



Chamber Music Journal

Vol. XI, No. 3,
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TGIF-Thank God It's Friday-*Les Vendredis* Part II

by
Renz Opolis

In the first part of this article, I described the Friday night chamber music sessions and concerts (always followed by a sumptuous banquet) which Mitrofan Petrovich Belaiev would host each week at his spacious St. Petersburg town home. These special evenings, later to be known to posterity as *Les Vendredis* (Fridays) took place for more than 20 years and became a legend in their own time. This was largely so because Rimsky-Korsakov and his many students such as Glazunov, Borodin and Liadov began attending and eventually would write pieces which were specifically composed to be played at Belaiev's Fridays. From time to time over the course of many years, during which the Fridays continued, these "Belaiev" composers would bring with them a quartet movement to be performed. Sometimes the movement might be composed right on the spot and sometimes the composition was a collaborative effort as well, hurriedly put together as a surprise treat for their great patron. (Belaiev had put his many millions at the disposal of Russian music by forming a publishing house whose purpose became to print and disseminate, both at home and abroad, the new works of Russia's composers.)



Mitrofan Petrovich Belaiev (1836-1903)

As all good things, the Fridays finally came to an end in 1903 shortly

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The Chamber Music of Paul Juon

by Dr. William Horne



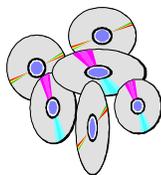
Paul Juon (1872-1940) was a very prolific composer, quite popular in Central Europe before and after World War I, but almost all of his music has fallen into oblivion. A CD set of all his piano trios by the Altenberg Trio pricked my curiosity about him. He had a unique style of music. In his first period, he practiced a late romantic style with much use of chromaticism. He straddles the changes wrought in the early 20th century, easing somewhat into diatonicism, modal harmonies, and even neo-classical austerity. Perhaps he is a victim of his times, a transitional era. I find his smaller works quite charming,

Russian in flavor, delicate miniatures. His larger works seem to reflect more of the society he lived in; somewhat Teutonic, bombastic, over-worked, possibly overwrought, to my taste. What hindsight can do for one's judgments.

Juon—how does one pronounce such a name? One might start with that issue. Juon's family was Swiss, originally from Canton Graubunden, (Grisons). His grandfather, a confectioner, emigrated around 1830 to Latvia on the Baltic. His father was manager of an insurance company in Moscow. Since he spent most of his adult life in Germany, he adopted the German pronunciation "You-on", instead of "Zhou-on."

He came from a talented family. An elder sister became a pianist. One of his younger

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Diskology Super Installment: Thuille, Jacob, Chaminade, Gouvy, Goldmark, D'Albert, Wilms, Van Bree, Dalberg, Børresen & More

As I have noted previously in the editorial column, *At the Double Bar*, a truly amazing number of recordings of non-standard chamber music has been recorded during the past five years. The sheer amount has made it all but impossible to do justice to so many recordings which may be of interest to listeners. Of course, we try and list a considerable amount of new releases in *Newly Recorded Music* but it is nothing more than a listing of new CDs. This column, on the other hand, is dedicated to giving prospective CD buyers an idea if the music on disk would appeal to them and, as such, often involves presenting considerable detail. The CDs reviewed are mostly new but sometimes have been released for a while. Although this sudden surge in previously unrecorded chamber music is a boon, it has made it difficult to keep up. For this reason, we shall, from time to time, be presenting a 'super installment' of Diskology in an attempt to remedy this problem.

And so we begin with Ludwig Thuille's *Sextet for Winds & Piano, Op.6 in B Flat* recorded on an Erasmus Muziek CD #WVH201. Thuille, (1861-1907) was born in the South Tyrol (Tirol), then Austria. He is best known, when he is known at all, as a good friend of Richard Strauss. But there was a time, during the last decade of his life, when he was known as one of Munich's leading musical figures. Thuille's parents died when he was 11 and he was sent to live with an uncle. He received a thorough education and when his musical talent showed itself, he was sent first to Innsbruck and later to Munich where he studied under Joseph Rheinberger. His de-

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Chamber Music Journal



The Sounding Board-Letters to the Editor



R.H.R. Silvertrust, *Editor*

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George Chadwick's String Quartets

Recently I heard a recording on the radio of a string quartet, by the American composer, George Chadwick. I think it was his Fourth. How many string quartets did he write and are any of them in print? Did he write any other chamber music?

Michael Falstone
Los Angeles, CA

George Chadwick (1854-1931) wrote five string quartets. The last two were published by Schirmer in 1900 and 1902. To the best of my knowledge they have not been reprinted. The first three quartets have never been published, though they deserve to be. The 4th, can often be found in good libraries while the 5th is somewhat harder to come by. Both could well do with a reissue. He also wrote a piano quintet which was published by the Boston publisher, A.P. Schmidt in 1890. This edition was reprinted by Da Capo Press in 1984 and may still be available. A two part review of

Chadwick's chamber music appeared in the Diskology section of the Journal in Vol. VI No.4 (Dec 1995) and Vol. VII No.1 (Mar 1996)

Can't Find Rarities for Piano Trio CD

After reading the last issue of the Journal in which you reviewed a CD entitled *Rarities for Piano Trio*, Mach CD #1 01012, I went to three record stores but was unable to purchase it. Can you tell me how I can obtain this disk?

Peter Wilkerson
San Antonio, TX

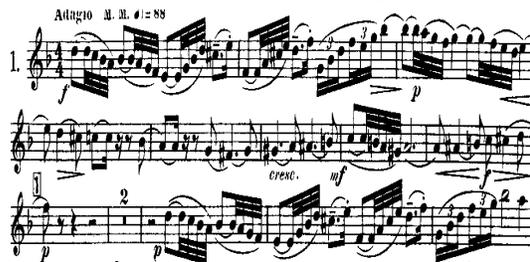
Several of you have written in wondering how you can get this CD. The answer was available, if you had read my *At The Doublebar* column. Please contact Dr. Ronald Goldman (violinist of the Gennaro Trio) by e-mail at violinron@aol.com

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.

The Music of Les Vendredis-Belaiev's Fridays

before Belaiev died. But in 1899, Rimsky-Korsakov, with the help of Glazunov and Lidadov, selected sixteen 'miscellaneous' pieces which were published by Belaiev in two parts or volumes. These are by ten different composers both known and unknown. They vary in length from the miniature, just a few lines on a single sheet, to that of a normal quartet movement some two or three pages.

The first work of Volume I is by Glazunov, and entitled *Preludio e Fuga*. It is dedicated to the Belaiev Quartet's first violinist, the physician Dr. Alexander Gelbcke. The prelude is an *Adagio* of considerable rhythmic complexity.



It is not an attempt to faithfully recreate an 18th Century example of this form but nonetheless is a somber affair. The *Prelude* reminds one of Bach, but a kind of Romanticism nevertheless creeps in. A four part fugue, *Moderato*, follows. Based on a Russian theme, it, too, is primarily reflective with little vivaciousness.

While there is no question as far as technical mastery is concerned, the musical material is not entirely convincing or captivating. Perhaps the pensiveness appeals to something in the Russian psyche, especially when they are deep in their cups, but I always have thought this a strange choice to place at the front of Volume I, as it is so atypical, at least in mood, of the spirit of the *Les Vendredis*. It is not inconceivable that Glazunov himself may well have chosen to place it there.

The second piece in Volume I is a *Serenade* by **Nicolai Artsibushev (1858-1937)** (also Artzibushev, Artcibuscheff, Artsybushieff et. al.). It is dedicated to Belaiev himself and I find it an altogether more appropriate representative in tone and mood of the elegant salon-style fragrance which *Les Vendredis* exudes. Artsibushev, a student of Rimsky-Korsakov, is little remembered today (No mention of him in the *New Grove* although a short entry appears in the older editions and in *Baker's Dictionary*. *Cobbett's Cyclopedia* lists his name but that is all), although several of his pieces for orchestra remained popular in Russia. After the Russian Revolution he fled to Paris where he managed the French branch of Belaiev's publishing business. No mention is made of other chamber music and this serenade may be the only sur-

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At The Doublebar

I have some positive news to report on the subject of the Cobbett Association Library. Readers will recall that a decision was made by the Board of Advisors in the early part of this year to pursue transferring our library to the Music Library of the University of Western Ontario (UWO) which had expressed considerable interest in having our Collection when approached informally by Dr. James Whitby in 1999. Contact was made with the Music Library of UWO and terms for the transfer of the Cobbett Library were then sent to the head of UWO's music library and subsequently forwarded to the UWO's lawyers.

In early September, Dr. Whitby and I met with Lorraine Busby, head of UWO's Music Library. We discussed the terms of the transfer of the Library. As far as I could determine, the Music Library is quite keen to have our Collection but there have been some questions raised by the University's lawyers mainly with respect to the question of liability for music which is found to be missing from the Collection after it is transferred to UWO. Their lawyers suggested an independent inventory (at our expense) to determine if everything we that say is in the Library is actually there. This would entail a substantial expense on our part but is, under the circumstances, a fair request by them. (It should be noted however that Jim and Margaret Whitby have spent dozens of hours of their time sorting through the library page by page to make sure that all of the parts are complete and made an extensive listing of deficiencies and have in many instances remedied them by making copies from their own library. But we could not expect UWO to take the Whitby's word when it would be UWO that would bear liability for missing music) There are a few other lesser questions which were also raised during our meeting but I believe all of these as well as the problem of the University's liability can be resolved to their satisfaction and am hoping we will be hearing from them soon with further developments. Unfortunately, the Library remains boxed and unusable as it awaits transfer.

Finally, I wish to thank Bill Horne for his fine article on the unjustly neglected chamber music of Paul Juon. Again thanks to Renz Opolis for his continuing series on *Les Vendredis*.

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viving effort in this genre. In 3/4 time, this serenade, dedicated to Belaiev, consists of two sections, *Allegro moderato* and a brief trio section, *Allegretto, poco meno mosso*. The simple main theme is folkish, but not particularly Russian in flavor:



But in the animato we hear echoes of both Borodin and Rimsky:



And in the short *Allegro* coda section we again hear a lovely Borodin-like melody. Though two pages long, this short and tuneful salon piece would make a lovely encore for any professional group.

The third piece, is the perhaps the best known of the lot, it is the *Les Vendredis Polka*, a collaborative effort by Nicolai Sokolov, Glazunov and Liadov. The tradition of collaboration in Russian music began with Balakirev and the young composers he gathered around himself as he formed the Mighty Five with Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Cui and Mussorgsky. They often collaborated each contributing a set of variations or a section to a work. This tradition was continued by Rimsky-Korsakov and the Belaiev composers and more than a few pieces were penned by more than one person. The story of the *Les Vendredis Polka* was told in the first part of my article (Summer 2000). Apparently hurriedly written on the spot in Belaiev's study while the concert was going on, and then given to him as a surprise present, it is an incredible accomplishment. In three sections, the first by Sokolov, features the viola, Belaiev's instrument, to whom the main theme is given with a filigree accompaniment in the 1st violin against pizzicato in the other voices:



The 2nd and more energetic theme is by Glazunov:



but there is also a reprise to the first theme. The marvelous trio section is by Liadov. It begins with pizzicato in all 4 voices:



It sounds a bit a like the innards of a musical clock at work. Then the viola is given a charming long-lined tune in its lower register before there is a reprise. What can I say, but *bravo, bravo, gentlemen!!*

The fourth piece in Volume I is a *Menuet* by **Jaseps Vitols (Joseph Wihtol 1863-1948)** dedicated to Victor Ewald. Vitols, from Latvia, studied with Korsakov at the St. Petersburg Conservatory graduating in 1886. From 1897-1914, he was the music critic for the *Petersburger Zeitung* and served as a professor at the Conservatory there from 1901-18 where he numbered Prokofiev and Miaskovsky among his students. After the Revolution, he fled to Riga, then capital of independent Latvia, where he worked for the next 20 years, serving as director of the Riga Opera. He also founded and served as a professor at the Latvian National Conservatory. Vitols wrote a considerable amount of music, including one string quartet (1899). The *Menuet* is a slight (5 lines long) and charming work.



Played at a moderate tempo, the *Menuet* is a gentle reinvention of the elegance of the pre-classical, perhaps French, minuet style. The lovely trio compliments without providing much contrast. This piece is a perfect example of Rimsky-Korsakov's remark that, "a predilection then sprang up within our (the Belaiev) circle for Italian-French music of the time of the wig and farthingale."

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New Recordings



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

String Quartets

Manuel CANALES (1747-86) Op.3 Nos.1-3, La Ma de Guide 2038 / Edward ELGAR (1857-1934) Qt. Op.83, Redcliffe RR 015 / Donald ERB (1927-) No.2, CRI 857 / Jacques IBERT (1890-1962) Qt., Olympia 707 / Kjell KARLSEN (1947-) Nos. 1 & 3, Aurora 5007 / Jean MARTINON (1910-76) Nos.1-2, Skarbo D SK 4002 / Juhani NUORVALA (1961-) Nos.1-3, BIS 1107 / Lorenzo PEROSI (1872-1956) Nos.5-8, Bongiovanni 5102/3 / Alan RAWSTHORNE (1905-71) No.3, Redcliffe RR 015 / Francis ROUTH (1927-) Divertimento Op.66, Redcliffe RR 015 / Vissarion SHEBALIN (1902-63) Nos.1-3, Olympia 663 / Wyladyslaw SLOWINSKI (1930-) In Memoriam Lutoslawski & Szeligowski, Elegy, 3 Burlesques, Acte Preamble AP0051 / Ernst TOCH (1887-1964) Op.12 & 15, Talent DOM 2910 52 / Ashot ZOGRABIAN (1945-) No.1, Le Chant du Monde 2781119

Strings Only-Not Quartets

Giovanni BOTTESINI (1821-89) Wks for Str Qnt & Kb, Audite 97.460 / Franz Xaver

GEBEL (1787-1843) 2 String Qnts., Op.20 & 25, MD&G 603-0956 / Felice GIARDINI (1716-96) 20 String Trios, Op.17 Nos.1-6, Op.20 Nos.1-6, Op. 26 Nos.1-6 2 Op. Post., Hungaroton 31837-39 / Sophia GUBAIDULINA (1931-) Str. Trio, Col legno 20506 / Lorenzo PEROSI (1872-1956) Str. Trio No.2, Bongiovanni 5103 / Walter PISTON (1894-1976) String Sextet, Naxos 8.559071 / Ignaz PLEYEL (1757-1831) Str. Trio, Op.10 No.2, CPO 999-743

Piano Trios

Franz BERWALD (1796-1847) Nos.1-3, Naxos 8.555001 / Alberto CASELLA (1883-1947) Op.62, ASV DCA 1085 / Hermann GOETZ (1840-76) Op.1, Hungaroton 31919 / Friedrich KIEL (1821-85) Nos. 1,6-7, Koch Schwann 3-6738-2 / Theodor KIRCHNER (1823-1903) Novelletten Op.59, Hungaroton 31919

Piano Quartets & Quintets

Giuseppe MARTUCCI (1856-1909) Pno Qnt, Op.45, Aura 416-2 / Walter PISTON (1894-1976) Piano Qt & Qnt, Naxos 8.559071 / Ottorino RESPIGHI (1879-1936) Pno Qnt in F, Aura 416-2

Winds & Strings

Franz DANZI (1763-1826) Flute Qt. Op.56 No.2, Camerata 28CM-574 / Jacques FRANCAIX (1912-1997) Clarinet Qnt., ASV DCA 1090 / Adalbert GYROWETZ (1763-1850) Flute Qt. Op.26, Camerata 28CM-574 / George KLEINSINGER (1904-1982) Clarinet Qnt., Elysium GRK 718 / Douglas MOORE (1893-1963) Clarinet Qnt, Elysium GRK 718 / Ennio MORRICONE (1928-) Trio for Cl, Hn & Vc, Agora 217.1 / Walter PISTON (1894-1976) Qnt. for Fl. & Strings, Naxos 8.559071 / Ignaz PLEYEL Flute Qt. No.2, Flute Qnt. Op.10 No.3, Camerata 28CM-574 also Octet for Str. Qt. Ob, 2 Hn & Kb, CPO 999-743.

Winds Only

Jørgen JERSILD (1913-) Wind Qnt, Marco Polo 8.224151 / Otto MORTENSEN (1907-86) Wind Qnt, Marco Polo 8.224151 / Rued LANGGAARD (1893-1952) Septet, Classico 311 / Carl NIELSEN (1865-1931) Wind Qnt., Marco Polo 8.822151 / Ignaz PLEYEL (1756-1831) Trio for 2 Cl & Bsn, CPO 999-743 / Henning WELLEJUS (1919-) Wind Qnt, Marco Polo 8.822151.

(Continued from page 3)

The fifth piece, *Canon (a 3 voci all' 8va col parte libera nel Violino I)* is by **Nicolai Sokolov (1859-1922)** Sokolov studied with Korsakov and later became a professor at the Petersburg Conservatory. He wrote several pieces including 3 string quartets. The *Canon*, a rather stodgy but short adagio, is begun by the cello. There is some resemblance between the opening four note theme and a hymn of glorification from the opera of *Boris Godunov*. I am sure someone out there will take me to task but I have always felt this a rather unremarkable effort.

The sixth work is a *Berceuse (Variation sur un thème populaire russe)* by Maximilian d'Osten Sacken. Unfortunately none of the standard reference sources in English seem to have any information about him. The Belaiev Publishing firm was not even able to include his dates probably because by the time Korsakov got around to putting together the two volumes of *Les Vendredis*, d'Osten-Sacken must have disappeared from the musical scene. The name is an aristocratic German one. A check of the internet reveals that there is a prominent German professor of science with the name. In any event, the short *Berceuse* is based on the well-known Russian folksong, *The Nights Have Bored Me*, first used by Balakirev, and later by Rimsky-Korsakov in his *Variations on a Russian Theme* for string quartet. The main melody is concentrated in the viola part:

While perhaps not one of the top pieces in the set, the work is typical of the pieces chosen: it is quite pleasing, shows fine craftsmanship (something Rimsky Korsakov always insisted upon), and makes a good impression.

The 7th piece in Volume I is a *Mazurka*, dedicated to Nicolai Hehseus longtime 2nd violinist of the Quartet, is by **Antoly Liadov (1855-1914)** Liadov was a student of Rimsky's and from 1880 until his death taught off and on at the Conservatory. Gifted, Liadov wrote little chamber music outside of the morsels which appear in *Les Vendredis*. Recognized as very talented, Liadov lacked both the discipline and self-confidence to regularly compose. Those works which exist have earned him the reputation of being a "minor poet" of Russian music. The *Mazurka* is short but perfect. The first section, *Allegro moderato*, if played too fast will ruin the melancholic Polish quality.

The second part of the trio section gives the viola a fine solo. This is salon music in a high form, not kitsch nor hopelessly sentimental.

This article will continue in the next issue of the *Journal*. The author will discuss the remaining pieces which were published as part of the *Les Vendredis*.

but the support in the other voices is very well done.

The Chamber Music of Paul Juon (continued from page 1)

brothers, Konstantin, was a very popular painter in Russia. At age 17, Paul entered the Imperial Moscow Conservatory, studying composition under both Sergei Taneiev, and Anton Arensky, and later under Woldemar Bargiel (half-brother of Clara Schumann) at the Berlin Hochschule in 1894-95. He won the Mendelssohn prize in composition during this period. His training is both Russian and German and his music clearly reflects this. However, he studied along with a contemporary, Nikolai Medtner, (1880-1951), also from a non-Russian background. Both were exposed to the Moscow school, not the nationalistic St. Petersburg faction, e.g. Rimsky-Korsakov. Juon's music, however, in contrast to Medtner's, shows much more Russian flavor. I wonder why Medtner is currently so much more widely played than Juon.

Upon graduation in 1896, he took a post in Baku, Azerbaijan, but within a year had moved to Berlin to teach in the same establishment in which he had studied, the Hochschule. He remained in Berlin the rest of his creative career. In 1905, he moved to the Berlin Conservatory and later became professor of composition. Among his students were Jarnach, Kaminski, and Stephan Wolpe. He has been described as very modest, most sincere and humane in personality. By 1919, he was elected a member of the Berlin Academy of Arts, and ten years later was awarded the Beethoven Prize for his vast output of works. Robert Lienau was publisher of most of his works.

His first wife died in 1911. During World War I he translated in a Russian POW camp on the Eastern Front. By 1934 due to political conditions in Germany, he moved to Vevey, Switzerland, on Lake Geneva, with his second wife, who was Swiss. He died there in 1940.

Cobbett's Survey of Chamber Music says this about Juon's music:

"In the natural evolution of the musical mind,melodic susceptibilities are awakened first, and the desire for technical development second. Juon's youth was Russian, thus his themes, and particularly his rhythms are Russian;...his craftsmanship is German.In the main, however, Juon, is a German composer haunted by Slavonic visions and memories."

As you will see in the following listing, his production in chamber music is prodigious-over 100 works. Almost of quarter of the opuses listed are for chamber ensembles. He has been called by some, "The Russian Brahms", for his vast amount of chamber music with piano. One commentator even called him the "missing link" between Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky.

Juon's **String Quartet No.1, Op. 5 in D major**, is dedicated to the Bohemian String Quartet. It is a long, overworked piece, showing excellent conception of quartet writing, but not that novel in outlook. There are four movements: *Allegro moderato, Adagio sostenuto, Scherzo (in g), Intermezzo, Finale-vivacissimo*

The **Sonata for Violin & Piano, No. 1, Op. 7, in A major**, is the first work of Juon's to be widely performed with moderate success. Its movements are: I: *Andante quasi moderato*; II: *Theme & variations*, (the 5th variation, is the famous Romance, also transcribed for viola and orchestra); III: *Vivace*

Märchen (Fairytale), Op. 8 is a short, Romantic piece for cello and piano.

The **Silhouetten, Op. 9** are six short salon pieces for piano and two violins, entitled "*Idyll, Douleur, Bizarrie, Conte mysterieux, Musette miniature, and Obstination.*"

Sonata for Viola & Piano, Op. 15 in D major is a better work overall, lyrical and more attractive than the Violin Sonata. A viola sonata was relatively rare when it was published. The 1st movement is *Moderato* in 6/4 again.; *Adagio assai e molto cantabile; Allegro moderato.*

Piano Trio No.1, Op.17 in a minor has three movements: *Allegro; Adagio non troppo; Rondo* in ¾ time. It is a fresh work, homogeneous in themes with a Russian flavor; the Adagio has lyric simplicity, nice counterparts. It was published in 1901.

The only work of Juon's still in print, and the first with which I became acquainted, is a set of four movements, culled from two early opuses, for clarinet, cello, and piano, but also transcribed for piano trio- The **Trio-Miniaturen**. They are delightfully tuneful pieces, entitled *Reverie, Humoreske, Elegie, and Danse phantastique*. All are charming, not too difficult, and well crafted. They are still my favorites.

The **Sextet, for Piano & Strings (2 celli), Op.22 in c minor (1902)** 1st movement, *Moderato*, is in 3/2 rather than 6/4 due to the frequent use of triplet quarter notes. It has a rather florid first movement. The second movement starts a series of "Theme and variations", that reminds me a bit of the Tchaikovsky Piano Trio. The Third Movement, "*Menuetto*", is composed of variations #6 and #7. The 4th movement, an "*Intermezzo*", is actually variation #8. The finale, "*Allegro non troppo*" is in 2/4 meter and I find it rather academic. This may be the most powerful work in the composer's first period, compared by some to the Brahms' Piano Quintet. As if to underscore the allusion, it is also published in a two-piano version, like Brahms'.

Around 1904, Juon wrote a set of **Four Pieces, Op. 28, for violin & piano**. They are charming, simple melodies, in late Romantic style.

The second **String Quartet, Op. 29, in a minor**, is more original than the first. The slow 2nd movement has a declamatory manner, leading to an introduction to the finale. Much of it reflects polyphonic recitative. The 3rd and 4th movements are more Slavic in nature, and it ends in a fugue.

Quintet for Piano and Strings, Op. 33 (1 violin, 2 violas) (1906) has a really nice Russian flavor throughout. 1st movement is *Moderato quasi Andante*, switching from 4/4 to 6/4. the 2nd movement *Molto Adagio*. has some bell-like effects in the piano, playing descant. The 3rd movement is *Quasi valse*, and the 4th movement is *Allegro non troppo* (Russian folk theme with developments- in fact, the theme is the same as one used by Tchaikovsky in the 2nd Symphony).

(Continued on page 6)

The Chamber Music of Paul Juon

A lighter, oriental flavor permeates the **Divertimento, Op. 34**, a piece of four short movements for clarinet and two violas. The movements are: "Variations, Serenade, Exotic Intermezzo, and Ländler", a type of German dance.

In 1907 Juon met Selma Lagerhof, a Swedish novelist who had achieved world fame with her first novel, *Gosta Berlings Saga*. He demonstrated his admiration for her originality with two great chamber music works, composed in what is considered his second style of composition. The music is not written programmatically, but does express the whimsy, episodic, capricious, and even rhapsodic mood of her writing. The first is the **Rhapsody, Op. 37, in d minor**. It makes no specific reference to the novel. The first movement, *Moderato*, starts off with a florid, cadenza-like section. The second movement, *Allegretto* is a very tuneful melody, gently off rhythm with its 5/4 meter, reflecting its Russian origins.

There is a second set of **Silhouetten, Op. 43**, also scored for two violins and piano. They are delightful miniatures entitled *Prelude, Chant d'amour, Intermezzi I, II & III, Melancolie, Danse grotesque*.

The **Quintet for Piano and Strings, Op. 44 in F**, scored for regular piano quintet, did not strike me pleasantly on a first trial playing.. In fact, it was so boring, we did not play it all the way through. However, Cobbett differs. Composed in 1909, it is described as a late work with open harmonies, diatonic and somewhat modal: "It is...the most personal and satisfying of his more mature chamber works." Oh, well, there is no disputing taste. Try it for yourself. The opening *Allegro moderato*-seemed repetitious, with a Russian-sounding theme; *Comodo*—similar, a melismatic theme that goes nowhere. The 3rd movement, *Sostenuto*, in a slow 6/8, starts off better, but then wanders into florid piano passages. The 4th movement, entitled *Also sprach Simplizissimus* (Thus spoke Simplicity) seems to be aptly named.

Weisse Nächte is another name for an arrangement of the *Elegy* for violin and piano from his Second Violin Concerto, Op.49a

The **Second Piano Quartet in G major, Op. 50**, is described as more nationalistic than its predecessor. The first movement is Slavic in character. The second is a Scherzo entitled *Zitternde Herzen*. (trembling hearts) The third movement, an *Elegy*, has a melancholic Russian flavor. The fourth is a wild dance in 5/4 time. This work was premiered in Danzig in 1912. I have been unable so far to find either a recording or the music. It sounds interesting.

Divertimento, Op. 51 for Wind Quintet & Piano in F major. (1913) was a delightful discovery. It has four, relatively short movements: *Allegretto; Intermezzo I, Fantasia, Intermezzo II, and Rondino*". It is full of oriental color, and was enjoyed at my summer workshop this year.

In the **Cello Sonata in a minor, Op. 54**, Juon's style is evolving toward a sparser, quasi-modal harmony, with frequent use of open 5ths. It is unjustly neglected.

The **Piano Trio No.3 in G major, Op. 60** appeared in 1915. In

The third movement, *Sostenuto*, recapitulates themes from the other movements, in an episodic fashion.

Piano Trio No.2, Trio-Caprice, Op. 39 After Gosta Berling by Selma Lagerlof, was published in 1908, dedicated to the Russian Trio, an ensemble which successfully performed much of Juon's music. (See photo on right)

I: *Moderato non troppo*, (flurries of 32nd notes in piano, bird calls); II: *Andante* starts with a hymn in strings and leads attacca in to *Scherzo, vivace* in 3/8 time with a haunting melody. The 4th movement is a *Risoluto*. The Trio is about 27 minutes long, and was a resounding success. It is much more of a tone poem than his earlier works. It is still considered one of his best works.



The Russian Trio with Juon (left to right: Joseph Press, Juon, Michael Press, Vera Maurina)

the second movement one hears a quotation of the beginning of the Op. 39 Trio-Caprice. However, the structure of the first movement, *Moderato assai*, is more normal sonata form, resembling the first trio, but with much more unusual modalities and colors. The second movement, *Andante cantabile* is in B flat, but linked to the first movement's second theme with an F sharp. The third movement is a *Rondo* with a somewhat grotesque character, perhaps reflecting the effects of the First World War which was being waged at the time it was composed. From the program notes: "The impact of this inferno and the collapse of the old world

The Chamber Music of Paul Juon

order clearly divides Juon's work into a 'before' and 'after'."

String Quartet No.3, Op. 67, in C major, is more straightforward, and perhaps easier to play than the earlier quartets. It has a modern looseness of tonality, and a spacious quality.

The **Sonata, op. 69 for Violin & Piano, in F major** has three movements: *Allegro non troppo*, *Largo*, and *Risoluto*. It is not even mentioned in Cobbett's, and although I found a copy, I found it to be rather dry and unrewarding.

Piano Trio No.4- Litaniae. Tone Poem in c# minor, Op. 70 was the first of two great tone poems for trio. It is written in a phantasy style, i.e. four differing sections linked together into a whole, with cross-referenced motifs. It resembles the compositions that Walter Wilson Cobbett was trying to sponsor in his annual compositional contests. An example from the slow section, *Largo*, is given below:

It was composed in 1920, but not published until 1929.

Arabesken, Op. 73 (composed earlier but not published until 1940) for Oboe, Clarinet & Bassoon is a really delightful work. Movements are entitled: *Commodo*, *Larghetto*, *Allegro (quasi menuetto)*, and *Vivo-Tranquillo-Tempo I*. This is one of the best of his later works, tuneful, interesting, and fun to play.

Sonata for Flute & Piano, Op. 78 is again a modal work, beautiful and haunting at times; at other times, it seems a bit overwrought, perhaps overwritten. Again perhaps I did not like it on first reading. The movements are: *Gemächtlich*; *Langsam*; *Straff*, *jedoch nicht zu schnell*.

The **Sonata for Clarinet (Viola) and Piano, Op. 82 in f minor** (1924) is equally playable by either instrument. It is composed in the "fantasy" form Juon was currently using, with movements of different tempi being connected without a pause.

Piano Trio No.5 Legende in d minor, Op. 83, written in 1930, is the second great tone poem. If *Litanae* may be considered a dream-like stream of consciousness, then *Legende* is more like an epic saga expressing the highest ideals. It is the most difficult of the piano trios to play.

The **Wind Quintet in Bb, Op. 84 (1930)** is a thoroughly modern and pleasing work.

A final piano trio (No.6), **Suite in c minor, Op. 89**, came to light in 1932, a much lighter, loose collection of five miniature movements. It is described as perhaps reflecting the cacophony of modern Berlin, and some elements of jazz weaving in and out.

I have found him listed by the Swiss as one of their composers, despite his never living in that country until he fled Nazi Germany. He continued to compose up until his death. I believe he died of cancer. His autographed photo intrigues me. (see page one) He looks so positive, pleasant. While his music does not strike me as the most enjoyable to play or listen to, yet it is certainly not terribly dissonant or unpleasant. The rhythms are often very unusual and chord progressions seem strange, exotic at times. He seems a good craftsman although many of his works do seem to lack a certainly fluidity of melody and feel a bit stiff. Again, I prefer his smaller works, when he is being the most exotic, and "Russian" in flavor. I hope you will try some of his music, which does deserve to be played.

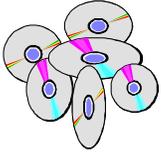
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Discography:

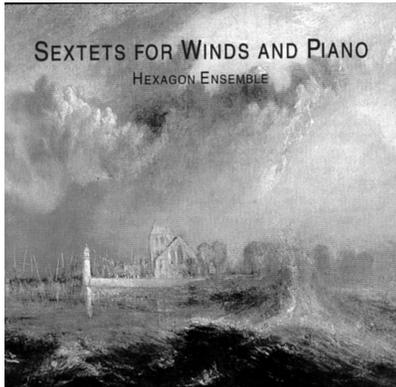
1. Koch D1CD 928481 Wind Quintet, Bb, Op.84 & Trio, Arabesken, Op.73
2. Russian Disc RD CD 10060, Viola Sonata, Op. 15 and Sonata Op. 82a
3. Vanguard Classics: 99133 -2 CD set of Paul Juon, The Piano Trios.
4. Gallo CD-876 Paul Juon, Kammermusik Ensemble Chamaleon

In Memoriam
Morton Altschuler

It is with deep regret, we report Morton Altschuler, a member of The Cobbett Association since its inception passed away on September 11, 2000. He was 81. During the course of a long and interesting life, Mort, as he was known to one and all, served as bandmaster to General MacArthur during WWII, was later a professor of woodwinds at the University of Arizona and then pursued a career in business. An avid violist and chamber music player, Mort was well-known not only for his interest in the wider chamber music literature but also as a superlative raconteur with an almost unmatched comedic delivery. Your editor had the great privilege of playing quartets with Mort for close to 20 years. His great experience and judgment as well as sight-reading and rhythmic skills were indispensable in the preparation of many articles for the *Journal* including the lengthy series on George Onslow's string quartets. He will be missed by all who knew him.



Diskology: Ludwig Thuille & Gordon Jacobs: Sextets for Winds & Piano Piano Trios by Chaminade, Gouvy & Goldmark (con't. from page 1)



was never attracted to the experiments which Reger undertook, nor the tone poem format which captured Strauss' interest. Written for Piano, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon & French Horn, the Op.6 dates from 1889. Strauss liked the work and encouraged Thuille to enter it in a competition. It is written in late high romantic style and bears some resemblance to the early work of Dohnanyi and Wilhelm Berger. In four movements, the marvelous but long opening *Allegro moderato* has the touch of Brahms' spaciousness about it. He follows this up with an effective *Larghetto*, beautifully written and reminiscent of Schubert. I found the short third movement, *Gavotte, andante, quasi allegretto*, particularly striking, slinky and modern-sounding for its time. The finale, *Vivace*, is the perfect ending to what is an absolutely first rate piece of chamber music. I cannot recommend it enough. The other work on this CD, is **Gordon Jacob's Sextet**. Jacob (1895-1984) studied at the Royal College of Music under Sir Charles Stanford and later taught there between 1926-66. He gained a reputation not only as a teacher but also as one of Britain's important 20th Century composers. The Sextet, composed in 1962, is written for the same combination as Thuille's and was intended as a tribute to his late friend, Aubrey Brain, a French horn player and father of the legendary Dennis Brain. In five movements, the Sextet begins gently though not gloomily with an *Elegiac Prelude: andante poco lento*. There is a lazy, hazy, pastoral quality to the music which just sort of 'hangs in the air.' Next comes a very short, Gallic-sounding *Scherzo*. It is angular and looks back to *Les Six*. The very effective middle movement, *Cortège: andante poco lento*, conjures up images of a bedraggled funeral procession, at first it is sad but not with pathos. Gradually it rises though bringing forth a depth of feeling and dynamic intensity before it softly sags away. Jacobs follows this up with a *Minuet and trio, allegretto*. Here the main theme is almost pre-baroque and curiously combined with a neo-classical French filigree accompaniment giving it a vague whiff of Stravinsky. The sextet concludes, *Rondo with Epilogue: allegro vivace*. It is full of nervous energy. Again, this fetching music brings to mind the neo-classic tradition but also has many original touches of its own. This sextet is a very fine work. To conclude, this CD, in my opinion, is a must-buy with two first rate works that deserved to be heard live as well as on disk.

Piano Trio enthusiasts have much to be thankful for as so many little-known but wonderful works are being recorded. Perhaps no

development was not dissimilar from that of his friend Strauss. Although he started as a classicist and was conservative by nature, he became captivated by the rich orchestral colorists of late romanticism. According to the *New Grove*, his orchestral writing could be brilliant and his harmonies adventurous and forward looking although he

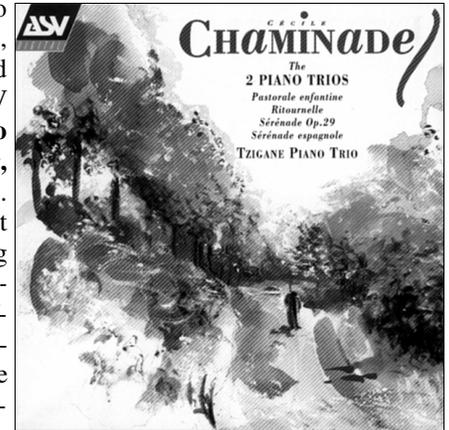
she only wrote two chamber music works, the piano trios recorded on this ASV CD#DCA965. **Piano Trio No.1 in g minor, Op.11** dates from 1881. In four movements, it begins with a flowing and slightly agitated *Allegro*. There is some affinity to the early chamber music works of Faure but she also shows a cognizance of Brahms. The *Andante* which follows is a Schumannesque lied. Next comes a racing *Presto leggero* in the manner of a scherzo. The brilliant opening theme in the piano is very French and updated in feel, the lovely lyrical second theme played by the strings provides excellent contrast and is traditional. The finale, *Allegro molto agitato* shows the influence of Godard as well as traditional central European musical thought. It is big but not overly long and brings this satisfying work to a suitable conclusion. This trio is very well-written, the piano neither overpowers nor out-plays the strings. It is a unified whole. The music has been recently republished by Durand. **Piano Trio No.2 in a minor, Op.34** was composed six years later. It has only three movements, omitting the scherzo. The opening theme to the powerfully scored *Allegro moderato* is characterized by scale passages but also a wealth of thematic material which fuses French and Central European styles together. The middle movement is a dignified but not funereal *Lento*. Highly lyrical, in my opinion, the use of doubling in the string parts heightens the effect of this very lovely music. The finale, *Allegro energico* alternates between forward thrusting thematic material and longer-lined lyricism, almost always given to the strings. While here the piano has a lot of notes, at least in this recording, (by the Tzigane Piano Trio) only what is important is heard, and one is not left with the impression that the piano part is florid. Certainly the 1st Trio, if not both, would do well in the concert hall. This is a CD well-worth investigating.

better example of this might be the piano trios of **Cecile Chaminade (1857-1944)** She studied privately with some of France's best including Benjamin Godard. Her reputation was unjustly "murdered" by some unknown (G. F. Mongredien) who wrote in a very early edition of *Grove's* that her pieces "do not rise above the drawing-room." Unfortunately this ridiculous dictum has been repeated in each successive edition including the *New Grove*. But Ambrose Thomas (composer of the opera *Mignon*) knew better. Upon hearing an orchestral work of the 18 year old Chaminade, he remarked, "This is no woman composer, this is a composer-woman. While the assessment in Cobbett's is hardly a sterling testimonial, at least it gives some reason for the opinions put forth and is not entirely dismissive. Primarily a concert pianist, Chaminade wrote over 200 works for piano and toured the world to considerable acclaim performing them. As far as I know

she only wrote two chamber music works, the piano trios recorded on this ASV CD#DCA965.

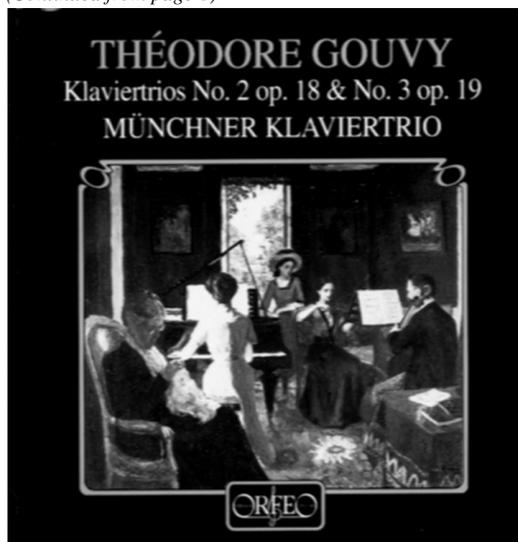
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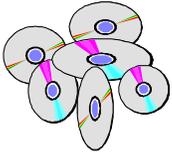
The chamber music of **Theodore Gouvy (1819-1898)** finally seems to have come to the attention of at least a few people in the recording industry. Readers may recall that we reviewed a release of his Piano Quintet, Op.24 and his String Quartet No.5 in the December issue of last year's *Journal*. From the Franco-German province of Lorraine, Gouvy was Prussian by citizenship, but French by culture and language and trained in Paris. For the most part however, he was little appreciated there as he was primarily a writer of symphonies and chamber music rather than operas which were all the rage of the Parisian musical public. As a result, even though he regarded himself as French, he lived most of his life in Leipzig where as he put it, he could find a properly heated room, get his music published, mix with artists such as Brahms, Reinbeck & Joachim and hear first class music. He wrote five piano trios of which two are presented on this Orfeo CD#C444971A. **Piano Trio No.2 in a minor, Op.18** composed in the early 1850s begins with a massive *Allegro vivace*. Agitated in mood, the influence of Mendelssohn can be heard very clearly. The piano writing, by no means easy, requires a deft touch to avoid wrecking this impressive opening movement. The string writing has much expressive melody. A broad and very beautiful *Andante* full of fine effects and part writing comes next. The spirit of Schubert infuses and is alive in the music. A very short but original and clever *Scherzo, Allegro assai* has an extremely challenging piano part which, like the music of Hummel, requires a very light touch to achieve the wondrous effect the Munich Piano Trio gets. The finale, *Allegro non troppo*, starts off with a fanfare and continues with a spacious theme which is not immediately as effective as the other movements although it has much to recommend it and certainly becomes better as time goes on. To me, this movement was overly long for the thematic material presented and the persistent use of the fanfare theme ultimately mars the music. A pity, since the rest of the trio is top notch. **Piano Trio No.3 in B Flat Major, Op.19**, also in four movements, was composed immediately after No.2. It begins with a very original sounding and captivating *Allegro moderato*. Much fetching melody is to be found here along with fine part-writing. This is followed up by a gentle *Intermezzo, Allegretto* which proceeds without pause into a lengthy *Adagio*. The hand of Beethoven seems to inform the music. It is a great pastoral canvas upon which Gouvy paints. The energetic and well-written finale, *Vivace assai*, is superbly constructed chamber music. I think this trio would be warmly received by concert hall audiences and can recommend that readers consider adding this CD to their collections. Gouvy, who wrote chamber music for strings, winds & piano, is a composer worth investigating.

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Karl Goldmark's dates (1830-1915) are within one year of those of the quintessential 19th Century Austrian emperor, Franz Josef. (1830-1916) Though born in Hungary, Goldmark, especially as a Jew, was more an Austrian than anything else. German was his first language and most of his life was spent in Vienna. Although he briefly attended a provincial conservatoire in Hungary, he learned nothing there and largely taught himself through a systematic study of the major treatises on composition while working as a theater violinist in Pest. The two piano trios recorded on Hungaroton CD#HCD31709 for the first time are the only ones he published. (Several were written in his youth and apparently destroyed) His **Piano Trio No.1, Op.4 in B Flat Major** composed from 1859. Goldmark had written considerably more than three works prior this, but destroyed everything he wrote before the age of 27 bitterly recognizing that it was of little value. The Op.4 dates from shortly after his own studies in Pest. The opening movement marked, *Schnell*, begins with a Nordic scale passage that sounds as if Svendsen had written it. However this is just a bar and there is a lot of tuneful thematic material stuffed into this movement, some of it quite original. One hears clearly that this is a mainstream mid-romantic German work, but there is no real lasting impression, despite the fact that it is well-written, because the themes are too pedestrian. However, in the following *Adagio*, Goldmark makes better use of Gypsy melody. A big movement, but good. A short fugal *Scherzo* follows. Here, again, Goldmark makes good use of his thematic material to create a more lasting impression. The fourth movement, marked simply *Finale*, is an allegro and much like the first movement: big, full of tunes, well-conceived and executed, but there is a certain something missing which might make it memorable. **Piano Trio No.2, Op.33 in e minor** was written some 20 years later. The opening theme to the massive first movement, *Allegro con moto* has a Brahmsian brooding to it, but Goldmark develops it differently and in sum, the musical language is closer to Schumann. Perhaps it is the melodies, but again for some reason, nothing seems to stay with one, despite the geniality of the music. But what a difference in the brilliant and exciting *Scherzo*, a real gem, perfect in every way including the marvelously contrasting dreamy trio section. A short and straight forward *Andante sostenuto* sounds as if it is to be a long and dramatic movement. The opening theme is darkish, the second, stated by the piano, is very dramatic and sounds as if it is out of Chopin. But in the end, the movement (which is played *attacca to the finale*) is nothing more than a long introduction to the finale, *Allegro*, which though lengthy is, at least for once, effective. This is a good trio, and despite some misgivings about the opening movement should be performed in concert.



(Continued on page 10)



Diskology: String Quartets by Eugene D'Albert, Johannes Bernardus Van Bree & Johann Wilhelm Wilms

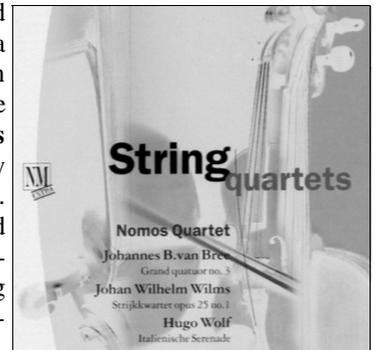


Eugène D'Albert (1864-1932) was just a name to me until I came across Pan Classics CD#510 097. From years of thumbing through record bins at music shops, I knew he had been a great pianist and composer of piano works, but really knew nothing more than these vague facts. So it was with much surprise that I learned (as I researched this article) that D'Albert was not only a pianist of the first rank, but also a composer whose compositions were admired by Liszt, Brahms, Richter & Eduard Hanslick among others. Born in Glasgow

to a French father. (His grandfather had been a cavalry officer in Napoleon's Grand Armee). His father, also a pianist and bandmaster, gave him his formative first lessons. His talent was recognized early on and as a result he won scholarships which brought him to London. There he was heard by Hans Richter who sent him to see Liszt in Vienna. In Vienna he also met Brahms who was very impressed by D'Albert's playing, as was Liszt, who took him on as a student and came to call him *Albertus Magnus*. The famous Viennese critic Hanslick was astounded at the maturity of the 18 year old D'Albert's compositions. After completing his studies with Liszt, D'Albert embarked on a successful concert career which included a series of legendary concerts in which he, under the baton of Brahms, interpreted the latter's two piano concertos. While the bulk of his compositions were either for piano or the opera, D'Albert did write two string quartets, recorded here. **String Quartet No.1, Op.7 in a minor** dates from 1886-7. It is four movements, the first is marked *Liedenschaftlich bewegt* (Passionately agitated). This properly describes the main theme. The writing exhibits considerable chromaticism and has episodes of Lisztian tonality more advanced than what one finds in Brahms. A surprising fugue brings the movement to close. A certain cohesion to the musical thought, however, is missing, perhaps caused by the abundance of ideas. The next movement, *Langsam mit Ausdruck* (slow with expression) although huge, does not have this problem. It is lyrically elegiac and contains effective writing for strings. Then comes a very fine and original-sounding scherzo, *Mäßig Bewegt* (moderate tempo). This is a kind of quick waltz. The trio section is faster yet. A first rate movement. The finale, *In maßiger, ruhiger Bewegung-Thema mit Variationen* (Moderate & peaceful, theme & variations) is the longest of the four movements and begins with a charming theme. Among the many variations, some are particularly interesting and adventurous tonally. Yet it must be said that the choice of a theme & variation format—rarely effective for finales—was probably ill-advised. Although this is a good work, it is not first rate all the way through. The excellence of the middle movements is dimmed somewhat by the outer ones. **String Quartet No.2, Op.11 in E Flat**, also in four movements, was composed in 1893 and dedi-

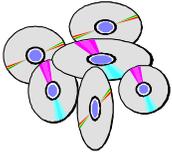
cated to Brahms, who in his letter thanking D'Albert, noted that the opening theme to the first movement, *Andante con moto*, shows some resemblance to the beginning of Beethoven's Op.127 Quartet. This is a spacious movement, yet the unity of thought is preserved. An absolutely extraordinary scherzo, *Allegro vivace*, follows. This rhythmically interesting (3/4, 2/4, 5/4, 6/8) and exotic, bizarre and very tonally advanced music has an almost, but not quite, French flavor to it. All the voices are muted in a hectic, insect-like buzzing. The short, genial trio section provides a good contrast. The Quartet's center of gravity is clearly the *Adagio ma non troppo e con molto espressione*. Much of the movement is characterized by the beautiful cantilena, high in the violin register, while the other voices almost independently explore the supporting harmony. The buoyant finale, *Allegro*, opens with a richly romantic theme, which shows some Brahmsian influence. It is music full of joy and lovely melodies as well as an effective conclusion. This is a finished work and Hanslick was right to highly praise it. It would be an ornament in any quartet's repertoire.

Neither of the two featured composers on this NM Extra CD#98010 gets much ink in Cobbett's *Cyclopaedia*. Of the two, **Johannes Bernardus van Bree (1801-57)** is today perhaps the better known. Trained as a violinist and composer, he became conductor of Amsterdam's leading music ensemble and composed in nearly every genre.



In the 1830's, he founded the renowned Amsterdam String Quartet and served as its 1st violinist for over 20 years. Most sources indicate that he composed three string quartets. **String Quartet No.3 in d minor** dates from 1848. The lovely first movement, *Allegro moderato*, opens with a sad and haunting theme. One feels the influence of both Schubert and Mendelssohn. The second movement, *Scherzo vivace*, is exuberating. Perhaps the show piece, *Air russe (Andante con variazioni)* is a set of variations on a well-known Russian folk tune, *Krasny Sarafan* (The red cloak). The finale, *Allegro un poco agitato*, is a pastiche of several styles. Certain Mendelssohnic effects are quite evident but successfully employed. Despite its eclectic nature, the movement works. While I would not argue that this is a masterpiece, I consider myself fortunate in that I own a set of parts to this work and have played it with great enjoyment many times. It is a good quartet and I have no doubt audiences would find it very pleasing as well.

Johan Wilhelm Wilms (1772-1847) was an all round Dutch musician, pianist, flautist, church organist and composer. He wrote two string quartets. **String Quartet No.1, Op.25 in g** is thought to date from around 1806. The jacket notes remark that it sounds remarkably modern for its time. I don't agree. Haydn had written more modern sounding music 15 years earlier. Onslow's first quartet written about the same time sounds light years ahead by comparison. I would say this music sounds like it was composed



String Quartet No.2 in g minor by Nancy Dalberg A String Sextet & String Quartet by Hakon Børresen

around 1775-1780. The first movement, *Allegro*, is very charming with gracious melodies, however, the first violin seems to have all of the thematic and melodic material. An *Andante* has rococo written all over it. Here the material get thrown around a little more. On the whole its quite charming though unremarkable. A third movement, *Menuetto allegro*, is good and sounds like it might have been written by Haydn around 1770. The finale, *Allegro*, is a mix of middle Mozart and early Schubert. If I have one criticism of this quartet, it is that it does not have a particularly original quality to it. However, it is filled with beautiful melodies which are very ingratiating. While not a candidate for the concert hall, except as an historic example of Dutch chamber music, I would very much like to have the chance to play it and am sure readers would enjoy hearing it. (Wolf's *Italian Serenade* is also on disk)



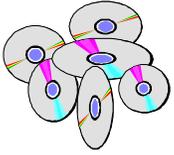
If you are looking for an important 20th Century Scandinavian woman composer, you need look no farther than **Nancy Dalberg (1881-1949)**. (The editors of the *New Grove* are ignorant of this wonderful composer!) Dalberg grew up on the Danish island of Funen (Fyn) where she leaned to play the piano. Her father, a well-off industrialist, refused her wish to study at the Royal Conservatory in Copenhagen and in the end she took private composition lessons from Johan Svendsen, Fini Henriques and Carl Nielsen. She was the first Danish woman composer to write a symphony. It was premiered to critical acclaim although it was noted with surprise and perhaps a touch of condescension that Dalberg was a woman. It is a problem that is still with us today. Of her **String Quartet No.2, Op.14 in g**, Wilhelm Altmann, perhaps the greatest of all chamber music critics, has written, "*Nancy Dalberg published this work without giving her forename, and, had I not learned by chance that it was composed by a woman, considering also the austerity and native strength of her music, it would never have occurred to me that it was a woman speaking to us. Her mastery of the technique of composition is remarkable, and she has something definite to say.*" Dating from 1922, the Quartet is in four movements. The opening *Moderato—Allegro vivo* begins with an ominous theme, based on a turn (∞), first introduced in the cello's lowest register. It builds quickly to a climax wherein the others soon join. This is a big and passionate movement always tonal and certainly more accessible than Nielsen's later quartets. An *Allegro scherzando*, is very modern sounding, wayward tonally, but quite clever. Next comes an *Andante con moto e cantabile*. This is truly a brilliant example of mixing episodes of very wayward tonality with traditional melody. At times rising to high passion, at other times falling back, this music effortlessly helps to extend one's range of hearing and appreciation of tonality to its outer limits. In the last movement, *Allegro molto e con spirito*, there is perhaps a touch of Nielsen but without the foreknowledge that he was her teacher, one might not reach this conclusion. While good, the movement gets off to a somewhat unfocused beginning and is not quite up to

the very high standard of the others, although it picks up as it moves along to convincing conclusion. Overall this is a first rate work which deserves to be known outside of Denmark and belongs in the concert hall. This quartet can be heard on Dacapo CD#8.224138 along with two orchestral works, some songs and a duo for violin and piano.

While fellow Dane **Hakon Børresen (1879-1954)** makes the cut in the *New Grove*, he merits but the briefest reference in Cobbett's *Cyclopedia*. A student of Svendsen, Børresen perhaps gets some ink in the *New Grove* because of his popular (at least in Denmark) works for stage, including the *Royal Guest*, probably the most successful early 20th Century Danish opera. He wrote only a few chamber works, two of which are presented on this CPO CD#999-613-2. The first is his **String Sextet, Op.5 in G** which dates from 1901 and was dedicated to Edvard Grieg, who spoke highly about it. The opening *Allegro moderato, ma energico*, begins quite like Svendsen's own Octet with a powerful, energetic and Nordic-sounding main theme. This is a very big movement, full of lovely melodies and at times unexpected and quirky rhythms. It is followed by an *Allegro* which, though not so marked, is a nicely conceived and somewhat genial scherzo. A sedate *Adagio* is characterized by very long-lined melodies. It is a rather reflective and introspective piece. The finale, *Allegro molto vivace*, opens in much the same fashion as the first movement. Both the first theme and second themes sound Nordic, and Svendsen's compositional technique can also, at times, be heard. But there are some original touches here and there. This Sextet, while not on the same level as those of Brahms or Tchaikovsky, is still a solid work which makes a nice addition to the scanty sextet literature. It is good to hear and I imagine fun to play. (As far as I know, it is not now in print) Although Børresen's **String Quartet No.2 in c** was composed nearly 20 years after Dalberg's Second Quartet, his musical language, though advanced far beyond that of his Sextet, nonetheless, remained far more conservative than hers. In this work, the writing is entirely original and devoid both of Svendsen's influence as well as the need to produce something Nordic-sounding. In four movements, it opens with a very effective *Allegro agitato*. Here we are in the post-Brahmsian world of the late romantics. There is something reminiscent of Dohnanyi. The *Intermezzo, molto vivace*, is the most striking and original of the movements. The first theme, played entirely pizzicato—much of it in lower registers, makes a strong impression. Some of the writing makes the quartet sound like guitars. This is followed up with an *Andante patetico* which holds one's interest from start finish. The concluding *Presto*, played *attacca*, is more energetic than fast. Its main theme, somewhat astringent, starts powerfully but loses steam as it develops. A lovely and lyrical second theme unfortunately only appears briefly and does not get developed. On the whole, this Quartet is a good work and should be of interest to amateurs, but I am not sure if it merits revival in the concert hall.

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Kreutzer's Clarinet Qt, Piano Qt & Quintet for Piano, Winds & Strings Czerny's Grande Serenade Concertante; Reichardt: 4 String Trios



Conradin Kreutzer (1780-1849) is another one of those men writing in the early romantic period whose charming music has been neglected. I cannot say entirely neglected as there has generally been a few pieces of his that have always been available on disk, such as his Septet, Op.62 for winds and strings, perhaps his best known instrumental work. Kreutzer left his native Swabia and

came to Vienna around 1800 where he completed his studies with Albrechtsberger and got to know both Haydn and Beethoven. His music shows a clear gift for melody and his instrumental writing shows knowledge of the instruments. I would not call any of his works shoddy or second rate. His style shows similarities to other better known early romantic composers such as Hummel, Weber and middle Schubert. Fetis's wrong-headed one sentence murder of Kreutzer's reputation is reproduced in Cobbett and should be ignored by all. The first work on this Orfeo CD#C512-991A is his **Quartet for Clarinet & String Trio in E flat**. No information whatsoever is given about this work, but I would say that it probably dates from 1810-1825. It is relatively short (14½ minutes) and in three movements: *Allegro*, *Andante grazioso* & *Rondo—Allegro moderato*. It must be said that this is a piece which is a vehicle for the clarinet even more than say Weber's Clarinet Quintet. It is a kind of *quatour brillant* for clarinet. Probably written during Kreutzer's time in Vienna upon order from some great clarinet virtuoso. He exploits the instrument masterfully and is able to write decent accompaniment for the strings but they have little if anything to do with the melodies presented, all of which are fresh and lovely. The **Piano Quartet** was published in Vienna in 1834 as *Grand Quatour Concertante*. As the title implies, the writing is concertante style with piano and the violin getting most but by no means all of the melodic episodes. The approach here is similar to that of Moscheles and perhaps to a lesser extent to that of Hummel. The opening *Allegro risoluto* is dramatic, full of energy and captivating melody. Though fairly lengthy, it holds one's interest entirely. In the *Andante grazioso*, the strings take over as the piano weaves a beautiful filigree obbligato. This is a superb movement full of lovely writing for all! In the finale, also *Allegro Risoluto*, Kreutzer uses the instruments much as Schumann, pitting the piano against the strings led by the violin. I thought this a first rate work, of its type, and believe it would be successful in concert. The last work on disk is the **Quintet for Piano, Flute, Clarinet, Viola & Cello**, which was never published. The parts used for the recording were in the library of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna. In four movements, the opening *Allegro maestoso* is written on a grand scale and has a definite Schubertian quality to it. There are a lot of notes to the piano part, however, they must be played lightly *a la Hummel* and in the background as the winds and strings have most of the wonderful melodic material. The following *Adagio* begins with the piano stating a very emotional theme, *patetico*. Here he uses all of the instruments together in masterful fashion. This is a gripping movement. The *Scherzo molto vivace* features charming tunes

with superb use of the instruments. The finale, *Tempo di Polonaise* could have been written by Chopin himself. Again the use of all the instruments is perfect and even the tiny piano cadenza does not offend. For its time, this is an absolutely first rate work. What a pity it has never been published, but it probably would not get played much because of its combination of instruments. Still, it's a pleasure to be able to hear it on disk. Highly recommended.

Carl Czerny (1791-1851) was born, died and spent much of his life in Vienna where at an early age he became Beethoven's most famous piano student and later a great pianist as well as one of the most important piano teachers of the 19th Century. (He numbered Liszt among his many famous pupils) Though, today he is mostly known for his etudes which are still studied by pianists, he wrote over 1000 compositions of which a fair amount were chamber music. The **Grand Serenade Concertante Op.125 for Piano, Clarinet, Horn & Cello** dates from 1827 and is heard on Meridian CD# CDE84310 along with several duos for flute & piano. First comes an *Introduzione-Adagio* then the *Theme, Allegretto grazioso*. This in turn is followed by 7 variations, in each instrument is featured in one variation, but the piano is favored and given 3, two of which are "*molto difficultissimo*." The variations, which are the weakest part of this piece, are followed by an *Adagio* and *Allegro vivace*. While pleasant, even the finale, in which Czerny uses the instruments fairly well, cannot be compared in the same breath to the music of Kreutzer reviewed above.



Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814) was born in Königsburg, capital of East Prussia. A student of Immanuel Kant, he briefly attended law school before setting out on a music career. The most important influence on him was C.P.E. Bach whose style the music on this disk resembles. At 23, he was appointed music director by Frederick the Great to the Prussian Court but enjoyed no great success. The music on this MDG CD#603-0731 was written between 1778-82 and does not sound very different from what Mozart wrote before he came under Haydn's influence. All of the trios are in 3 movements, in a fast—slow—fast format. The first work, **Op.1 No.3 in Bb**, is for violin, viola and cello and is perhaps the strongest from the perspective of part-writing. The parts are in print from Zimmerman. The viola and cello are treated almost as equals to the violin. The writing is concertante style. The 3 trios of **Op.4 Nos.1-3** are for 2 violins and cello. Here, the melody is primarily given to the 1st violin. These are all charming, well put together pieces and enjoyable to hear.