



## *The Cobbett Association for Chamber Music Research*

6827 Roxbury Dr. Sarasota, Fl. 34231 Tel. 813-922-6986

# Music Lovers Strike Gold in Rocky Mountains with Da Vinci Quartet

The Da Vinci Quartet, located in the heart of the Rocky Mountains performs and teaches chamber music at the highest level -- both literally and figuratively. We are pleased to have this fine ensemble as our newest member of the Cobbett Association.

The Da Vinci was formed in 1980 at the U. of Wisconsin at Milwaukee where the players were teaching assistants. In 1982, the group moved to the U. of Colorado at Colorado Springs to become Artists-in-residence. Since then, these talented women have achieved national recognition for their expertise in performing and teaching chamber music. In addition to establishing two major concert series in the Colorado Springs area, the Quartet has toured the state, region, and nation, performing and teaching at various universities including such prestigious ones as Harvard, Vassar, Yale, and the U. of California at Davis.

In December, 1991, the Da Vinci Quartet achieved international acclaim as a prize winner in the Dimitri Shostakovich International String Quartet Competition in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Joel Krosnick, cellist of the Julliard String Quartet said of the Da Vinci, "Each time I hear them I am more impressed with their excellence, their integrity, and the musical excitement they produce."

Like other Cobbett Association members, the Da Vinci Quartet, is interested in lesser known chamber works. In their 1992-93 repertoire, they included works by Hugo Wolf, Benjamin Britten and Amy Beach, in addition to the standard quartets.

The Da Vinci also has a special interest in performing music by women composers. The group recently issued a never-before recorded work, Quartet in E flat major, by Fanny Mendelssohn, the sister of Felix.

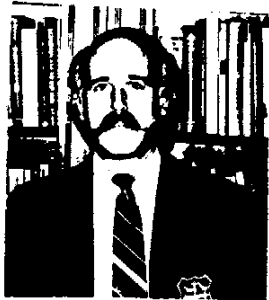


Members of the Da Vinci Quartet (pictured above) are as follows: **Jerilyn Jorgensen**, 1st violinist, a graduate of the Julliard School of Music; **Carol Jenkins**, second violinist, a graduate of the U. of Toronto; **Katharine Knight**, cellist, a recipient of awards for cello and chamber music performance from Peabody Conservatory, John Hopkins U., and the New England Conservatory; and **Margaret Miller**, violist, a graduate of Indiana U. and the Institute of Chamber Music at the U. of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

For information on booking the quartet or buying recordings, call 719-593-3331, or write the DVQ Assn., P.O. Box 7150, Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7150.

## Raymond Silvertrust Appointed to Cobbett Assn. Advisory Council

Raymond Silvertrust, a member of the Cobbett Association since it began in Sept. 1990, has been appointed to the organization's Advisory Council, effective Jan. 1, 1993. His extensive knowledge of and experience with rare and neglected chamber music makes him a welcome addition to the council.



Raymond is an investment advisor and attorney in Riverwoods, Illinois. He holds a BA from Northwestern University, MA from Oxford University, Diploma from the University of Vienna, and JD from Syracuse University. He studied cello with Dudley Powers and Harold Cruthirds, and chamber music performance with Professor Dr. Hugo Zelzer at the University of Vienna.

For the past twenty years, he has been a member of various string quartets, professional and amateur, including, Die Musikfreunde, The Larghi, and Quartetto Bel Canto.

Raymond is particularly interested in lesser known chamber music and was one of five members singled out for special thanks for his contribution to the Amateur Chamber Music Players' List of Recommended Chamber Music (1984). He is currently working on a performers' and listeners' handbook to the chamber music literature.

## Violinist Nathan Milstein Dies

Nathan Milstein, one of the greatest violinists of all times, died of a heart attack at his home in London, on December 21, 1992. He was 88.

Milstein was the last surviving pupil of Leopold Auer, who was considered the 20th century's finest teacher of violin. Certainly he was a credit to his teacher as he played music from Bach to Prokofiev, but with a special affinity for the Bach unaccompanied sonatas.

Milstein's playing was often described as "flawless," "aristocratic" and "elegant," but he was most loved for the warm, personal, and unaffected interpretation he brought to his music.

Milstein was born in Odessa, Russia on Dec. 31, 1903. He started playing the violin at the age of four and made his recital debut at the age of 12, with his

sister accompanying him on the piano. He later said that he became a violinist because his mother made him study the violin to keep him out of mischief.

## Henry Temianka Will Be Remembered

The versatile violinist, Henry Temianka, died in November, 1992, just before his 86th birthday. He was an exceptionally fine soloist, chamber music player, conductor, musicologist, master teacher, and author.



At the suggestion of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, the great patron of Chamber Music, he formed the Paganini Quartet in 1946 and led this renowned group for over 20 years. The quartet was named after the four Stradivarius instruments that had once belonged to Niccolo Paganini and were purchased for the use of the quartet.

In 1960, Temianka founded the California Chamber Symphony which he conducted until shortly before his death.

Temianka was Professor Emeritus at California State University/Long beach, and held many guest professorships elsewhere. He made educational films, edited music, and took on humanitarian projects as well.

Among his writings is a delightful autobiography, Facing the Music, which was published in 1973 and subtitled, "An Irreverent Close-up of the Real Concert World".

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Phone: (813) 922-6986

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## ROBERT MAAS, Cellist -- A Vivid Memory

by Robert Maas, violinist and coordinator of the Cobbett Association

Many musicians, over the years, have asked me if I am related to the late Robert Maas, the gifted cellist of the famous Pro Arte Quartet of Belgium.

No, I'm not related, but I did have the good fortune to know this great musician while I was a student of the University of Wisconsin from 1938 to 1942. The Pro-Arte had come to America and its members were then "Artists-in-Residence" at the university.

Following a concert, I introduced myself to the "other" Robert Maas, and thereafter he was very friendly. After concerts, we often discussed the music and joked about having the same name. This extremely talented cellist was always interested in playing rare works and was an inspiration to me in my avocation of playing chamber music and researching neglected works.

### The Pro-Arte Quartet

The Pro-Arte Quartet was formed by a group of gifted students at the Brussels Conservatory in Belgium in 1912. Maas joined the group in 1921, remaining with them when they migrated to America. In 1939, however, he returned to Belgium for a vacation and became "trapped" during the German occupation of his native land. He eked out a living by playing in a cafe in Brussels, but returned to the U.S. as soon as the war was over.

### The Paganini Quartet

Back in America, Maas was befriended by that "patron saint of music", Mrs. William Andrews Clark, widow of "The Copper King" and U.S. Senator from Montana. When he confided to Mrs. Clark that he would like to form a new quartet, she offered to provide the funds.

Soon after, Maas met the noted violin virtuoso, Henry Temianka. Temianka was also planning to form a quartet, under the patronage of another wealthy chamber music lover, Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge.

In 1946, the two men joined forces and formed the Paganini Quartet which they named in honor of the four Stradivarius instruments the members played. Once owned by Paganini, these legendary instruments

were purchased for the use of the quartet by Mrs. Clark. With Temianka as its leader, the quartet was extremely successful during the twenty years of its existence.

Robert Maas, however, played with the quartet for only two years.

In July, 1948, tragedy struck. The great cellist collapsed and died of a heart attack during the intermission of a concert at Mills College in Oakland, California. He was only 47 years old.



### Tribute by Temianka

In his book, Facing the Music, Henry Temianka wrote of the first time he heard Robert Maas play the cello. "I knew instantly that I was in the presence of a master, a great cellist, and a great artist. His style of playing was monumental. There was a throbbing, indestructible rhythm that drove the music on to its inevitable destiny, neither hurrying nor halting, and there was an extraordinary feeling of unity between him and his cello as he bent forward, controlling his instrument, driving his bow deep into the strings to produce a tone of unique vibrancy and breadth.

Temianka also wrote, "One of the things I admired most about Maas was his remarkable ability to renew himself indefinitely. When he played a Beethoven quartet for the 400th time, he played it with the concentration, dedication, and freshness of his first performance."

### The Four Strads

Perhaps you are wondering whatever happened to the four strads. Mrs. Clark had decreed that they must never be separated, so in 1966 when the Paganini Quartet dissolved, Temianka placed the instruments in the custody of the Corcoran Gallery in Washington D.C. where Senator Clark had placed many of his art treasures.

# Fanny and Clara Had Much in Common

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805-1847), elder sister of Felix Mendelssohn, was considered as talented as her brother and was an excellent pianist and composer. We know much about Felix, but very little about his beloved sister.



Fanny composed hundreds of works in various genres, which show the influence of her brother. Six of her songs were published under Felix's name, Op. 8 and 9. She is known mainly for her romantic Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 11, which was originally published by Breitkopf & Hartel in 1850. She also wrote an attractive string quartet in Eb (1834) which is in the repertoire of the Da Vinci Quartet (see page 1), and a Quartet in A for Piano and Strings (1822). Most of her compositions, which included oratorios, cantatas, sonatas, and dramatic scenes, were never published.

Fanny's greatest joy was always music, and she took part in the famous Sunday "Musicals" at the Mendelssohn home. Her father was very firm, however, when he told her, "Music should be an accomplishment, but never a career for women." Felix agreed.

Fanny married Wilhelm Hensel, the Prussian court painter in 1829. With his encouragement, she published a song in 1847. She continued to compose all her life, but nothing more was published until 1846 when several books of songs and piano pieces appeared.

In 1847, at the age of 42, Fanny died just a few months before Felix's death. Before her death, she provided the essential source material for the biography of Felix which was written by her son, Sebastian.

Clara Wieck Schumann (1819-1896) was considered one of the most outstanding pianists of the 19th century. After much early training she began concert tours, and by 1835, she was known throughout Europe as an exceptionally talented child prodigy.



As an adult, she became known for her poetic interpretations of the great classics, including the works of her husband. She was not only a fine concert artist, but also an excellent teacher and composer. Unfortunately, most of her works have been ignored.

Among Fanny's admirers were Paganini, Mendelssohn, Chopin, and Robert Schumann. She eventually met Robert, but her father objected strenuously to their marriage. They were finally married, nevertheless, in 1840. Fanny had seven children which made it difficult to perform, but she continued her career in spite of family responsibilities. Robert died in 1856, but Clara outlived him by forty years. After Robert's death, Fanny became a close friend of Brahms.


One of her best works, which is in her husband's style, is her Trio in G Minor, Op. 17, originally published by Breitkopf & Hartel. It has appealing rhythms, pleasant harmony, and flowing melodies. Her last compositions show more originality than her early ones. This is particularly noticed in her songs, Op. 23. She left twenty compositions, including a piano concerto, piano pieces, and songs. In spite of her talents, she had no great ambitions to be a celebrated composer. In her time, women were not encouraged in such endeavors.

## PLANS for 1993 . . .

The study and evaluation of trios for piano, violin, and cello should be completed by April when the fourth part of the evaluations (composers from R through Z) will be mailed with the newsletter.

The remainder of the year will be devoted to the research and evaluation of non-standard quintets for strings (2 violas and 2 cellos) and string sextets (w violins, 2 violas, and 2 cellos).

The newsletters will continue to feature articles on neglected composers and their rarely heard chamber music.

 The purpose of this organization is to study, evaluate, and preserve rare and neglected chamber music of special merit, and to share information and encourage the performance of such music.