use of the strings. In the finale, a pleasant *Allegretto*, the piano once again takes off. Parts from Wollenweber No.39. There is no recording.



# Hurdles to Playing Chamber Music of the 18th & Early 19th Centuries

By Dr. James L. Whitby

There are a number of reasons why chamber music of this period has been less pursued. The most important one is that the music is less readily available, though microfilming and the photocopier are helpful in supplying copies. The second is that the music is usually simpler and thus presents less of a challenge. The third is expense, copies of the original editions are usually expensive, and even modern republications are usually not cheap. Then when playing from original editions or film or photo copies of them, present day musicians may have problems with some of the notation used in the parts.

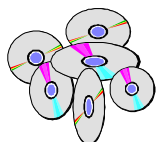
The most common notational problems are rests, accidentals and clefs. Examining the problem of rests, one finds the symbol for the quarter note rest is usually that used then, and now, for an 8th note but printed backwards. An additional problem is that it is sometimes not possible to read the number of bars rest required of the player. In cases of difficulty one must always look at the coded indication of the duration of the rest. I refer to the convention whereby one measure of rest is indicated by a bar

suspended, usually from the line below the top line of the staff, 2 measures rest by a block between two lines and 4 measures by one between 3 lines etc.

Accidentals apply in any octave in the measure in which they are written, and also usually apply until such time as they are then cancelled by a new accidental that reverts to the original key signature. This problem is most likely to occur in compositions published before 1790, but one should always be on the lookout for it. Very often I find I play the correct note quite naturally as it looks instinctively correct.

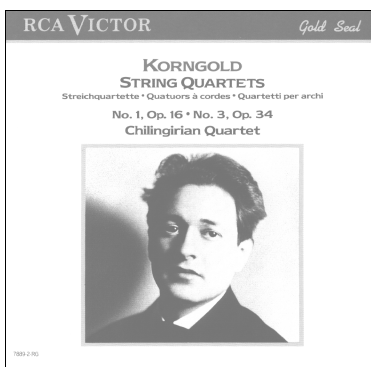
In early editions, particularly of Boccherini, one may find a variety of clefs used, mostly for the cello part(s), here soprano and alto clefs may be found as well as tenor clef and treble clef. At that time the latter was usually intended to be played one octave below the indicated pitch, the indication "8va" is used, if it is intended that the cello play at the normal treble pitch. One may also find other difficulties such as 8va or very low notes in the tenor clef. If one wants

to play the work, this sort of difficulty can only really be solved by writing out the passage in question. But I think the use of treble clef played an octave below pitch must be mastered by any cellist wishing to explore old editions of music. This convention, often now known as the "trouble clef", was a conventional way of writing high notes for the cello, which even persists today in some editions of Dvorak. Sometimes one is not certain whether treble clef is to be played at pitch or not, usually this can be correctly determined by finding some sequential, scale or arpeggio passage where a clef change occurs, as the flow of the passage is unlikely to be interrupted by a sudden leap up or down in the region of an octave. Another indication occurs where the tenor clef is used for some high passages. In that case, the use of the treble clef implies true pitch, though this is not always 100% reliable. It must be emphasized, if cellists want to play quartets or quintets by such composers as Onslow, they must master this problem and it can be done with only a little perseverance.



## Diskology: Korngold, Boccherini, Spohr, Kozeluh & Music of the Biedermeier Period

**Erich Korngold** (1897-1957) was yet another one of those talented Viennese *wunderkind* forced to leave The City with the Golden Heart upon the return of the Oberösterreicher from Berlin. Like several others, he eventually emigrated to the United States and wound up in Hollywood where he became well-known as a composer of film music. This recording is interesting because it couples his first quartet, Op. 16 written in Vienna in the early 1920s with his last one, No.3, Op.34, which was composed just after the Second World War. And these are important quartets because they are typical representatives of the continuation of the *tonal* branch of the Viennese tradition in the 20th Century, of which Korngold himself is an integral part. Performed by the Chilingirian Quartet on RCA Victor CD 7889-2-RG. Parts to both quartets are published by Schott and are available.



really in the guise of a scherzo follows. Light and quick, it has great charm and makes an immediate impression through the effective use of pizzicati and mutes. The Finale begins in a very relaxed manner but then gives way to a pizzicato accented march. The mood is sunny but pastoral. Though a movement of great breadth it lacks dramatic tension. It is of moderate difficulty.

The opening *Allegro moderato* of **Quartet No.3 in D Major** sounds much more modern and of greater complexity than the earlier quartet. Not allegro, but slow and aimless without direction, suddenly tension builds with a long spiraling downward passage. There is little of the composer's legendary lyricism in this movement though there is an unmistakable sense of striving as it melts away into nothingness. The superb *Scherzo-Allegro molto* is much more coherent. It is characterized by strong forward motion, which then gives way to a lyrical trio, the theme of which was taken from one of his movie scores. The third movement is marked *Sostenuto*, *Like A Folksong* and is just that, a simple quiet melody, briefly interrupted by a stormy middle section. The finale opens with several very strident chords but then gives way to an exciting tonal theme of driving speed which dominates this very fine movement to its effective ending. Although this is a work of advanced difficulty, it does not sound like it would be beyond the ability of proficient amateurs.

**Quartet No.1 in A Major** opens *Allegro molto* with the music of modern tension, tonally quite advanced, but soon gives way to lyricism. The *Adagio quasi fantasia* is one long song, where the use of extensive double-stopping creates a very rich texture. An *Intermezzo*

(Continued on page 10)

## Some Boccherini String Trios, A String Sextet & Piano Quintet by Spohr, Quartets by Kozeluh & Music of the Biedermeier Period

**Luigi Boccherini** (1743-1805) wrote a lot of chamber music. Even today, it is not known exactly how much. He is thought to have written around 70 string trios, but only a dozen are for the classical combination of violin, viola and cello. Six of these are performed on this Opus 111 CD OPS 41-9105 by the Italian trio, L'Europa Galante. [Fabio Biondi, violin, Andgelo Bartoletti, viola and Maurizio Nadeo, cello] These **six trios** are his **Op.47**, G.107-112. Unlike most of his trios, these have only two movements and are simple works compared to many of his earlier sets of trios such as his Op.14 or Op.38 (both for two violins and cello) The author of the jacket notes ponders what was behind this "evolution," and posits that Boccherini was seeking a greater degree of purity. I seriously doubt it. Most of the composer's works were commissioned and many were written in a particular form at a publishers request. I have performed several of the Op.47. My personal favorite, Op.47 No.3, is very Spanish and quite effective. The parts to these charming trios have recently been reprinted by Amadeus No. GM 412.

The String Sextet repertoire is not massive and a well-written work for such a combination is always welcome. With **Ludwig Spohr** (1784-1859), one may sometimes be in doubt as to the quality of the part writing but never as to the wealth and beauty of melody. When both are to be found, as they are here in his **Sextet, Op.140**, it is music of a high order. We know it was written around 1848 as Spohr, a supporter German republicanism and democratic causes wrote upon the manuscript, "At the time of the glorious people's revolution...& reawakening of Germany." This is a mature work in every way and as such probably served as the model for those who followed. Spohr was the first since Boccherini to have composed in this genre. Of interest is the fact that the first viola is given the role of thematic leader in the first movement. The final two movements, a scherzo and a presto, are actually cleverly combined into one movement. Recently reprinted by Wollenweber No.107 and performed here by the Ensemble Villa Musica on a Dabringhaus+Grimm CD L3848. Members of the same group also perform his **Quintet for Piano and Winds** (flute, clarinet, horn & bassoon), **Op.52**. Here Spohr was writing music not for himself but his wife an erstwhile pianist. Both Mozart and Beethoven had written quintets for piano and winds (K.452 & Op.16). Beethoven, perhaps with himself in mind, had written a virtually solo role for the piano. Spohr, while definitely taking pains with the piano part is more careful to create real chamber music and succeeds except in the last movement where the piano breaks loose. The chromaticism one finds in Spohr is particularly striking in the *Larghetto*. The Quintet is not on a caliber with the Sextet, but is still pleasant to hear especially as one does not often hear works for this combination. Spohr also arranged it for piano and string quartet as his Op.53



Titelblatt des Erstdrucks von op. 140 MD+G L 3448

**Leopold Kozeluh** (1747-1818) was a prolific Austro-Czech composer well known to his contemporaries but not alas to posterity. Of him one finds no mention in Altman's *Handbuch*, and only a terse uninformative paragraph in *Cobbett. Grove's* is little better quoting Jahn, one of Mozart's biographers, about the fact that the two were not on good terms. Beethoven is thought to have disliked him, possibly for business reasons, Schubert, however, is said to have liked and respected him. Educated in Prague, at first in law, Kozeluh moved to Vienna and eventually, after Mozart's death, succeeded him as court composer to the Hapsburgs in 1792. He wrote **six string quartets** that we know of, two sets of three, **Op.32 and Op.33**. All six were written more or less during the same time around 1790-91 and were published immediately by Kozeluh himself who apparently had the wherewithal for such an undertaking. These are interesting works to hear, and, I imagine, to play. If there is such a thing as a first rank of composers *after* Mozart and Haydn from the so-called Viennese Classical Period [1770-1800] then Kozeluh along with composers such as the Paul and Anton Wranitzky (Vranicky) and Franz Krommer belong in it. By the time these quartets were written [1790-91] Mozart had penned his Prussian Quartets and Haydn had completed Op.64. While Kozeluh's quartets are not on a par with K.575, 589 or 590, the gap between them and Haydn's Op.64 is not all that great. Melodically, there is considerable inspiration and charm. Interestingly, five of the six quartets have three movement, the other has but two. Structurally, this seems a throw back to the earlier Mannheim school, but the writing itself is of a later vintage. Although there is not as much interplay between the parts, passing snippets of the theme back and forth, as one finds in the Haydn, Kozeluh does make good use of the instruments and while the first violin is favored (as it was by all composers of the time), his frequent use of the cello thematically places him in a vanguard ahead of Haydn and perhaps Mozart, too, since the cello only received equal treatment in the Prussian Quartets to flatter the Royal cellist who had commissioned them. These excellent performances are by the Stamic (Stamitz) Quartet on two Supraphon CDs: 11-1528 & 11-1529.



**Johann Strauss Sr, Josef Lanner, Michael Pamer, Joseph Labitzky, Philip Fahrback, Josef Strauss** and the redoubtable Johann Jr.—Yes, you can hear their music played by the 110 men of the Vienna Philharmonic, however to my mind it has no charm at all. But when played by a group like the **Biedermeier Ensemble Wien** (2 violins, viola & bass)...Doch! Daß ist echte Wien—it's the real thing. If you love waltzes, ländler, galops, and polkas and wish to hear them played the way most Viennese did in their cafes and hotels, then these three recordings, Denon CDs 72587, 75779 & 77052 are highly recommended. This is lovely music, and happily, the parts to many of these pieces for this instrumentaton are in print.