



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

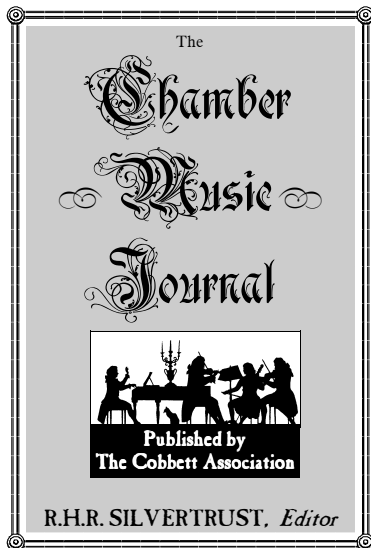
*The Essential Guide  
For Players & Listeners  
To The Wider World  
of Chamber Music*

***Joachim Raff: The Piano Trios***  
***Heinrich von Herzogenberg's***  
***The Chamber Music for Piano & Winds***  
***Ernst von Dohnanyi—A String Sextet***  
***And the 2nd Piano Quintet***

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# The Sounding Board-Letters to the Editor



## Wants Parts to Burgmüller Quartets

In the last issue of *The Journal*, you reviewed CDs of Norbert Burgmüller four string quartets (MDG CD #336 0993 (Qts 2 & 4) & 336 0994—ed.). I like what I heard on the sound-bites I found on the Cobbett Association website ([www.cobbettassociation.org](http://www.cobbettassociation.org)—ed) and was wondering whether parts to this music exist. By the way, congratulations on the new website. I found it quite useful, especially the sound-bites you have provided for the CDs which have been reviewed.

Matthew Williamson  
Houston, Texas

*Good news, as is often the case now when a previously unrecorded and out of print work appears on CD, the republication of the parts is not far behind. All four of Burgmüller's quartets have recently been published and can be ordered from Cobbett Member music shops such as Broekmans en Van Poppel of Amsterdam ([www.broekmans.com](http://www.broekmans.com)) or Performers Music of Chicago. (☎ 312-987-1196).*

## On String Trios

Ray Silvertrust's article brought an interesting perspective to Dohnanyi's inspiration for his Trio by Beethoven's Serenade trio. The Dohnanyi Trio is indeed one of the treasures of the chamber literature. Readers might not know that the haunting theme of the *Andante con moto* was surely the inspiration for the theme of the movie *Baghdad Cafe* (1988), titled *Calling You*, composed by Bob Telson the previous year and sung by Jevetta Steele.

I question whether Beethoven chose the trio medium for his early compositions because it was "considerably less daunting." It is generally recognized that the trio cannot carry the richness and the textural flexibility of the quartet, but it offers the challenge to both players and composers of maintaining interest and equality of the three voices. When a player is late to a reading session, Bach's Goldberg *Variations*, in the excellent arrangement from Doblinger, tunes up the group nicely for quartets. I believe that Beethoven, having learned the piano from Bach's *Well-Tempered Klavier*, wanted to develop his part-writing skills through this time-honored contrapuntal technique, just as Haydn and Mozart did after their exposure to the antiquarian salon of von Swieten in Vienna. That composers after Beethoven bypassed the genre is as much a reflection of its difficulty as of its distance from the Classical and Romantic tastes. There are also

some fine trios for 2 violins and viola from the 19th century, besides the Dvorak, by Hummel, Pleyel, Cremont, and Rolla.

Ron Erickson  
Fort Myers, Florida

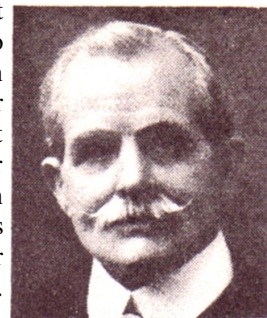
## Praise for Carl Reinecke

I want to thank you for Emil Lindbach's article on Carl Reinecke's fine works for piano, strings and winds. As a pianist, I had only played with string players—usually piano trios and on rare occasions, piano quintets. Lindbach's article whetted my curiosity and I called a clarinetist friend to ask if he knew about these works. He did indeed. Not only was he keen to play them, he had the music. As a result, I had the chance to play Reinecke's Trio for Clarinet, Viola & Piano, Op.264. What a marvelous work, so well-written and satisfying to play. We also played Bruch's *Eight Pieces* for the same combination as well as the Schumann *Märchenerzahlungen*, Op.132. On another occasion, my friend arranged for a hornist to be with us and we played the Reinecke Trio for Clarinet, Horn & Piano, also a very good work. I was also introduced to Franz Lachner's interesting Trio for the same combination as well as Gustav Jenner's superb trio. So really, the purpose of my writing is to alert pianists to the fact that there is a whole world of worthwhile music out there which you can share with your friends who are wind players.

Joshua Cohen  
New York, New York

## What Cobbett Looked Like

Despite the fact that Robert Maas chose to name this Association in honor of Walter William Cobbett (1847-1937), other than a brief paragraph in the first issue of his *Newsletter*, he never wrote about Cobbett. Almost 10 years ago, to celebrate the sesquicentennial anniversary of Cobbett's birth, we devoted a short article to him. (Vol.8 No.1, March 1997). No picture was available at the time. But thanks to Mr. Terry King who sent us this photograph, readers now are able to see what he looked like.



*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.*

# Joachim Raff: The Piano Trios

by Larius J. Ussi



Today, who has heard of the name of Joachim Raff and who knows, or has heard, any of his music? One small morsel, his famous *Cavatina*, is all that has stood between him and total oblivion. Poor Raff! It was not always so. No, if you had, say between 1875 and 1910, consulted any of the many books and articles that were devoted to discussing the music of the then contemporary composers, you would have found Raff's name always mentioned along with those of Liszt, Brahms and Wagner as one of Germany's leading composers. His music was compared favorably with that of Mendelssohn, Schumann and Tchaikovsky and, if concert programs are anything to go by, performed just as often. Yet, by 1920, his music had all but disappeared from the concert stage and it would only be another decade before his name faded away altogether.

The question invariably arises as to why and how such a meteoric decline occurred. Raff's reputation certainly was not the only one which waned and to a great extent its initial disappearance can be attributed to the highly negative attitude toward romanticism which occurred after the First World War. This revulsion with romanticism temporarily harmed the reputations of many romantic composers and, for a long time, destroyed the popularity of their music as well. Names, such as Spohr and Hummel, which had been very close to the front rank, all but vanished and their music entirely disappeared from the concert stage. Even such greats as Schumann and Mendelssohn did not entirely escape this phenomenon. But whereas Mendelssohn and Schumann had recovered by mid-century, and Spohr and Hummel began to revive during the 1970's, Raff and his music continued to be ignored until only a few years ago. This was pretty much due to a factor that applied only to him: Raff, despite having written many masterworks, had unfortunately penned literally hundreds of pieces of little or no musical value. There was certainly a reason

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Heinrich von Herzogenberg's Chamber Music for Piano & Winds

by Armin Hochbauer

In the past ten to fifteen years, the name of Heinrich von Herzogenberg (1843-1900) has risen, if not exactly to fame, at least from the depths of oblivion. Ten years younger than Brahms, he spent most of his living in the latter's shadow because many of his works show the influence of that composer. And, it was an influence, which on occasion, almost rose to the level of imitation. It is ironic, however, that many of these works are of such excellence that they could well have been written by the master. Brahms himself grudgingly recognized this fact, which in no small part led to his generally distant, if not at times, hostile attitude toward Herzogenberg, for it is one thing to write a second rate work which shows the influence of great composer, but quite another to write a piece that is every bit as good. The truth was, that beneath this aura of hero-worship, Herzogenberg was a master composer in his own right. But, as I have noted, what stopped him and his works from receiving the recognition they ought to have received is the fact that they often showed such strong resemblance to those of Brahms. This is especially true when speaking of Herzogenberg's chamber music. It would, however, be an omission to not to point out that Herzogenberg was at times influenced by the music of Bach, Schumann and by the composers of the so-called New German School.



Herzogenberg was born in Graz, the provincial capital of Steiermark (Styria) and was the son of a minor Austrian imperial bureaucrat. He had the typical education then given to children of the middle and upper classes in the German-speaking world: Gymnasium and university. At the University of Vienna, where he matriculated in 1861, he initially pursued law studies but soon dropped out to study composition with Otto Dessoff, who was a professor at the Vienna Conservatory and a

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## ERNST VON DOHNANYI

An Early String Sextet  
The 2nd Piano Quintet

by R.H.R. Silvertrust

*In the first two parts of this series, the author discussed Dohnanyi's Piano Quartet, Piano Quintet No.1, Hochzeitmarsch for Piano Quintet, String Quartet Nos. 1 & 2 and Serenade for String Trio.*

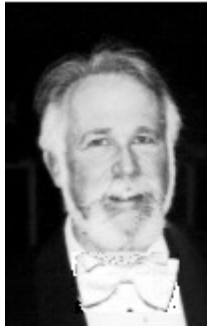
Prior to beginning this series, I had heard reports that Dohnanyi had composed a string sextet in his youth which had never been published or recorded. This information slipped my mind, however, or I would have included a brief note to this effect in the first part of my article. Since then (December 2005), a recording of the Sextet work has been made and was released in early 2006 on Hungaroton CD#32300. I have obtained this recording (sound-bites should be on our website by the time you read this), and while I almost never discuss a work which I myself have not performed or at least have played through, for the sake of completeness, I will discuss the sextet based, solely upon hearing it. I wish to emphasize that I have not played it.

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## At The Doublebar



By the time you receive this issue, summer will be well under way and many of you will have found your way to the wonderful and numerous chamber music workshops, camps and holiday venues which exit through-

out North America and Europe. Last summer, in an attempt to increase our membership (which declines in great part because of old age and the death of our members), I sent the directors of over 70 chamber music workshops information about The Cobbett Association, including applications for membership and several samples of past issues of *The Journal*, which were intended for distribution among the participants of the workshops. I have to say that I was rather surprised and disappointed at the poor response to this time-consuming effort. Of course, I cannot be sure that our information was even put on display, let alone looked at. Still, I felt and feel certain that there should be a fair amount of interest in an organization such as ours at these gatherings. So it is for this reason that I encourage those of you who have the opportunity to attend these workshops to interest your fellow participants. We stand ready to provide you with printed material, such as sample issues of *The Journal*, or any other materials you feel you might need.

Larius Ussi's article on Joachim Raff is the beginning of a long overdue examination of this composer's chamber music. It is hard to believe, given the number of really first rate works he wrote, that in the 16 years of *The Journal's* existence, Raff's name has only appeared once and that in passing. Of course, as Mr. Ussi explains in the first part of his excellent article, the disappearance of Raff's music and reputation are rather a unique case, but all the same unjust in light of the quantity of fine music which came from his pen.

I think wind players will find Professor Hochbauer's article on Herzogenberg's two works for piano and winds very interesting and the music well-worth investigating. And I trust that readers will also find my continuing series on Dohnanyi's chamber music of interest.—Ray Silvertrust,

## Dohnanyi-an Early String Sextet and The 2nd Piano Quintet

(Continued from page 3)

Dohnanyi's **String Sextet in B Flat Major** was completed in November of 1893. Dohnanyi later revised it in 1896, after two years of composition study with Hans Koessler at the Budapest Academy of Music. Still not satisfied with the result, he revised it once again during 1898-99. I have learned from my research that the original manuscript, i. e. the 1893 version is in the British Library. Florida State University, where Dohnanyi-taught for many years, has the manuscript of the revised 1896 version. Unfortunately, the location of the 1898-99 version is unknown or this version has been lost. The recording was therefore made from the 1896 version.

The Sextet was one of the works Dohnanyi submitted at his entrance examination to the Academy in 1894. He was 17, and according to the author of the jacket notes, Laszlo Gomgos, he had already composed three string quartets, a piano quartet, two cello sonatas, an overture, several songs and a mass in addition to the Sextet.

A comparison between the masterly Piano Quartet, (discussed briefly in part one of this article and at greater length in a CD review in the Spring 2006 issue of *The Journal*) and the Sextet is quite interesting. In four movements, the Sextet begins with an *Allegro ma tranquillo*. This is a big, spacious movement, lasting nearly as long as the other three movements altogether, but the one thing it is not, is tranquil. The promising opening theme first stated by the two cellos, is dark, brooding and mysterious. As it is restated by the higher voices, it becomes more vibrant and less mysterious. One also hears Brahms quoted, in the use of a mordent and a turn, early on and it seems rather likely that the young Dohnanyi had Brahms' B Flat Op.18 Sextet in mind when he wrote that passage. In my opinion, there is absolutely no reason why he should have written the passage as it does not particularly fit. The second theme is brighter and lovely, and has a Schubertian quality to it. As the movement progresses, there are other instances where the hand of Brahms rests somewhat heavily upon the composer. Like the Piano Quartet, the instruments are very well handled and the part-writing is quite good but I think the development of the themes is weaker. In view of this, I am not sure that the movement's length is justified. This problem is not noticeable in the Piano Quartet perhaps because so many themes appear, whereas in the Sextet, Dohnanyi confines himself more classically to just two.

The fleet, short second movement, *Scherzo, Allegro vivace*, is Mendelssohnian in nature, light and airy. Certainly Brahms never wrote anything like it. The trio, is a rich string choral, darker and quieter in nature, and provides excellent contrast. After the return of the scherzo, surprisingly, there is a highly lyrical second trio led by the cellos. It mushrooms forth with great passion before the scherzo returns to bring the movement to an end—an outstanding movement, perfect in every way.

The third movement, *Adagio quasi andante*, is a rather sedate affair. The opening is not particularly noteworthy, however, as the music is developed it becomes quite interesting, seemingly inspired by late Beethoven. The first cello is given the lead on several occasions to state the more poignant melodies. The writing, generally rich and quite dense, at other times is almost ethereal.

The somewhat didactic first theme to the finale, *Animato*, reminds one of a Mendelssohnian or Schumannesque march. The second theme is, at first, lighter, but it blossoms forth with some rather interesting episodes that tonally are quite advanced and typical of Dohnanyi's writing during his middle period. Despite the fact that movement is not quite six minutes in length, it is too long for the material and its treatment. The melodic progression of the coda reminds one of Dvorak.

In sum, while the Sextet is not as fine as the Piano Quartet, it is not a bad work. Its greatest weakness is to be found in the first movement with some of the Brahms quotes. The elimination of these would in no way harm the music, quite the contrary. As previously noted, Dohnanyi was not entirely satisfied with this version and again revised it, although no one knows in what way. I would say it is strong enough to be

republished but not to gain a place in the concert hall given the fact that there are better sextets which we unfortunately do not get to hear. If Dohnanyi had substantially shortened the first movement and had removed the ever present Brahmsian mordent and turn, and if the thematic treatment of the finale were strengthened, then this verdict could be revised.

Roughly 12 years separate the last chamber work Dohnanyi wrote (Serenade for String Trio, Op.10) before he began work on his **Piano Quintet No.2, Op.26 in e flat minor**. It was completed in 1914. In his very uneven article on Dohnanyi for *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey*, Donald Tovey, in complete contrast to Brahms' opinion, bizarrely dismissed the First Piano Quintet as a work of little value, comparing it to the early Sextet which he never heard but had only heard about! For some reason, the fact that Tovey had heard Dohnanyi as the pianist at the English premiere seems to have put him off the work. However, even Tovey recognized the excellence of the Second Piano Quintet, which has been regarded by one and all as one of the great masterworks for piano quintet.—As a sad aside, I wonder how many readers have actually heard this work performed in concert. Pitifully few, I would hazard. No, our unimaginative programmers and performing groups always give us the same old Schumann or Dvorak.

Although only in three rather than four movements, the quintet, nonetheless is written on a



substantial scale. The opening *Allegro non troppo* begins very softly and mysteriously. The strings, led by the first violin, present the opening theme (see: left) in their lower registers over a soft, prolonged triplet piano accompaniment which almost sounds like

tremolo. Tension is built slowly and one expects that there will be an emotional explosion when the piano finally takes part in the theme. But surprisingly, this does not happen. Instead, the piano is allowed to present a more elastic and powerful version of the theme. While the tension, created mainly by the soft tremolo now in the strings, is still there, it remains beneath the surface, as the piano plays a more heroic version of the theme. (See right) Whereas the initial statement was filled with a mood of foreboding, here there is a feeling of destiny, that something soon will happen. The second theme is more lyrical and lighter. Its developed in a rather chromatic fashion during an extended interplay between the strings and piano. With the return of the first subject, once again, we are brought face to face with the initial unrest. This time, for sure, one feels there will be an explosion in the coda, but there is not. The music just expires softly, evaporating into thin air.



The second movement is marked *Intermezzo, allegretto*, but this marking does not really tell the full story. The very lovely, lilting opening theme (see left), initially stated by the viola and then by the first violin, is indeed treated in the fashion of an intermezzo. It is clothed in the unmistakable aura of an elegant late Viennese waltz. What follows this, however, is quite different. One suddenly becomes aware that this

dance theme is not being developed in any traditional way. It seems as if Dohnanyi has created a theme with a set of five short variations. But even this is not quite accurate. There are five different interludes which flirt with being variations, but which at the same time show some traditional developmental traits. Sometimes they interrupt each other, sometimes not. The first, a *Presto*, is a playful scherzo. (see below). This is followed by a, *Rubato e capriccioso*, basically a piano cadenza which leads, without any pause,



to a *Tempo del primo pezzo*, a brief lyrical trio for the upper voices. This, in turn, is followed by a second *Presto* which is not entirely the same as the initial one. It then merges into a *Vivace*, with quick downward plunging, scale

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passages in the piano. At last the theme returns and is given a more regular developmental treatment in the form of a coda.

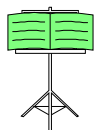
The finale, *Moderato*, begins with an extraordinarily somber canon, (see right) with the cello beginning and the others following in step upward by voice. Although funereal, there is neither pathos nor any sense of tragedy but rather a mood of regret and resignation of the sort one finds in Beethoven's Late Quartets. Tonally, Dohnanyi seems poised on the precipice of an abyss, much like where Schönberg found himself at the time he



wrote *Verklärte Nacht*. The second theme (see left), is presented in its entirety by the piano. Although solemn, it is not charged with the same pervasive pessimism of the first. An impassioned and lengthy development of both themes takes up the rest of the movement, which remains somber, if not entirely pessimistic right up to its close.

There have been several recordings of this work and the parts are available from Boosey and Hawkes. (This article will conclude in the next issue of *The Journal*.)

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## New Recordings



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

### String Quartets

Antonio BAZZINI (1818-97) Nos.1-6, Dynamic 486-1-10 / Sally BEAMISH (1956-) Nos.1-2, BIS 1511 / Luigi BOCCHERINI (1743-1805) G. Nos.165-70, 213-15, 232-35, 248-49, Dynamic 486-1-10 / Robert CASADESUS (1899-1972) Nos.1-4, Opus Millesime 20041 / Valery GAVRILIN (1939-99) Nos.1 & 3, Quadro Disc KTL03-753 / Alberto GINASTERA (1916-83) Nos.1-2, Arte Nova 721250 / Mikhail GLINKA (1804-57) Nos.1-2, Suoni e Colori 53003 / Andre GRETRY (1741-1813) Op.3 Nos.1-6, Musica Ficta 8004 / Robin IRELAND (1954-) No.1, Meridian 84528 / Ben JOHNSTON (1926-) Nos.2-4 & 9, New World 80637 / Ayme KUNC (1877-1958) Nos.1-2, Suoni e Colori 253262 / Gian Francesco MALIPIERO (1882-1973) Nos.1-8, Dynamic 486-1-10 / Darius MILHAUD (1892-1974) No.4, MD&G 307 1359 / Conlon NANCARROW (1912-97) No.1, Other Minds 1002 / Ignaz PLEYEL (1756-1831) Op.2 Nos.4-6, Naxos 8.557497 / Ferdinand RIES (1784-1837) WoO Nos.10 & 37, CPO 777014 / Henri RIGEL (1741-99) Op.10 Nos.1-6, Atma 2348 / Arnold SCHONBERG (1874-1951) Nos.2 & 6, Naxos 8.557521 / Ruth SCHONTHAL (1924-) No.3,

Naxos 8.559451 / Sholum SECUNDA (1894-1974) Qt, Naxos 8.559451 / Germaine TAILLEFERRE (1892-1983) Qt, MD&G 307 1359 / Sergei TANEYEV (1856-1915) Nos.1-2, Northern Flowers 9933 / Anton TIETZ (1742-1810) Qt 2Vln, Vla & Kb, Caro Mitis 0022004 / Reza VALI (1952-) Nos.2-3, Albany Troy 790 / Riccardo ZANDONAI (1883-1944) Qt, Dynamic 486-1-10

### Strings Only-Not Quartets

Luigi BOCCHERINI (1743-1805) Op.11 Nos.1-6, Brilliant 92889 / Mark Rurnage (1960-) Octet, Onyx 4005 / Anton TIETZ (1742-1810) Qnt for 2Vln, 2Vla & Kb, Caro Mitis 0022004

### Piano Trios

Peter BREINER (1957-) Sonata Ostinata, Cas-cavelle VEL3079 / Joseph JONGEN (1873-1953) Op.30 for Vln, Vla & Pno, Cypress 1638

### Piano Quartets, Quintets & Sextets

Mikhail GLINKA (1804-57) Sextet, Suoni e Colori 53002 / Joseph JONGEN (1873-1953) Qt Op.23, Cypress 1638 / Mark Rurnage (1960-) Side Stride for Pno Qnt, Onyx 4005

### Winds & Strings

None this Issue

### Winds, Strings & Piano

Joseph LABOR (1842-1924) Qnt for Pno, Cln & Str Trio, Cedille 90000 088 / Walter RABL (1873-1940) Qt for Pno, Cln, Vln & Vc, Cedille 90000 088 / Camille SAINT SAENS (1835-1921) Septet for Pno, Str Qt, Kb & Trmt, Arte Nova 378570

### Piano & Winds

W.F. BACH (1710-84) 6 Trios for 2 Fl & Pno, Berlin 0017802BC / Mikhail GLINKA (1804-57) Trio Pathetique for Cln, Bsn & Pno, Suoni e Colori 53004

### Winds Only

Harrison BIRTWISTLE (1934-) Verses for Qnt, Etcetera 1130 / Dmitry BORTNYANSKY (1751-1825) March for 2Ob, 2Hn & Bsn, Caro Mitis 0052003 / Gunnar De FRUMERIE (1908-87) Suite for Wind Qnt, Daphne 1019 / Karl GOEPFART (1859-1942) Qt Op.93, Centaur 2594 / August REUSS (1871-1935) Octet Op.37, Centaur 2594 / Carl REINECKE (1824-1910) Sextet, Op.271 & Octet Op.216, Etcetera 1155 / Hilding ROSENBERG (1892-1985) Quintetto / Heinrich SCHMID (1874-1953) Qnt Op.28, Centaur 2594

# Herzogenberg's Works for Piano & Winds

(Continued from page 3)

friend and staunch admirer of Brahms. And, it was in fact through Dessooff that Herzogenberg met Brahms. Herzogenberg's relationship with Brahms was straightforward and constant, that of admirer and friend. Brahms' was rather more complex. Brahms found Herzogenberg useful but generally was rather critical of his music and paid little attention to Herzogenberg's opinions. On the other hand, he was far more solicitous towards Herzogenberg's wife Elizabeth, herself a talented pianist and a composer in a small way. There is some evidence to support the premise that Brahms fancied Elizabeth and probably envied Herzogenberg but, of course, it being Brahms there was certainly nothing overt left behind.

After completing his studies Herzogenberg worked for some years as a composer in Graz during which time his interest in Bach became particularly strong. Eventually he helped to found the Bach-Verein (Bach Society) of Leipzig and served as its director for a decade. It was this which gained him what reputation he achieved and eventually led to a professorial appointment at the Berlin Hochschule für Musik in 1885.

Although he wrote in most genres, the common consensus is that his best works are those for chamber ensembles. He left us two string trios, five string quartets, a string quintet (2 Violas), two piano trios, two piano quartets and the two works which are the subject of this article: A quintet for piano, oboe, horn, clarinet and bassoon and a trio for piano, oboe and horn.

The **Quintet for oboe, horn, clarinet, bassoon and piano, Op.43 in E Flat Major** dates from 1888, during the time he was a professor of composition in Berlin. This is an important work for several reasons, not the least of which is because there are so few works of any significance which have been written for this combination. There is, of course, Mozart's K.452, the Beethoven Op.16, Franz Danzi's Op.41d, and a quintet without opus by Ignaz Pleyel. Brahms never ventured here.

Herzogenberg's Op.43 is a big work and it is clear that he considered it an important one. It opens with an *Allegro* the main theme to which clearly exhibits some of the influence of Schumann but in an updated fashion. It is a sunny, martial theme, somewhat triumphant in nature. There is absolutely no trace of Brahms, in my opinion, whatsoever. The instruments are used incredibly well. Herzogenberg demonstrates his compositional skill by avoiding the common solution used by less imaginative composers when writing for piano and winds, or piano and strings, i.e., the pitting of the piano against a massed chorus of the other instruments. The second theme of the *Allegro* has a dream-like quality to it. In this is excellent movement of many moods, Herzogenberg integrates all of the instruments seamlessly. A long, leisurely, *Adagio* follows. After a short introduction by the piano and statement of the peaceful main theme, the upper winds reply. In the development, the bassoon, oboe and clarinet are given especially lovely phrases that have an almost string-like quality to them. Except for a very brief moment or two, quiet reigns. Imagine if you will, a lily pond on a warm, lazy day. This is a gorgeous and appealing movement, a real achievement in view of the fact that

the music is devoid of passion. Again, there is no influence of Brahms is to be found. The short third movement, *Allegretto*, is a real surprise. Not only does it not sound like Brahms, it does not sound Central European or German. Instead, there is a French feel to it, as if one of *Le Six* had written it in a neo-classical vein. The spirited main theme given to the winds is bouncy and humorous. Meanwhile, the piano provides very important rhythmic trim. But then, as in the other movements, the parts are blended together so well, they create a seamless fabric from which no one voice can be detached. This is a real gem of a movement which would make a great encore. The concluding *Allegro giocoso*, is, in mood, a continuation of the previous movement. Lively and jocular, it begins with a theme whose rhythm, though not melody, sounds Beethovenian. With the horn in the lead, the music bounds forward full of good spirits. A wonderfully contrasting, march-like middle section has a Turkish or oriental military flavor to it. The parts are available from Breitkopf und Härtel. It has been recorded on Tudor CD DOM 2010 23.

The next year (1889), Herzogenberg followed up with the quintet with a **Trio in D for oboe, horn & piano, Op.61**. Works for this combination are even more rare. In fact, the only other such trio for this combination of any consequence is the Op.188 of Carl Reinecke. (*This trio was discussed in Vol.XVII No.1, Spring 2006—ed.*) As a result, Herzogenberg's publisher insisted that he make arrangements for other combinations which would justify the cost of publication. He did so, and versions exist for standard piano trio, as well as for violin, viola and piano. This trio not only has a modern, almost neo-classical, feel to it, but it also shows none of Brahms' influence. In four short movements, it is not written on as grand a scale as the quintet, but is more intimate. The main theme to the opening *Allegretto* has a genial march quality to it, but the music is never allowed to become boisterous. The part writing leaves nothing to be desired. There is some wonderful, sparkling interplay between the piano and the oboe while the way in which the horn weighs in is both original and charming. Next comes an excellent *Presto*. After a short piano introduction, the horn and oboe present the lively hunt theme. In this movement, Herzogenberg reveals how well he knows the instruments and the way they combine. The short trio section, as might be expected, is quiet and somewhat slower. It retains just a hint of the hunting rhythm which allows for a very smooth transition to the scherzo. The writing in this presto for the oboe and the horn is masterful and shows them off to their best advantage. It is hard to imagine that they could be combined any better. The following *Andante con moto* really does not lend itself to motion. It is a slow and stately processional led by the horn, which toward the end is given a lovely long solo passage. The word *trio* is missing from the title to the finale, *Allegro*, but it belongs there. The main theme, in the piano, bubbles forth whilst the winds make meaningful rhythmic contributions. The music is at times neo-classical and at others a modern version of the French musette. The melodies are clever and charming, the rousing coda superb. This is a masterpiece which should be heard in concert. Amateurs are encouraged to obtain this work, the parts being available from Amadeus. There are at least two recordings currently available on CD.

# Joachim Raff: The Piano Trios

(Continued from page 3)

for this and a good one too, but it is only now that this reason has slowly been taken into account by those reevaluating Raff's musical contribution.

With no patron or permanent teaching post, Raff found himself in the unfortunate position wherein he was unable to make a living as a free-lance composer of serious music or by giving private lessons. At the same time, he found that he was able to churn out pedestrian works—for example, potpourris for piano on famous songs from operas—which were extremely popular among the home music-making crowd and especially with amateur pianists. And it was this which, in the end, for many years paid the bills and put food on the table for his family. Sadly, it was only during the last five years of his life, upon his 1877 appointment as director of the new conservatory in Frankfurt, that he was entirely able to stop writing the ephemeral and cliché-ridden works aimed at the mass market which had kept him alive. Unfortunately, his huge output of this type of work led latter day scholars and critics, who were reexamining past composers, to write off Raff as nothing more than a hack. While it cannot be denied that Raff produced a great quantity of works best left forgotten, when one concentrates on the music about which he really cared, the music upon which he took time and lavished care, it becomes quite clear that he was a composer of great ability and talent, able to create magnificent, first rate works deserving of revival.

Joseph Joachim Raff (1822-1882) was born in the small town of Laachen not far from Zurich. His father, a school teacher and an organist, was not Swiss but from Württemberg. He had fled to Switzerland during the Napoleonic wars. The only real musical education Raff received was from his father. Early on it became clear that he had an extraordinary talent and at a young age was an accomplished pianist and violinist as well as an organist. In addition, he showed considerable talent for mathematics and had hoped to attend university to further these studies but his family could not afford it. Instead, he was sent to a Jesuit teacher-training college. Although Raff became a school teacher, he did not abandon music. He began to give piano lessons and started to compose. Soon he realized that he did not want to be a school teacher but was unable to get any of his works published. Then, on the advice of a friend and composer, Franz Abt, Raff sent several of his compositions to Mendelssohn for his opinion. Mendelssohn was impressed and contacted his own publisher, Breitkopf & Härtel writing, *"If a quite famous name stood on the title page of these pieces, I am convinced that you would do good business with them, for from the content certainly nobody would notice that a good many of these pieces are not by Liszt or a similar virtuoso."* The result was that Breitkopf published 13 of Raff's early works for piano. This was enough to convince Raff to give up school teaching, against his parents wishes, and to try to make his way as a musician and composer. This turned out to be a catastrophic decision, certainly in the short term, as Raff's father washed his hands of him and, as he had quit his job, he had no means of support.

He then made up his mind to seek out Mendelssohn and become his student but, being unable to make a living, he was forced to remain in Zurich where he could not even find work teaching the

piano. He situation was so extreme that he could not afford lodging and was forced to sleep outdoors on park benches. He ran up debts which he could not pay and was declared bankrupt and threatened with prison.

At this juncture (1845), Raff learned that Liszt was performing in Basel. Determined to seek him out, he set out on foot. It was a hard two days walk from Zurich, during which it rained the entire time. When finally he arrived at the ticket office, disheveled and dripping wet, it was only a few minutes before the concert was to begin. All of the tickets had been sold and despite his protestations that he had walked from Zürich just to hear Liszt play, he was unable to obtain a ticket. But by chance, Liszt's personal secretary overheard his pleas and took Raff backstage and telling him to wait in the wings. Liszt, preparing to leave the Green Room for the stage, was told by his secretary about Raff. Ever one for the grand gesture, Liszt replied *"Bring him here! He is to sit next to me on the stage"*. In later years, Raff recalled that as Liszt played, *"a complete circle of rainwater gathered around me on the floor; like a spring's source I sat there"*. After the concert, Raff told the great man his sorry story and showed him some of his compositions. To his amazement, Liszt, who must have been impressed, found Raff employment, albeit it menial and poorly paid, with a music publishing firm in Cologne. He also introduced Raff to music publisher Schott, who eventually published some more of his early compositions. Finally in 1846, Raff was able to meet Mendelssohn and to show him his latest compositions. Mendelssohn, though impressed, was disappointed Raff had indiscriminately modeled his music upon Mendelssohn's own style and, to a lesser degree, upon that of Liszt, rather than striving for greater originality. He suggested Raff come to study with him at Leipzig, but unfortunately Raff's financial situation made it impossible. Again, it was Liszt who came to Raff's rescue and found him better employment with the Hamburg music publisher Julius Schuberth. During the time Raff worked for Schuberth, the two became good friends and remained so throughout their lives. Schuberth was impressed with the young man who not only worked diligently and hard for him but also clearly had compositional talent. Then toward the end of 1849, Liszt offered Raff a position as his personal assistant. At the same time, Schuberth offered him a promotion and a chance to run his business in his New York branch. It was a difficult decision for Raff who eventually accepted Liszt's offer. The position was ill-defined with vague responsibilities and one which left him with little time for composition. He became a combination personal secretary, copyist, orchestrator and translator for Liszt. On the positive side, he met and made friends with many of the famous and important musicians of his day, including, Joachim, von Bülow and Tchaikovsky among others who made the pilgrimage to Weimar to visit Liszt.

As part of Liszt's inner circle, Raff was considered a member of what became called the New German School. Here, it is important to relate that by the mid 19th century, the German musical world had divided into two warring camps. Opposed to the members of the New German School were the Classicists, who held up Schumann and Mendelssohn as their ideal. Later, Brahms was to become their standard bearer. Each camp had little use for the music of their opponents. And here is where Raff was to founder. Although literally at the very center of the New German School and



certainly influenced by the music of Liszt and early Wagner, he was not really a member of it, certainly not an uncritical or unquestioning member of it. In 1854, he wrote a book entitled *Die Wagner Frage* (The Wagner Question) which criticized several of the newer developments in Wagner's music. Raff though highly impressed with *Lohengrin* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, had little appreciation or use for the operas of the Ring Cycle. His book astounded those around him and its immediate effect was to estrange him from Liszt and the Wagnerites, for whom there was no Wagner question. After this, Raff's life at Weimar gradually became intolerable. He made up his mind to leave and strike off on his own. It was a brave thing to do. To those of the New German School he was a traitor. Yet, despite this break, the Classicists continued to regard him as a member of it and for a long time did not and would not embrace his works. He was thus isolated and without anyone to champion his music.

Bruch, Gernsheim or Bargiel. nor did he have what could be called a meaningful paying job. Although employed by two girls schools in Wiesbaden as a music teacher, the salary was not enough for one person let alone a family. Starvation became a real possibility and it was only the knowledge that he could crank out highly popular but ephemeral works of little or no artistic merit in great numbers which probably gave him the courage to take this almost unheard of path. Few other important composers of the day, the notable exception being Brahms, were able to support themselves merely by writing music. In addition to this constant stream of what might be called "pulp music", Raff eventually was able to obtain some extra income by giving private piano lessons. Still, for many years, Raff and his family experienced lean times with a precarious existence. Nonetheless, Raff found time to devote himself to works of real worth and nearly all of his compositions of artistic merit date from his years in Wiesbaden.

In 1856 Raff moved to Wiesbaden near Frankfurt where he spent the next 21 years of his life. He was now thirty four, soon to be married and with a family to support. Unlike composers such as Tchaikovsky, Raff had no patron. Nor did he have a concert career to fall back on such as Liszt or Moscheles, nor a teaching appointment at a conservatory such as Gade, Reinecke or Rheinberger, nor directorship of an orchestra or theater such as

Despite the trivial works he published, by the 1870's Raff's serious music was universally acclaimed. In 1877, this led to his being offered the directorship of a new conservatory in Frankfurt. Here, he spent the last five years of his life, working tirelessly to create a first rate music school. His stature was such that he was able to attract such luminaries as Clara Schumann to the faculty, and by the time of his death, the Frankfurt conservatory was acknowledged as one of the best in Germany.

Raff wrote five piano trios, four of which are extant. The first was composed during the late 1840's and was either destroyed or lost. His first surviving and published work in this genre, **Piano Trio No.1 in c minor, Op.102**, dates from 1861 and was published by his friend Schubert in 1864.

It was premiered to considerable acclaim and almost immediately became regarded as a masterwork. Nearly seventy years later, in his 1934 *Handbuch für Klaviertriospieler* (Handbook for Piano Trio Players), the famous chamber music critic and scholar Wilhelm Altmann warmly recommended it, writing that it still deserved to be heard in concert and could hold its own against any of the other of the major works of this genre.

The big first movement is marked *Rasch* (quick) but it does not actually begin this way. Rather, there is a masterful, slow introduction which only gradually ratchets the tempo up to speed as it builds dramatic tension. This introduction (see left) is a very fine example of Raff's abundant compositional skill. The piano opens the work in a Lisztian fashion, dramatic and dignified. Twice, the strings reply with a somewhat pleading answer. Then out of this the piano takes over with a long, restless eighth note pas-

(Continued on page 10)

The image shows the beginning of the first movement of the Grand Trio No. 1. It features a piano introduction with a heavy, accented first theme in the bass register. The music is in a minor key and has a martial quality. The score is written for piano and includes dynamic markings like *p* and *mf*.

sage, entirely in its bass register. The tension becomes palpable. At last, the heavily accented first theme (see left) breaks forth. It has a martial quality to it and, although arresting, it is not particularly melodic. As it hurls forward with considerable motion, Raff adds a heroic touch to it. Interestingly, the first part of the development section shows a Schubertian lyricism which is absent from the theme itself. In the second theme, we hear the lyricism which was hinted at during the development section. Though not particularly sad, it has a valedictory quality to it. When this trio was first published, it appeared with the title *Grand Trio No. 1*, and either Raff or Schubert the publisher must have felt it justified the title. Certainly, the justification would have been the size, scope and elaboration of the first movement which is written on a very large scale. Nevertheless, because of a rather impressive display of compositional virtuosity, especially in regard to the first theme, the movement in no way gives the impression of being too long. Certainly, at first blush, the first theme does not reveal any particular wealth of possibilities for development and it comes as rather a pleasant surprise to hear Raff present them.

The second movement, *Sehr Rasch* (very quick), is a scherzo, which begins softly as a fugue with the violin beginning, then the cello and the piano. The theme is fleet with a tinge of the macabre. The very beautiful theme from the trio section is especially memorable. It has, at least to me, a strangely familiar quality to it. It would not be out of place as the main theme of a 1950's Western film, upbeat and lyrical, somewhat heroic and with forward motion. Some commentators have called it a hunting theme based with the quality of a folk melody. The scherzo then returns and the movement ends softly and in a haunting fashion.

This block contains two musical examples for the second movement, *Sehr rasch*. Example 1 shows the 'Theme from the scherzo' starting at measure 1, marked *p*. Example 115 shows the 'Theme from the trio section' starting at measure 115, marked *istesso Tempo*.

Wilhelm Altmann considered the third movement, *Mässig langsam* (moderately slow), as the "crown" of the work. In his *Handbuch*, he writes, "It is poetically executed and is one of the composer's most magnificently inspired creations. A blissful air of peaceful quiet has been breathed into it along with uncommonly beautiful sonority." The lovely opening theme is presented in its entirety by the piano alone before the strings enter. Interestingly, there is a rather harsh dissonance during a passing note which certainly sounds like it must have been a mistake by either the composer or the performers but the fact that it is repeated later in the movement makes it clear that it is certainly intentional. The middle section shows a burst of dramatic energy but the hopeful and optimistic mood does not change.

The image shows the beginning of the third movement, *Mässig langsam*. It features a piano introduction with a lovely opening theme. The music is in a major key and has a blissful, peaceful quality. The score is written for piano and includes dynamic markings like *p*, *f*, and *mf*.

Example 1 shows the first theme of the third movement, *Rasch bewegt*, marked *Piano* and *mf*. The tempo is *appassionato*. The score is written for violin and includes dynamic markings like *mf*.

Example 2 shows the second theme of the third movement, which is a Hungarian-sounding melody. The score is written for piano and includes dynamic markings like *p*.

The stirring finale, *Rasch bewegt*, (quick moving), replete with three memorable and tuneful themes, for my money, is the crowning movement. Volker Tosta, the editor to the new edition by the German firm Nordstern, writing of the finale states "it reminds one of Slavic musical examples." but this is really a very misleading statement. The movement, which is clearly a rondo, opens with an attractive, Mendelssohnian theme, in the cello, full of yearning. (Example 1). As for the second theme, one could hardly find a more typically Hungarian-sounding melody. (Example 2). It is only briefly in the second half of the third theme that the elaboration, in the minor, veers into the



realm of the Slavic. (see example on the left) Attractive and unexpected, it does justify Tosta's sweeping remark. If anything, this excellent finale is in the long and honored tradition of the Hungarian rondo. The coda is short and well executed. This trio was recognized as a masterpiece at the time it was written and in my opinion it remains so today. Without question it belongs in the repertoire and is as good as anything

written from this period. With the exception of a few brief but somewhat difficult passages in the piano, the work will present no difficulties for amateurs. As noted, it is in print from Edition Nordstern and has been recorded along with his Fourth Piano Trio on CPO CD# 9996162.

**Piano Trio No.2 in G Major, Op.112** was composed two years after his first in 1863. This was the time during which Raff was still almost mass-producing operatic pot-pourris and other for which he was paid a rather good price compared to his serious music which he was usually forced to sell for a pittance. Like the First Trios, the Second's tempi and other markings are in German, a practice Raff was to terminate as he began to distance himself from the New German School. The title to the opening movement, *Rasch, froh bewegt* (quick, lively & joyful) in fact aptly describes the main theme which is presented by the violin. This is a very good theme, full of possibilities but Raff's exploration of them perhaps is too extensive. The second subject is gentler and lyrical. (directly above) It makes but two short appearances. The music softly fades away as the movement concludes but the final two cadences which end it are played *ff*. This is a good movement but probably would benefit by being somewhat shorter.

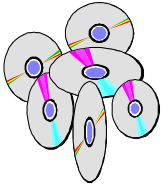


Next comes a scherzo marked *Sehr Rasch* (very quick). In the minor, it is a somewhat lopsided but lilting dance, characterized by the rhythmic feature of a 16th note tied to an 8th for several measures. Triplet passages are used consistently throughout to interrupt the mood. The lyrical but brief middle section consists entirely of a canon in which the violin leads and the cello follows while the piano provides the harmonic underpinning.

The magnificent third movement, *Mässig langsam* (moderately slow), is undoubtedly the trio's center of gravity. Spacious and calm, this music might well serve as a eulogy. The movement opens quietly with the piano presenting the main theme in its entirety. It is solemn and dignified with the aura of Schubert's late piano sonatas to it. The development, primarily entrusted to the strings, adds a mildly pleading air to this mix. Then a lengthy, turbulent and roiling middle section explodes forth. First, there is just unrest, but quickly Raff heightens the tension until there is a powerful sense of the melodramatic.



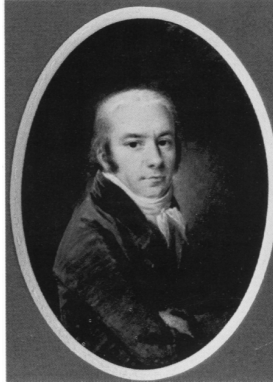
The rondo finale, *Rasch, durchaus belebt* (Quick, lively throughout) begins with a catchy theme characterized by whirling 16th notes. Its development takes the form of a fugue. In the middle section, the piano is given a lively and peculiarly familiar Chinese interlude. Tchaikovsky borrowed it for use in his Nutcracker Suite. The further elaboration of the main theme is syncopated and recalls Schumann. The coda follows an exciting stretto section and leaves nothing to be desired. It must be admitted that this movement makes considerable technical demands on all of the players, though it is certainly not beyond the scope of good amateurs. This is a fine trio, well worth concert performance. That it is not an unqualified masterpiece is due to a certain diffuseness, primarily found in the first movement. This article will conclude in the next issue of *The Journal*.



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## The Clarinet Quartets of Antonio Cartellieri A Piano Trio & Piano Quartet by Charles Stanford

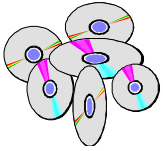
**Antonio Cartellieri** (1772-1807) does not seem to have made the cut with respect to the standard reference sources and even on the internet you will have to do some serious searching before you can find anything about his life. Cartellieri was born in Danzig the son of an Italian father and a German mother. He is thought to have studied composition with Salieri in Vienna, eventually obtaining the position of Kapellmeister for the music loving Prince Lobkowitz. This gave him the chance to rub shoulders with such musicians as Beethoven, Haydn and the brothers Wranitzky. He is best known to clarinetists, I would assume, because, of the few recordings there are of his music, nearly all are for clarinet. And it is the well-known German clarinetist Dieter Klöcker who has tried to resuscitate him. Two MDG CDs #301 1097 & 98 present his **five quartets for clarinet and string trio** all of which were composed in 1806, the year before his death. These works are all written in the concertante style, although, at times, Cartellieri shows some understanding of the advances made by Haydn and Mozart. Space does not permit a discussion of each quartet but a quick look at two of them (along with our sound-bites) will give the reader a good idea of what can be found here. **Clarinet Quartet No.3 in B Flat Major**, like its companions is in four movements. The tempi arrangements are fairly standard as well: Fast—slow—minuet—fast. The opening *Allegro* begins like a clarinet concerto, but soon the cello makes a brief appearance before the violin is given a lengthy solo. Each of the instruments eventually gets some in-nings, but it is the clarinet that is given the lion's share and its solos require a virtuosic technique. The very appealing melodies are an amalgamation of Mozart and Weber, and in many ways, these works are reminiscent of, or perhaps more accurately anticipate, the Weber's treatment of the instruments in his clarinet quintet. Second is a *Larghetto* is a theme and variations with the clarinet more or less having the solo throughout. The bouncy *Minuetto, Allegro* which follows, once again heavily favors the clarinet. The appealing finale, a *Rondo*, does not differ in treatment from the preceding movements. In the only unnumbered quartet, the **Clarinet Quartet in D Major**, Cartellieri begins with a fine *Andante* introduction in which the clarinet is given no precedence. This leads to the main part of the movement, *Allegro*. Here, the violin and clarinet are treated, more or less, as equals, while the lower voices continue in the background. In the languid slow movement, *Andante*, this partnership is continued. In the stormy middle section, the concertante style disappears and all of the voices work together equally to bring it off. The excellent *Minuetto* is given over entirely to the strings with the clarinet remaining tacit. In the trio, the clarinet joins in but is not given a solo. This movement shows Cartellieri could, when he wanted, write in a more advanced style. The finale, *Allegro vivace*, partially returns to the concertante style. These are very charming works sure to please most who hear them. A recommended CD.



The once high reputation that Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924), later Sir Charles, enjoyed had all but disappeared by the end of his life, as he was written off as a German “copycat” and just another Brahms imitator. While there is a certain amount of truth that the early works of Stanford do show heavy German influence, this should really come as no surprise for two reasons. First, during the last part of the 19th century, the British, unlike the French and the Russians who combated the powerful Austro-German influence with styles of their own, had yet to develop anything that could be called a national style. Second, it was during this time that Stanford went to Germany, in the mid 1870's, and studied with two of that country's (if not the world's) leading teachers and composers: Carl Reinecke and Friedrich Kiel. But ultimately, Stanford went on to help found an English style and contributed to the renaissance of British music. This is particularly true in the realm of chamber music where Stanford almost single-handedly jumpstarted the British repertoire. Among his many students were Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, Herbert Howells, Frank Bridge, Ernst Moeran, Arthur Bliss, and Percy Grainger.



One only has to listen to the opening measures of his **Piano Quartet No.1 in F, Op.15** to immediately realize that Stanford was a gifted composer who was capable of writing compositions of the first rank. This is truly a superb work. The buoyant opening theme of the first movement, *Allegro con brio*, is truly full of brio. The rich scoring and masterful part-writing clearly show the lessons Stanford received from Kiel and Reinecke were well absorbed. One can hear their influence but, for my money, not that of Brahms. This a powerful movement full of luxuriant melodies and excitement. Next there is a *Scherzo*. Not so lively as one might expect, the mood is more of a relaxed but rhythmic intermezzo. The trio section is a soft chorale by the strings alone. The *Poco adagio* which follows, once it gets going, sports some very lovely string writing. Perhaps there is a trace of Brahms, here and there. The *Finale* begins in a triumphal style, its main theme harking back to Schubert and Schumann. A brisk pace is kept up from start to finish. If the composer of this work had been German, no one would have hesitated, even today, to proclaim it a masterpiece every bit as good as the best piano quartets of the day. That fact that a Briton wrote it resulted in it not achieving this status. But how unfair is it to think that Stanford or anyone else could have created a full-blown national style overnight. Dvorak didn't. This is certainly a great work though, I think out of print. The second work on this ASV CD# 1056 is his **Piano Trio No.1, Op.35**. It was composed in 1889 and dedicated to the famous German conductor and pianist, Hans von Bülow. The opening *Allegro grazioso* begins in a relatively unassuming way and slowly builds momentum but always remains true to its *grazioso* character. The melodies are certainly ingratiating if not captivating. The light-hearted second movement, *Allegretto con moto*, performs the function of a brief, dance-like intermezzo.



## Mihály Mosonyi's String Sextet

### Ignacy Dobrzynski: Two String Quintets for 2 Violins, Viola & 2 Cellos

The tempo of the *Tempo di Minuetto* which comes next is perhaps that of a slow minuet but the music is more in the form of a lyrical andante. The finale, *Allegro moderato, ma con fuoco*, right from the start begins in an exciting fashion. The themes are thrusting and energetic. By far, this is the most striking movement of the trio and crowns a well-crafted and appealing work. Broekmans en Van Poppel lists this trio as being print but, I am not sure who the publisher is. A highly recommended CD.



**Mihály Mosonyi** (1815-1870), who until he changed his name in 1859, was known as Michael Brand. Born in the Austro-Hungarian town of Frauenkirchen (Boldogaszonyfalva), he studied piano and composition with unknowns and learned what he did from studying the Viennese Classics along with textbooks by Anton Reicha and Johann Nepomuk Hummel. Up until 1859, he wrote in the German Romantic style. The **String Sextet in c minor** is the companion piece on **Hungaroton CD#32300** to Dohnanyi's early sextet which I discussed on pages 3 and 4 in my article. The sextet dates from 1844, well before his Hungarian conversion and there is nothing Hungarian-sounding about it. The big opening *Allegro agitato* begins in dramatic fashion with a gripping theme. Schubert and Beethoven seem to have been the models, tonally-speaking. However, it would be a mistake to consider it imitative. The music is quite fresh and original sounding. The part-writing also is quite good. The ensuing *Adagio* begins in an almost Mozartean fashion. Its main theme is quite charming. What follows appears to be a set of variations, really very well-executed. An excellent *Scherzo, allegro* comes next. It has some very interesting and briefly jarring tonalities. A canonic episode is also quite arresting. The middle section has some very original harmonic effects. The main theme to the finale, *Allegro furioso*, is not as captivating as the earlier ones, but the rhythmic drive serves as compensation. The powerful and highly dramatic coda is handled quite deftly. In all, this is really a first rate work. It's worth considering that no well-known composer of the 19th century had yet to write a string sextet. It would be quite nice if the parts were reprinted. Another highly recommended CD.

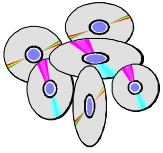
**Ignacy Feliks Dobrzynski** (1807-67) was the son of a kapellmeister to a Polish count who held much the same duties that Haydn did with the Esterhazys. Training from his father and experience with the count's orchestra provided Dobrzynski's early musical education. Later he went to the Warsaw Conservatory and studied piano and composition with Josef Elsner. He was never able to achieve any success in his native Poland where his works were often criticized as being inferior to those of German



masters. Yet during his tours to Germany, his works were highly praised, and critical reviews in newspapers, such as those in the influential city of Leipzig, were very favorable. The Sextet, composed in 1845, was performed to considerable acclaim by the Leipzig Gewandhaus concertmaster Ferdinand David and his col-

leagues in 1849. The jacket notes to this **Acte Prelude CD#0048** unfortunately do not provide much in the way of information about the two string quintets recorded on it. Both are for 2 violins, viola and 2 cellos. Both were published by Hoffmeister of Leipzig and both are substantial, each lasting over 30 minutes. The first work **String Quintet in F, Op.20** dates from the late 1830's. We need not look beyond its dedication "*a Monsieur George Onslow*" to determine the inspiration and model that must have served for Dobrzynski. (I was able to determine this because I own a copy of the Hoffmeister edition) Onslow, of course, was the best-known composer of works for this genre at this time. (Schubert's great quintet still laid undiscovered—it was not published until 1853). The writing, however, does not sound much like Onslow. The first movement, *Allegro moderato*, stylistically, in my opinion, shows a considerable affinity with the music of Spohr, especially in the way long running passages are handed off from instrument to instrument. The lovely melodic writing also resembles that of Spohr. The only thing really missing is Spohr's trademark use of chromaticism. Particularly admirable is the way Dobrzynski makes excellent use of his second cello, a technique he probably did learn from studying Onslow's double cello quintets. However, the writing for the first cello is probably as difficult as anything Onslow ever wrote for his first cello and borders on the virtuoso at times. This is a very engaging and well-executed movement that holds the listener from start to finish. This is followed by a *Minuetto, Allegro moderato*. It is indeed a minuet, in the early romantic style. Here again, one is reminded somewhat of Spohr's tuneful chamber music. The main theme is graceful and elegant and has a vague Polish flavor to it. When all the repeats are taken, the movement seems a little too long, perhaps because the trio does not provide much of a thematic or mood contrast from the minuet. With its chromatic and descending introduction, reminiscent of Onslow, the third movement, *Andante, Doloroso ma non troppo lente*, immediately captures the listener's attention. The gorgeous main theme which follows easily holds on to it. This is very fine string writing. The finale, *Vivace assai*, is a kind of polacca of the sort Spohr might have written. Very melodic and full of energy, it provides a suitable conclusion to what is a good quintet. While this quintet often reminds one of Spohr by the virtue of its melodies, unlike the quartets of Norbert Burgmüller (reviewed recently in Vol.XVI No.IV), it never sinks to the level of mere imitation. The second work on disk, **String Quintet in a, Op.40** was published in 1848 but could well have been written earlier. The first cello is entrusted with the presentation of the lyrical and somewhat sad main theme to the opening *Allegro espressivo e sentimentale*, before the others join in. I have no idea to whom this work was dedicated but the poignant first theme and its entire treatment sounds as if Onslow might have composed it. The second theme is of a very different sort, direct from the Italian opera of the time. Strangely, it reminds one of the lovely cello melody in the trio of the third movement of Verdi's quartet, then yet to be composed! The lovely slow movement, *Andante cantabile ed espressivo*, also seems to take Onslow for melodic inspiration. Both cellos are used to maximum advantage in presenting the theme. The use of a very dramatic and stormy interlude is also a page right

(Continued on page 14)



## George Onslow: Two String Quintets for 2 Violins, Viola & 2 Cellos A Piano Quintet from Jean Cras

out of Onslow's book, but again, this is not imitation and this first rate writing can clearly stand on its own. A somewhat aggressive and angry *Minuetto, allegro impetuoso*, follows. The cello parts are every bit the equal of the violins if not more important. Here, we find an excellent trio, full of contrast and mood. The first cello sings a lovely tune to the pizzicati of the other voices. Very effective. In the finale, *Agitato presto*, the aura of Onslow hovers over this exciting and finely wrought movement. This is the far stronger of the quintets and I would place it in the masterwork category, the equal of Onslow's best. Unfortunately, to the best of my knowledge, there is no modern reprint of either work. Recommended.



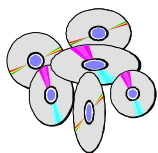
It is gratifying that quite a lot of **George Onslow's** chamber works are finally being recorded. MD&G has brought out at least six of his string quintets in the past few years. Onslow (1784-1853) was a generation older than Dobrzynski and, as I noted, served as the latter's model for at least one of his quintets. **MD&G CD#603 1253** presents two Onslow string quintets

in the version for 2 Violins, Viola, Cello *and Bass* from the composer's middle period, the mid-late 1820's. The quintets from this period mostly likely would have been the ones Dobrzynski studied before writing his own. I thought it would be interesting to review the quintets of the two composers side by side so that readers might be able to make some comparisons. The first work on disk, **String Quintet No.12 in a, Op.34** appeared in 1829. Although it was originally intended for 2 cellos, after hearing it performed with a bass instead of a second cello, Onslow began writing alternate bass parts to his quintets, which could, if desired, be used in lieu of the second cello. The dramatic opening *Allegro* begins with a slow, moody theme. Onslow gradually increases the tempo. The second subject, entrusted to the first violin and cello, is highly lyrical. This is a very big movement, but the quality of the thematic material sustains interest. The second movement, *Minuetto, allegro moderato*, may well have served as a model for the Minuetto in Dobrzynski's Op.40 quintet. A strong, downward plunging chromatic passage introduces a rather non-traditional minuet. The development passes between the two firsts, violin and cello. The contrasting trio consists of a beautiful, relaxed folksong. The *Adagio espressivo*, which serves as the slow movement, is classic Onslow. A gorgeous, valedictory melody is played over the soft pizzicati of the other voices. Gradually, it develops into a heavenly duet in the form of a chorale. Extraordinarily fine string writing is to be found here. In the wonderful middle section, the second cello (bass) comes into its own with very telling pizzicati passages. The opening theme to the exciting finale, *Allegro non troppo presto*, once again is entrusted to the first violin and cello. The second theme is every bit as good. This is one of Onslow's best works and, in my opinion, is a

masterwork. The parts and a score have recently been republished in an all new edition by Edition Silvertrust. ([www.editionsilvertrust.com](http://www.editionsilvertrust.com)) The false treble has been removed from the first cello part now making it possible for amateurs to sight read it. The second quintet, **String Quintet No.13 in G, Op.35** appeared in 1830. In the opening *Allegro spirituosissimo assai*, the thematic treatment is very different from that of Quintet No.12. Here, the theme is made of small motivic fragments, *a la Haydn*, and is not developed in the traditional sense. What's more, these fragments are of a virtuosic nature and by no means easy to hand off from voice to voice as required. The second theme is quite beautiful. Again a *Minuetto, allegro moderato* comes second. It's not really a minuet, but a lumbering, rhythmic dance in the bass, which when developed by violin becomes less clumsy. The interesting trio, is a slower, reflective, almost religious melody. The main theme to the slow movement, *Andante cantabile*, begins high in the first cello's treble register. Though lovely, it is not especially compelling. In the middle section, a stormy interlude, between the first violin and the bassi, plays out over the pulsing 8th notes of the middle voices. The finale, *Presto*, not one of Onslow's best, is characterized by busy, running scale-like passages in the form of triplets. A more lyrical second theme makes brief appearances. Though a good work, it does belong with Onslow's finest. While Dobrzynski makes *both* of his bass voices important throughout, Onslow only does this on occasion. He prefers the interplay between the first violin and cello. A recommended CD.

I can think of no other composer who rose to the rank of Rear Admiral other than **Jean Cras** (1879-1932). Although Rimsky Korsakov and Albert Roussel did stints in the navy, they did not spend their entire working lives in it. Cras and his music, once recognized as an important link to the French post-romantics, sank into oblivion after the Second World War. He was born into a musical family with a long tradition of naval service. By six, he began composing short piano pieces, but despite his obvious talent enrolled in the Naval Academy at the age of 17. Initially self-taught in theory, orchestration, and composition, in 1899 Cras was able to study formally with Henri Duparc who declared him to be one of the most gifted musicians he had ever met. Jean Cras' greatest problem as a composer was that his naval career left him with a chronic lack of time to compose. His **Piano Quintet** dates from 1922 and was composed at sea while he was commanding a destroyer. Cras, himself, provided short programmatic notes. Of the first movement, *Clear and Joyous*, Cras writes, "*The intoxication of breathing pure sea air. The advance impressions of all that will arise...on the voyage.*" The music is buoyant, restless and has a vague jazz quality to it. Of the second movement, *Calm and Peaceful*, Cras writes, "*The ecstasy of a European soul giving itself over to the intense poetry of an Afri-*

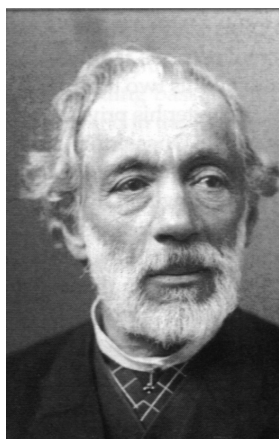




## Jean Cras' String Quartet

### Eduard Franck: Two String Sextets

can evening.” The first theme is a perfumed and romantic melody sung by the strings. The second subject has an oriental quality to it. Next comes *Alert and Decisive*, described by Cras as follows, “*The exuberance of living in the sun, the eyes full of bright colors, the ears excited by the rich musical intensity of an Arab town.*” The movement serves as a kind of scherzo, the first theme dance-like, followed by a clearly oriental chant, denoting the Arab town. This is stunning music. Of the finale, *Passionate and Proud*, Cras writes, “*The return voyage, the soul full of memories, liberated by the open space from the petty things of life.*” Here the music is vigorous and triumphant but with surprising tonal episodes, including a brief Chinese interlude. This is a wonderful work, fully tonal, but often quite adventurous. Despite its programmatic qualities, it defies categorization. Romantic, but not in the traditional sense, it is at times impressionistic, but highly original and fresh. The other work on this **Timpani CD#1066** is his **String Quartet**. Composed in 1909, the quartet bears the dedication *To My Brittany*. Nearly 40 minutes in length, it is, from a tonal standpoint, surprisingly a far more advanced work than the later Piano Quintet. Though full of different emotions, in no way can it be called program music. The lengthy opening movement, *Lente, allegro*, begins in a diffident manner with no tonal center, something which characterizes most of the work. The passionate faster section shows the influence of the impressionists. Never uniformly fast, the tempi vary throughout. The slow movement, *Calme*, though mainly reflective, does eventually rise to a passionate high point in its middle section. A scherzo, *Vite et léger; modéré*, begins with strumming chords to a lively tune. It is the most attractive and, along with the finale, the most accessible of the movements. A muted and mysterious middle section provides an excellent contrast. The finale, *Lent, allegro molto*, begins in a highly individualistic manner. Tonally wayward, the slow introduction quickly leads to a powerful, fast moving main theme, consisting primarily of running triplets. It is less French-sounding than the other movements. Here, Cras shows himself abreast of the developments from Central Europe. Full of mood swings and changes of tempi, this is an excellent example of Cras’ masterful compositional technique. Not always ingratiating, nonetheless, here is a work which well repays close listening. The parts to both works, as far as I know, are unavailable. A Highly recommended CD.



**Eduard Franck** (1817-93), though fairly well-known as a teacher, never really gained fame as a composer. This may well be because he failed to align himself with the New German School headed by Liszt and Wagner and also did not pay much attention to the newer trends of the classicists as personified by Brahms and his followers. Instead, Franck, more or less, went his own way, holding Mendelssohn and Schumann, and to a lesser extent Beethoven and Schubert, as his guiding lights. Franck—no relation to Cesar Franck—was from a family of Silesian bankers.

He studied piano and composition with Mendelssohn in Dusseldorf and Leipzig, and enjoyed a career as a concert pianist and teacher for more than 4 decades. Teaching eventually came to occupy most of his time. During the course of his life, he held several teaching positions in Germany and Switzerland, eventually spending his last 25 years teaching in Berlin. Although highly critical of his own works, he allowed quite a number to survive and is thought to have written some 60 works of chamber music. His **String Sextet No.1 in E Flat, Op.41** was published in 1882. Right from the opening bars of the huge first movement, *Allegro* (nearly 14 minutes in length), one can hear the influence of Mendelssohn in the gurgling pianistic bridge passages the strings are required to play. The music is not particularly fast and the pleasant and generally gentle themes are developed in a rather leisurely way. Though lacking in any great passion or drama, this haunting music nevertheless holds the listener’s attention throughout. The second movement, *Andante*, begins very softly. While the music is not per se funereal, it has the subdued quality of a processional anthem that would be suitable for such a service. In the gorgeous middle section, the first violin plays a long melody which comes close to the main theme found in Wagner’s *Siegfried Idyll*. Again, the music though generally quiet and calm, retains its interest throughout. I found the *Allegro*, which serves as a scherzo, somewhat disappointing. Though there is a fair amount of rushing about, the thematic material is rather ordinary—not bad, not good and not particularly memorable. The finale, *Presto*, both melodically and especially rhythmically, sounds like a continuation of the busy but insignificant third movement. Its second subject stated by the first cello, though more lyrical, is not particularly interesting. After two very fine movements, Franck seemed to have run out of real inspiration. Of course, you can hear the sound-bites and make up your own mind. No modern edition exists and I am not sure one would be justified. **String Sextet No.2 in D Major, Op.50** was not published until a year after Franck’s death in 1894. The net result, as I discovered when I went to republish it, was that the parts to the first edition have serious errors in them, most likely because Franck had no chance to proof the galleys. Measures were missing and key signatures bungled. The performers on this **Audite CD#97.501** must have worked long and hard, as I did, to correct these mistakes so as to make the Sextet playable. The opening movement, *Allegro*, like that of the First Sextet, is somewhat slow-moving and genial. Unlike the First Sextet, Mendelssohn is not, as it were, “present at the inception.” Despite the strong presence of chords in both cello parts, the music, though rich, is not heavy. The second theme bears a remarkable likeness to one of the prominent melodies from Smetana’s *The Moldau*. The gorgeous, funereal second movement, *Adagio molto espressivo e sostenuto* is clearly an elegy. Its sad main theme is extraordinarily beautiful. The third movement, *Allegro*, begins as a heavy-footed scherzo. But before long, it evolves into an elves dance. Soon the elves and the ogres are dancing together. In the attractive finale, *Allegro molto*, Mendelssohn, at last, “arrives.” Both melodically and rhythmically, the writing might almost be a tribute to him. Valedictory in nature, the ideas are well conceived, well-executed and fresh. This is a work of the first order. Newly republished by Edition Silvertrust. ([www.editionsilvertrust.com](http://www.editionsilvertrust.com))

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE



Heinrich von Herzogenberg



Joachim Raff



Ernst von Dohnanyi



Antonio Cartellieri



Charles Stanford



Mihaly Mosonyi



Jean Cras



Ignacy Dobrzynski



George Onslow

ONSLOW, SPOHR, STENHAMMAR, FUCHS, KIEL



HERZOGENBERG, GLIERE, TANEYEV, REINECKE

WRANITZKY, RIES, GOUVY, REICHA, TURINA, TOCH, PFITZNER, ROTA

KROMMER, LACHNER, GRANADOS, VAN BREE, GRETCHANINOV