THE

CHAMBER MUSIC JOURNAL

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

Zdenek Fibich–The Chamber Music

A Fresh Look At Fauré's String Quartet

A Tale of Two Octets: Otakar Zich & Joseph Rheinberger

Volume XVI No.1 Spring 2005 ISSN 1535 1726

The Chamber Music Journal

Published by The Cobbett Association

R.H.R. SILVERTRUST, *Editor*

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ISSN 1535-1726

The Sounding Board-Letters to the Editor

Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata Cello Quintet Arrangement

I have read Ron Erikson's first article (*Journal Summer 2004*) on the 2-cello quintet repertoire with interest (being a cellist). I, also, have much enjoyed playing Sebastian Brown's 2-cello quintet reconstruction of Brahm's Piano Quintet which is obtainable in the UK from Polychordia Music. I look forward to the second article. In the meantime, readers might be interested in a two-cello quintet arrangement of Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata. This was first published by Simrock in 1832 but it is not known who did the arrangement. SJ Music has just produced a new edition which has been very well received. You can listen to a few measures on the web site: www.printed-music.com/sjmusic or get more information by emailing sjmusic@printed-music.com

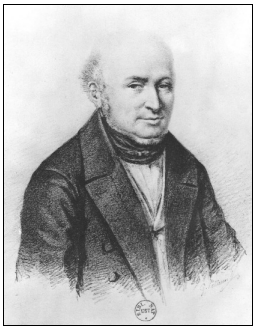
Judith Rattenbury
Cambridge, UK

Thank you for this interesting information. I am sure cello quintet parties will want to explore this.

Alexander Boëly—Who Was He?

The other day on the radio, I heard the last two movements of a string trio, I think the announcer said it was Op.5 No.1, by a composer called Alexander Boëly. I had never heard of him before but I liked the music very much. It reminded me a bit of Beethoven. What can you tell me about him and is this music in print?

Janice Johnson
Seattle, Washington



Alexandre Pierre François Boëly (1785-1858) (left) was born in Versailles. His father, one of the king's musicians, was his main teacher although he also studied with a Tyrolean pianist by the name of Ladurner who was residing in Paris. Boëly eventually became an organ virtuoso but received little acclaim. He was largely a self-taught composer, and attained his considerable skills by studying the music of Bach, Scarlatti Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven all of whom he championed at a time (1820's and 1830's) when these composers, as Saint Saens wrote, "...were still ignored by everyone in France." *Saint Saens continues,* "In his chamber music Boëly went back to Haydn and Mozart, still largely distained in France, and even more to Beethoven whose very name provoked a sense of horror." *Boëly's output was mostly for the organ and the piano, however he did write five string trios. Op.5, a set of three, was composed in 1808 and published in 1829. The last two, Opp. 23 and 24 were composed in the early 1820's and published in 1857. He also wrote four string quartets, Opp.27, 28, 29 & 30 which were published in 1859, a year after his death. However, they had actually been composed sometime between 1824 and 1827. The Op.5 trios are in print. Durand republished all three in a beautiful but horrendously expensive edition during the 1990's. Merton Music has published the trios individually, but the cost is roughly 7 times less than the Durand. There is a recording of Op.5 No.1 on Le Chant du Monde CD # 278 821. To the best of my knowledge, I do not think the Opp.23 & 24 are in print—nor has there been a modern reprint of any of his string quartets, although Opp.27 and 29 were recorded on the same CD as the Op.5 No.1 trio. To say that Op.5 No.1 reminded you of Beethoven to me seems an understatement. I have played all three of the Op.5 and like them, but it must be admitted that Boëly surely had a copy of Beethoven's Op.9 in front of him at the time he wrote his. There are long passages in Op.5 No.1 which are very similar to those found in the Op.9, especially Op.9 No.2. Though I have not played any of the string quartets, the two I have heard do not display such strong influence and have a more original sound to them.*

Definitive Onslow Book Published

In the last 100 years, there has only been one commercially available biography of George Onslow. This was Christiana Nobach's *Untersuchungen zu George Onslows Kammermusik,* which was more of a study of his chamber music than his life. In German, it was never translated. Richard Frank's work *George Onslow: A Study of his Life, Family and Works,* was never published although recently available through the university thesis publication program. Now comes what certainly will be *the* biography, entitled simply *George Onslow.* It is by Baudime Jam and published by Les Editions du Melophile. An English translation is planned. Editions Melophile is also publishing a critical edition of his string quartets. So far the three quartets of Op.9 have been appeared.—editor.

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.

Zdenek Fibich-The Chamber Music

by Renz Opolis

(*The author wishes to thank Messers Peter Lang and John Wilcox for providing the parts to some of the works discussed in this article)*

If reputation could be likened to a horse race, then in the "19th Century Czech Composer's Derby" Antonin Dvorak would cross the finish line several lengths ahead of his nearest rival, Bedrich Smetana, and then, after an even greater distance, would come Zdenek Fibich, far behind in third place. But reputation must not be confused with quality. Fibich (1850-1900) is no third rate composer. The issue of whether his chamber (and other) music is as fine as Dvorak's or Smetana's is, of course, a subjective one governed, like all such questions, primarily by taste. Having said this though, I would argue that his music is of very high quality, and totally undeserving of the near obscurity into which it has fallen.

The fall into obscurity can explained by the fact that Fibich lived during rise of Czech nationalism within the Habsburg empire. And while Smetana and Dvorak gave themselves over entirely to the national cause consciously writing Czech music with which the emerging nation strongly identified, Fibich's position was more ambivalent. That this was so was due to the background of his parents and to his education. Fibich's father was a Czech forestry official and the composer's early life was spent on various wooded estates of the nobleman for whom his father worked. His mother, however, was an ethnic German Viennese. Home schooled by his mother until the age of 9, he was first sent to a German speaking gymnasium in Vienna for 2 years before attending a Czech speaking gymnasium in Prague where he stayed

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A fresh Look At Fauré's String Quartet

And Its Place In French Quartet Literature

by Ron Erickson

The later chamber music of Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) has had a tough time of it; in fact, Fauré himself was not generally appreciated, even in France, for most of his life, except by a few highly gifted and subsequently influential students, particularly Charles Koechlin, Maurice Ravel, Nadia Boulanger, and Darius Milhaud. Only stage works got much attention in France, and that was not Fauré's strength, nor was orchestral writing – much of his orchestra music was scored by Koechlin. Not until after 1905, when he became director of the Paris Conservatory, did Fauré begin to achieve status as an eminent composer and teacher. Eric Blom, in the 5th edition of Grove's Dictionary, sums up a general ambivalence towards the appreciation of Fauré's music: *"He is not a musician for the masses, and never will be, nor is he quite a musician's musician, for all the impeccable finish of his technique, as far as it goes, since it does not go quite far enough for those who like masters who, they fancy, can do everything. But for a cultivated and civilized minority his music will remain a precious possession."* With such further dubious encomiums as "evanescent" and "fastidious," Blom seals Fauré's epitaph with qualified praise.

The general listening public has come to treasure Fauré's *Requiem*, a number of short works, and, of his chamber music, the Op. 13 sonata for violin and piano and the Op. 15 *Piano Quartet*. But the later works remain something of a mystery, though often revived, and the songs and piano music, perhaps the core of his artistic expression, are rarely included in recitals.

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A Tale of Two Octets

Otakar Zich & Joseph Rheinberger

by John Wilcox

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times….Over the past year, I "fell into" the editing of several chamber works with Rosewood Publications. The purpose of this article is to share those editing experiences regarding two octets for mixed winds and strings and to share information about these newly published works.

The Octet by Otakar Zich

I had been searching for many years for the Otakar Zich (1879-1934) *Octet*, which employs the Schubert *Octet* forces of 2 violins, viola, cello, bass, clarinet, horn, and bassoon. I had seen references to this work in several Czech chamber music reference works, and the composition was also described in one non-Czech book, Koenigsbeck's *Bassoon Bibliography*, an excellent single-volume work published by Musica Rara in 1994. I knew that the Zich *Octet* was probably a very good work because I had played a version arranged by the composer's son for standard nonet (wind quintet

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IN THIS ISSUE

At The Doublebar

We kick off 2005, our 16th year with what I think are three really fascinating articles

To begin, there is the first installment of a 3 part series by Professor Opolis on the chamber music of Zdenek Fibich whose fine works have for far too long taken a distant back seat to those of his better known contemporaries. While Fibich did not write a large amount of chamber music, what he wrote is of high quality. The combinations involve strings, string and piano, as well as strings, winds and piano.

Next we have Ron Erickson's detailed and highly interesting reexamination of the Faure string quartet. An examination which led him to conclude that an altogether better edition, than what was available, should be published. And so, Erickson Editions has brought forth that edition.

The third article, by John Wilcox, does indeed tell a fascinating tale about two unknown works, one by a composer—Otakar Zich—who has not previously appeared on these pages.

Having had the chance to hear and review a fair amount of Rick Sowash's music on CD, I decided to purchase some. I bought a duet for violin and cello entitled *Convivial Suite* and had such fun playing it that I approached Mr. Sowash about the possibility of writing another. I was able to commission a second duet *A Suite of Virtues*—for a very reasonable price—–which has given much pleasure and I am hoping to commission a string trio later this year. I strongly believe that we must step up and support those of our contemporary composers like Rick Sowash who are writing such approachable, wonderful, and playable music. Those interested in the opportunity to commission a work from Mr. Sowash can contact him at www.sowash.com. Make sure you tell him you're a Cobbett member.

While the majority of you have returned your renewals to us promptly, there are still quite a lot of you who have not. So if this issue arrives with yet another renewal form, please mail it back to us promptly.—*Ray Silvertrust, Editor*

A Tale of Two Octets

(Continued from page 3)

plus violin, viola, cello, and bass.) The Czech Nonet has recorded this arrangement, which is available for rental from the Czech Lending Library in Prague. I searched, with the help of friends, for years for the music to the original octet. Many letters, phone calls, and several visits to Prague produced nothing, until last year I was finally able to locate the original score in an attic in Prague. I contacted Rosewood Publications in the UK, who were delighted to publish the work, and I sent them a copy. There were many spots in the score which were challenging to read, and I innocently volunteered to "help" in any way I could, since this work was of great interest to me. I had worked a bit using Finale, the same notation software Rosewood uses, so there seemed to be a fighting chance that I could be useful.

To make a long story tolerable, I would estimate that I spent about 500 hours editing the score and parts to the Zich Octet. As is the case with most manuscripts, composers make errors. They get sloppy. They use shorthand and make assumptions. They are incomplete. They are not clear. They are inconsistent in articulations, rhythms, dynamics, chords, and notes. The more I studied the 85-page handwritten score, the more of these inconsistencies and problems I discovered, and the more editorial decisions Susanna Westmeath (of Rosewood) and I had to make. We tried always to be true to what we felt the composer wanted, but it was not easy to always know what he wanted. The 1904 Czech notation for the horn part was not what modern horn players expect, so decisions on producing a modern, playable version were easy. But even seemingly simple decisions concerning courtesy accidentals, page turns, and courtesy cues were not always easy and merited discussion. After we had produced a satisfactory modern score and set of parts, I assembled groups of friends to read through the parts slowly several times. It should be noted that the ability to play parts (in various combinations) on the computer permits one to check notes extremely carefully, but there is no substitute for vetting a new edition than actually playing the piece, with good musicians.

To provide a little bit about Otakar Zich and the work, I'll quote from the notes we prepared for the printing of the *Octet*. Otakar Zich (b. 25 March 1879 d. 9 July 1934) studied mathematics, physics, and aesthetics at Charles University, receiving a doctorate in 1901. While studying there, he also studied under Otakar Hostinský, a musicologist and aesthetician. Zich attended a course in composition under Karel Stecker, who taught at the Prague Conservatory. In 1901, Zich became a secondary school master in Domažlice, a town in the Chod (or "Chodsko") region of southwest Bohemia. While in this region, Zich became very familiar with the Chod folk music. Between 1906-10 he published several articles under the title, *Singing and Dancing Round in the District of the Chods*. The title page to this *Octet* contains the reference "Domažlice, 1904/5," indicating that the work was composed while Zich was living in the Chod region.

In 1906, Zich returned to Prague and completed his work at Charles University in 1911 as an aesthetician with special work in the aesthetics of music, i.e. the nature of music, its creation and appreciation. From 1911-19 he was a lecturer at Charles University. From 1919-24 he taught as a professor of aesthetics at Masaryk University in Brno. Zich then returned to Charles University, becoming a professor of aesthetics, where he remained until his death.

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Zich was essentially a self-taught composer. He wrote and published extensively about music, composers, and particularly about Czech musicology. He composed song cycles, cantatas, chamber music (*Piano Trio*, 1902, *Czech Suite* for violin & cello, 1928), and 3 operas. He edited several of Smetana's works, orchestrated Smetana's *Czech Dances*, and wrote books about Smetana's music. He was a music critic, championing Smetana's works and not favoring Dvořák's. However, he is primarily remembered as an aesthetician. His book *Aesthetic Appreciation of Music* (1910) was perhaps his most important work.

Otakar's son, Jaroslav Zich (1912-2001), also studied philosophy and musicology at Prague University. In 1939 he made an arrangement of this *Octet* for nonet (wind quintet, string trio & bass) which the Czech Nonet has performed many times. This work has come to be called the *Chod Suite*.

The *Octet* is replete with folk melodies. The first movement consists of a ballad-like introduction, followed by two themes of folk character. The second movement consists of two melodies: the first is a type of love song characterized by lingering on various syllables, and the second, which is more lively, is reminiscent of instrumental melodies from Chodska. The third movement, Scherzo, is representative of a dance, with pointed rhythms, giving each instrument turns at variations to the theme. A calmer Trio contains a song-like melody. The fourth movement combines several elements: a main theme with a clear reference to the first movement's final theme, a new song-like melody given primarily to the winds, and references to the first movement introduction, followed by a climax based on the first movement's main theme.

According to comments written in the score, the premier performance of the *Octet* was given on January 21, 1934, most probably in Prague, with members of the Ondříček String Quartet and other prominent musicians.

Rheinberger *Oktett/Octet*

When it rains, it pours. While in the middle of editing the Zich *Octet*, I had the good fortune to locate a copy of the manuscript for another piece for which I had been searching for years, Joseph Gabriel Rheinberger's *Octet*, op 132, an unpublished early version of his nonet op 139. Susanna and I were back to the drawing board again, with the same sets of ambiguities to research, ponder, and resolve, to produce a modern playable version. For this octet, we could refer to the nonet in some places to resolve ambiguities, but that was always risky, since there are clear differences in articulations, melodies, chords, etc. between the octet and the nonet. Another 500 hours or so of pondering, keystroking, test playing, another octet.

Again, I quote from the notes we prepared for the printed edition, to provide background on Rheinberger and the *Octet.: "Joseph Gabriel Rheinberger was an eminent German organist, conductor, composer, and pedagogue who lived from 1839 until 1901. Although born in Liechtenstein, he spent most of his life in Munich, studying at the Munich Conservatory (later studying composition under Franz Lachner), serving as principal conductor of the Munich Choral Society, and teaching organ, piano, and composition at the Munich Conservatory. His reputation as an organ teacher was remarkable, and students from around the world came to study organ and composition with him. Rheinberger's students included Humperdinck, Wolf-Ferrari, Thuille, Sandberger, Kroyer, Trunk, Chadwick, and Furtwängler."*

According to *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, "It may safely be said that there is hardly one among Rheinberger's chamber works which will fail to give some satisfaction; for amateurs, especially, they cannot be too warmly recommended. The slow movements, which make no excessive demands on the players, are in most cases very expressive, and almost all are distinguished by good melody and wholesome sentiment." The late Nicolas Slonimsky in *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* states: "As a composer, he created a number of works remarkable for their dignity, formal perfection, and consummate technical mastery, if not their inventive power." Similar comments are found in *New Grove*: "The strength of his works, in every sphere, lies in the indisputable mastery and the planned coherence of his compositional style, which is imbued with the spirit of polyphonic thinking rather than compelling inventiveness or vivid conception."

Few of Rheinberger's compositions are performed today. Yet he composed 20 organ sonatas, 2 symphonies, 2 organ concertos, and a large number of vocal works. His chamber music output included 3 string quartets, a string quintet, a piano quintet, 4 piano trios (one of which was arranged by the composer as a marvelous sextet for piano and wind quintet), 2 violin sonatas and a cello sonata.

Rheinberger's *Nonet* op. 139 for wind quintet and 4 strings was originally published by Kistner in 1885 and is available today from Musica Rara. The Octet, Op. 132, was basically an earlier unpublished version of the nonet, without flute. There are similarities and major differences between the octet and the nonet. Basically, the 1st movement (allegro), 3rd movement (menuetto) and 5th movement (rondo-finale) of the *Octet* are similar to the 1st 2nd and 4th (last) movements of the nonet. However, the octet contains 2 lovely slow movements not found in the nonet. The adagio of the octet (4th movement) was apparently composed at a different time, since it was written on a separate score from the other 4 movements. In the nonet, three of the four movements are in the horn-friendly key of E flat. The same 3 movements in the octet are in E flat, but the 2 movements found only in the octet are in D flat and A flat. Those familiar with the *Nonet* will notice countless differences and surprises as they play the *Octet*. Publication of the *Octet* provides the opportunity to see and hear how a gifted composer sifts through ideas and changes those ideas over time.

Lessons Learned

The editing process takes an incredible amount of time, patience, and attention to detail. Assumptions are made constantly in the process, just as assumptions are made by us as players and performers, and as assumptions were made by composers. Ambiguities abound in almost any manuscript and probably in most printed editions, even of "standard" works. Music is a fluid language, subject to wide ranges of interpretation. In spending time on these two works, it was very enlightening and fascinating to try to act as faithful interpreter of the composer's wishes, and in trying to present a fair, clear printed version to performers, so that both performers and listeners could make sense of what musical thoughts were put on paper by the composer.

The process has appeal to me. I'm currently working with Rosewood on Friedrich Rung's 5-movement Serenade for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and string quintet. Stay tuned.

Zdenek Fibich-The Chamber Music *(continued from page 1)*

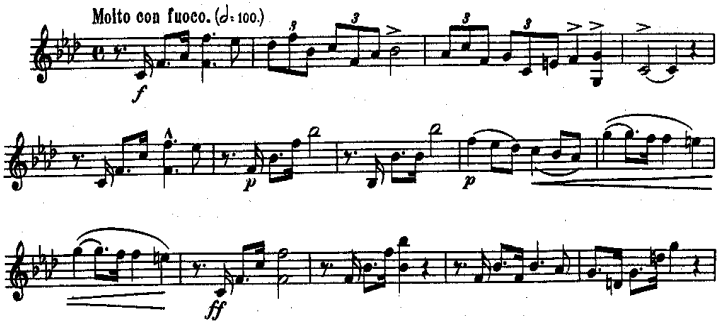
until he was 15. After this he was sent to Leipzig where he remained for three years studying piano with Ignaz Moscheles and composition with Salamon Jadassohn and Ernst Richter. Then, after the better part of a year in Paris, Fibich concluded his studies with Vincenz Lachner (the younger brother of Franz and Ignaz) in Mannheim. Fibich spent the next few years living with his parents back in Prague where he composed his first opera *Bukovina,* based on a libretto of Karel Sabina, the librettist of the *Bartered Bride.* At the age of 23, he married (a Czech) and took up residence in the Lithuanian city of Vilnius where he had obtained a position of choirmaster. After spending two personally unhappy years there (his wife and newly born twins both died in Vilnius), he returned to Prague in 1874 and remained there until his death in 1900.

Hence Fibich, in contrast to either Dvorak or Smetana, was the product of two cultures, German and Czech. He had been given a true bi-cultural education. And during his formative early years, he had lived in Germany, France and Austria in addition to his native Bohemia. He was perfectly fluent in German as well as Czech. All of these factors were important in shaping his outlook and approach to composition. And this outlook was far broader than that of Smetana and Dvorak, who in their maturity, exclusively took up the Czech cause and never let it fall. Such an approach was too narrow and constricting for a man like Fibich, trained at the great Leipzig Conservatory by colleagues and students of Mendelssohn and Schumann; too narrow for a man who had sojourned in Paris and Vienna; a man who understood that German, along with French, was clearly one of the leading languages of Europe. And Fibich could plainly see that writing opera and vocal works (his main areas of interest) in Czech would limit their appeal. What he did not appreciate was that writing such works in German would profoundly affect the way in which he and his music were regarded by Czechs. In his instrumental works, Fibich generally wrote in the vein of the German romantics, first falling under the influence of Weber, Mendelssohn and Schumann and later Wagner. It seems, that like Tchaikovsky, Fibich did not wish to write music that merely sounded nationalistic, but unlike Tchaikovsky, for the most part, Fibich succeeded. And therein lies the reason that Fibich has never been held in the same regard by his countrymen as either Dvorak and Smetana or even Janacek.

There is no denying that during his first thirty years, Fibich identified more with German culture than Czech. He preferred the German form of his first name Zdenko, rather than the Czech Zdenek, and insisted that it appear on his published works. His early operas and close to 200 of his early songs are in German. These works along with his symphonies and chamber music won considerable praise from German critics if not from Czechs. However, his reputation abroad began to fade when the international public began to clamor for the exotic sounding Czech music his rivals were composing. The public no longer wished to hear works from a Czech composer, which no matter how well-crafted or ingenious, nonetheless did not sound particularly slavic. Having said all this, it would be unfair to omit that the bulk of Fibich's operas are in Czech, although many are based on subjects from non-Czechs such as Shakespeare, Schiller and Byron. Nor is it fair to state that his music never sounds Czech. It just does not often sound obviously so. Perhaps in his chamber music, more than anywhere else, Fibich makes use of Bohemian folk melodies and dance rhythms such as the Dumka. Lastly, it must be noted that Fibich was the first to write a Czech nationalist tone poem (*Zaboj, Slavoj a Ludek*) which served as the inspiration for Smetana's *Ma Vlast.* He was also the first to use the polka in a chamber work (his quartet in A), again serving as an example for the older Smetana.

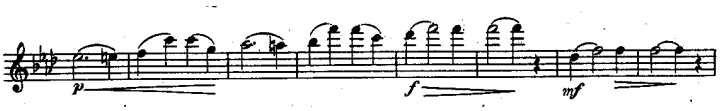
While the amount of chamber music which Fibich wrote is small in comparison to his total output, it should not be styled as "neglible" as the author in the *New Grove* claims. It is a comment he would not have made had he either played or listened to this music. In all, we have six chamber works from Zdenek Fibich: a piano trio, a piano quartet, three works for string quartet and a quintet for piano, violin, cello, clarinet and horn.

The **Piano Trio in f minor**, dating from 1872, is Fibich's earliest known chamber work and was one of the first works which brought him to the attention of musical Prague. Although it received favorable reviews upon its premiere, Fibich never submitted this surprisingly mature work for publication during his lifetime. It was not until 1908 that Fibich's chamber music publisher, Urbanek decided to bring it out. It is in three movements. The opening *Molto con fuoco* begins with a very powerful and original sycopated theme:

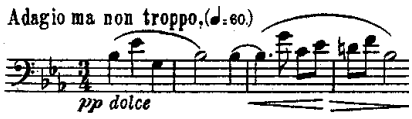


Interestingly, almost immediately, the strings bring forth echos of Bohemia in measures 4-7. Not much later the piano is given an unmistakably Czech-sounding passage.

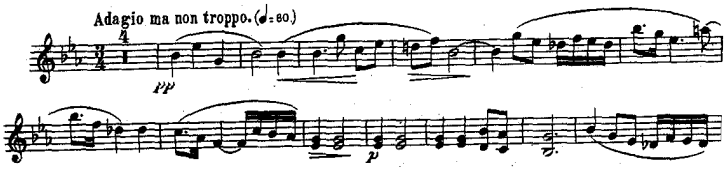
The lovely second theme follows without any real development. Highly romantic, lyrical and longing, it stands in sharp contrast to the main subject:



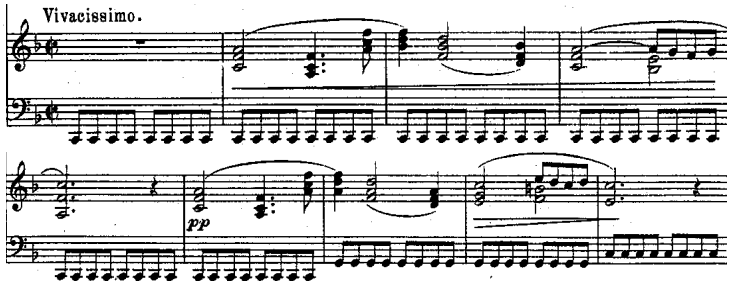
The part-writing is excellent, the instruments well-integrated, this movement has everything from convincing themes to pulsating forward motion to an effective and exciting coda. The music is so self-assured, one feels almost certain that Fibich must have tried his hand at a similar composition before penning this one.



The beautiful monothematic second movement, *Adagio ma non troppo,* is one long lied given entirely to the strings. The cello begins (see above) by stating the first half of the melody. The violin then completes it.



Though it is not a very long movement, the seamless way in which the music proceeds from start to finish is indeed impressive. This feat can easily escape the inattentive listener because the music is not particularly showy and not imbued with any great passion but rather remains calm throughout creating a mood of repose. But rehearing only increases ones admiration for the effortless way the theme just oozes forth.



In the first part of the finale, *Vivacissimo,* the piano is entrusted with the first half of the heroic sounding main theme. (see above) The strings' entrance adds a lyrical element. The second theme, with its quarter note triplets creating hemiolas has the aura of Brahms to it. Sparking piano passages, telling episodes of cello pizzicato, emotionally charged and attractive melodies and a powerful finish complete the picture to this superb movement. Surely this trio is a match for Dvorak's Opp.21 and 26 trios as well as Smetana's Op.15. Finely crafted and very appealing, this trio would be warmly received by audiences if professional groups were to give it a chance which it certainly deserves. *(This article will be continued in the next issue of The Journal)*

New Recordings

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

String Quartets

Magnar AM (1952-) *The Silver Cord,* Aurora 5028 / Niels ASHEIM (1960-) *Genesis,* Aurora 5023 / Amy BEACH (1867-1944) Qt, Lorelt 114 / Peter Maxwell DAVIES (1934-) Nos.1-2, Naxos 8.557396 / David DIAMOND (1915-) Nos.4 & 7, Albany TROY 727 / Karl Ditters von DITTERSDORF (1739-99) Nos.1, 3-5, VMS 156 / Daniel ELLIS (1933-) No.1, Campion Cameo 2027 / Friedrich GERNSHEIM (1839-1916) No.2, Aulos 66108 / Vinko GLOBOKAR (1934-) *Discourses VI,* Aulos 66142 / Friedrich KIEL (1821-85) Op.53 No.1 & *3 Waltzes* Op.73, Cavalli 231 / Nicola LEFANU (1947-Georg LICKL (1769-1843) Nos.1-3, Hungaroton 32220 / (Ermanno MAGGINI (1931-91) *Canto XIV*, Jecklin 317 / John McCABE (1939-) No.2, Campion Cameo 2027 / Roland MOSER(1943-) *Neigung*, Jecklin 283 / Seppo POJHOLA (1965-) No.3, Alba 187 / Josep QUADRENY (1929-) *Quartet de Catroc,* Ars Harmonica 133 / Joachim RAFF (1822-1882) Nos.2 & 6, Tudor 7116 / Wolfgang RIHM (1952-) Nos.5-6, col legno WWE 20212 / Ervin SCHULHOFF (1884-1942) *5 Pieces,* Praga 250 303 / Allen SHAWN (1953-) No.4, TROY 683 / Ethyl SMYTH (1858-1944) Qt, Lorelt 114 / Ragnar SÖDERLIND (1945-) No.2, Aurora5028 / Susan SPAIN-DUNK (1880-1962) Qt, Lorelt 114 / Peter STREIFF (1944-) *Wandelude Gange*, Jecklin 283 / Robert SUTER (1919-) No.2, Jecklin 283 / Zoltan SZEKELY (1903-2001) Qt, Atoll 793 / Germaine TAILLEFERRE (1892-1983) Qt, Helicon 1008 / Lasse THORESEN (1949-) *Aion,* Aurora 5028 / hFritz VOEGELIN (1943-) *4 Szenen* / Anton WEBERN (1993-1945), Op.22, Naxos 8.557530 / Peter WETTSTEIN (1939-) *Janus,* Jecklin 283 / Riccardo ZANDONAI (1883-1944) Qt in G, Dynamic 461 / John ZORN (1953-) *Necronomicon,* Tzadik 8006

Strings Only-Not Quartets

Daniel ELLIS (1933-) String Trio, Campion Cameo 2027 / Ervin SCHULHOFF (1884-1942) Sextet, Praga 250 303 / George TSONTAKIS (1951-) *Heartsounds* for Sting Trio, Koch Intl 7559 / Anton WEBERN (1883-1945) Trio Op.20, Naxos 8.557530

Piano Trios

Karl GOLDMARK (1830-1915) Nos.2-3, Centaur 2684 / Joseph JONGEN (1873-1953) No.1-2 (2 is for Pno, Vla & Vc), Phaedra 92041 / Henryk MELCER (1869-1928) Op.2, Acte Prealable 111 / Sergiu NATRA (1924-) Trio, Romeo 7231 / Odon PARTOS (1907-77) *Fantasia,* Romeo 7231 / Mordecai SETER (1916-94) Trio, Romeo 7231 / Daniel SHALIT (1940-) Trio, Romeo 7231

Piano Quartets, Quintets & Sextets

Seppo POHJOLA (1965-) *New York, New York* for Pno Qt, Alba 187 / Pere TINTORER (1814-91) *Quartetino* & Pno Trio, La Ma de Guido 2059 / George TSONTAKIS (1951-) Qt No.2 & *Bagatelles* for Qt, Koch Intl 7550

Winds & Strings

J.C. BACH (1735-82) Qt for Ob & Str Trio, Naxos 8.557361 / Bernhard CRUSELL (1775-1838) *Divertimento* for Ob & Str Qt, Naxos 8.55361 / Ketil hvoslef (1939-) Cln Qnt, Aurora 5023 / Ervin SCHULHOFF (1844-1942) *Concertino* for Fl, Vla & Kb, Praga 250 303 / Anton VRANICKY (Wranitzky 1761-1820) Sextet No.7 for Fl, Ob, Vln, 2Vla & Vc, Supraphon 3788 / Pavel VRANICKY (Wranitzky 1756-1808) Sextet Nos.3,4 & 6 for Fl, Ob, Vln, 2Vla & Vc, Supraphon 3788

Winds, Strings & Piano

George TSONTAKIS (1951-) *Eclipse* for Cln, Vln, Vc & Pno, Koch Intl, 7550

Piano & Winds

Winds Only

Vinko GLOBOKAR (1934-) *Discourses VII* for Wind Qnt, Aulos 66142 / Sigfrid KARG-ELERT (1877-1933) Trio for Ob, Clon & Eng Hn & Qnt for 2 Cln, Ob, Bsn & Hn, Hungaroton 32166

A fresh Look At Fauré's String Quartet

(Continued from page 3)

This is especially true of his last work, the Op. 121 *String Quartet* in E minor of 1924.

The *Quartet* has remained in the recorded repertory since the Krettley Quartet issue in 1930 (Krettley, or Krettly, also participated in the premiere, with Jacques Thibaud and the eminent cellist André Hekking, in 1925). Krettley's, and the six or eight other recordings I have heard, all appear to represent the established edition by Roger-Ducasse (Durand, 1925) rather than Fauré's autograph score. Weakened by illness, Fauré had only the will to mark dynamics and slurs in the exposition of the first movement, and left instructions for Ducasse, as his student, to see through to their completion. My thesis here is that Ducasse, an organist and not a particularly notable composer, overlaid the *Quartet* with altered and added markings that were meant to bring the work to life, but which actually obscured or assumed Fauré's intentions with a cloak of his own interpretation.

Following Ducasse's edition, Durand published a facsimile of Fauré's manuscript score to allay the suspicion, according to authority Jean-Michel Nectoux, that Ducasse may have contributed compositionally to the *Quartet* as well. Aside from filling in a couple of measures from sketches left by his teacher, Ducasse appears to have left unchanged the durational and pitch elements of the score. But his added markings, taken at face value as Fauré's intentions, smooth out and trivialize the energy suggested in the score as left by Fauré, and which is found in other works of Fauré's last years, particularly the cello sonatas. Ducasse may have interpreted some of Fauré's longer slurs as phrasings, but his added bowings, on the level of practical execution which he may have thought the composer had left to the editor and the artist, are not supported musically by the autograph score.

An edition by Jaques [sic] Pési from Peters in 1982 "after the sources" attempts to reconcile the autograph and sketches with Ducasse's markings. In the score, Pési breaks Fauré's slurs where they are matched by Ducasse's, but retains all of Ducasse's markings, and even adds a few suggestions which, again, are not consistent with the music. Reviewing that edition, I resolved in 1994 to create an edition (available from Erickson Editions) directly from the autograph, adding only such slurs as I deemed essential to performance, based on my own experience and research.

In one of his sketches for the *Quartet*, Fauré noted, perhaps wryly, that Haydn, at 77, was almost the same age as Fauré (at 78) when he left his uncompleted quartet Op. 103. The quartet was Haydn's principal mileu; why did Fauré wait until so late in life to essay a string quartet? Fauré had a strong sense of humility with regard to the monuments of the quartet genre, particularly to those of Beethoven. This intimidation was shared by other French composers, such as Fauré's mentor Camille Saint-Saëns, César Franck, and Fauré's eminent student Florent Schmitt, whose quartets were also among their last works, as were those of Verdi, Grieg (his unfinished 2nd quartet), and Cherubini, though perhaps for different reasons. Poulenc discarded his attempt in 1940. Perhaps Fauré's own hearing loss, leaving him in his last six years unable to discern true musical pitch, gave him the courage to begin his last and only chamber work without piano.

The liberation from the sometimes facile keyboard texture which had supported his other ensemble works brought Fauré to focus on a structure of linear interplay that would stand by itself. In a contrapuntal play of controlled passion, the isolated lines weave a few

(Continued from page 8)

motives through a virtuosic labyrinth of tonalities. Players may comment: "it goes on repetitively with no direction or structure," or, "it's very dissonant." But the play of motives and overlapping suspensions that creates those effects progresses through unexpected modulations, teasing the bounds of tonality, to an ecstatic series of cadential arrivals and climactic peaks emerging in a delicious clarity of logic from an apparent haze of harmonic wandering. Fauré is said to have been free, alone of his colleagues, from the influence of Wagner, yet as with Schumann – a major influence, along with Chopin - he was attuned to an elegiac sphere of melodic inspiration that is unforgettably satisfying, even addictive. It is that sublime spinning forth of unearthly beauty, calling to mind passages in Mahler, that marks, in particular, Fauré's songs and choral music, as in the *Requiem.* Yet it is perhaps that same quality in the *Quartet* that fails to satisfy the instrumentalist and the audience expecting the vocabulary of terse contrasts, physical energy, and architecture of the standard chamber literature.

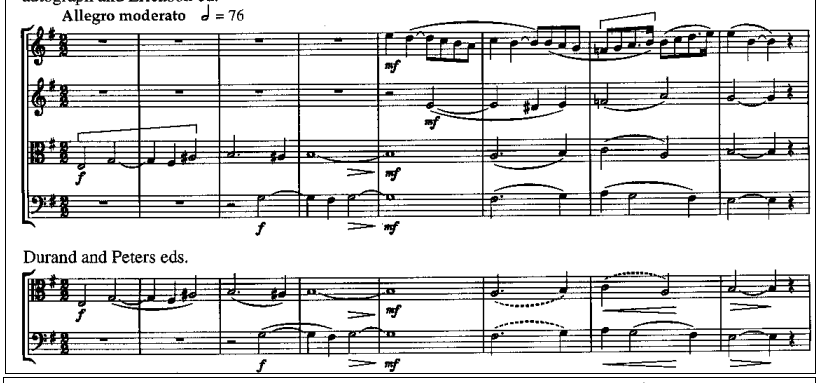
The import of Ducasse's changes shows from the first measures (EX. 1). The viola, which plays a particularly strong role throughout the work, opens alone, *forte*, with an "assertive" (so termed by Fauré authority Robert Orledge) disjunct ascending figure, joined by the cello in the third bar. The violins answer more softly in a descending scale-wise melisma, to establish a contrast that characterizes the whole movement. The contrast is obscured by Ducasse's added bowings, which remove some of the articulation of the first four measures. These measures can be seen as a microcosm of Fauré's melodic language. The theme is built on two melodic intervals: first, the minor third, E – G, which identifies the main key; second, the augmented tritone, E - A-sharp – the first tetrachord of the transposed Lydian mode - as the passing F-sharp eclipses the preceding G-natural. The first violin answers in E-minor, descending scale-wise towards the 2nd scale degree of F-sharp, which instead becomes F-natural in a Phrygian-mode transformation of the key, rising then through the Lydian tetrachord to B and cadencing to the tonic E-minor in meas. 8.

The ancient modes became Fauré's signature. In 1855, as a precocious pianist and composer at age nine, he was brought to study on scholarship at the *école* Niedermeyer in Paris by its founder, where for the next ten years he received a thorough and modern education and was introduced to counterpoint, Gregorian chant, and the church modes, in the study and teaching of which Louis Niedermeyer was a pioneer in France. Saint-Saëns succeeded Niedermeyer in 1861 and became Fauré's principal teacher. Through the use of modes, and the study of the parallelism of open intervals in the organum technique of late medieval French church music, independent French composers developed a national vocabulary which helped release them from the domination of the German-based musical tradition perpetuated by the Paris Conservatory. The modal flavor arrived at its most consistent and extreme expression during Fauré's generation with Eric Satie.

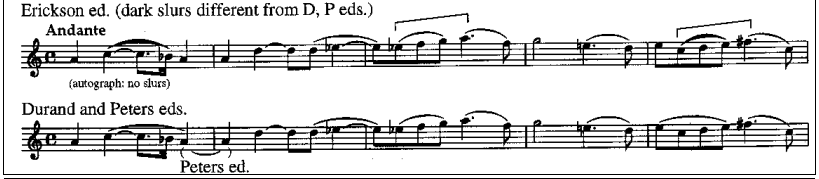
Author of the Fauré entry in the new edition of the *Oxford Companion* and of a book analyzing Fauré's musical development, Orledge claims that Fauré abandoned his cyclic use of thematic material in his last chamber works. This is not entirely true of the *Quartet*: the shape of the opening theme is developed throughout the *Quartet* as a fundamental element of the structure and links each movement. In the first movement, this theme is a frame for secondary material drawn from an earlier work, the abandoned *Violin Concerto*, Op. 14, of 1880. Interesting that the attempt at the *Concerto* falls between the time of his best-known chamber works, the *First Violin Sonata*, Op. 13, and the *First Piano Quartet*, Op 15. One might view the *String Quartet* as the apotheosis, forty-five years later, of Fauré's personal musical goal, achieved through a mastery of tonal exploration and the inspiration of France's earliest musical monuments.

As the *Quartet* unfolds, the Lydian tetrachord, filling in the augmented tritone, expands its opening role as a source of play with scale-based melodies, creating effective tonal ambiguities. In this play of tonalities the pivot of frequent enharmonic ties challenges the intonation of the string player who is not attached to the fixed temperament of the keyboard. One might even argue for this tetrachord as a nascent whole-tone scale, which hints toward its exploitation, even stereotyping, by Debussy and Bartok, in a more familiar challenge to the player. Further, the minor key of the *Quartet* is a natural vehicle, in both senses of the word, for both the Dorian and Phrygian modes, with their minor 7th degrees.

EX. 1
First Movement, beginning
autograph and Erickson ed.

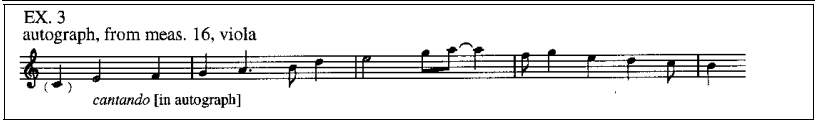


EX. 2
Second Movement, beginning
Erickson ed. (dark slurs different from D, P eds.)

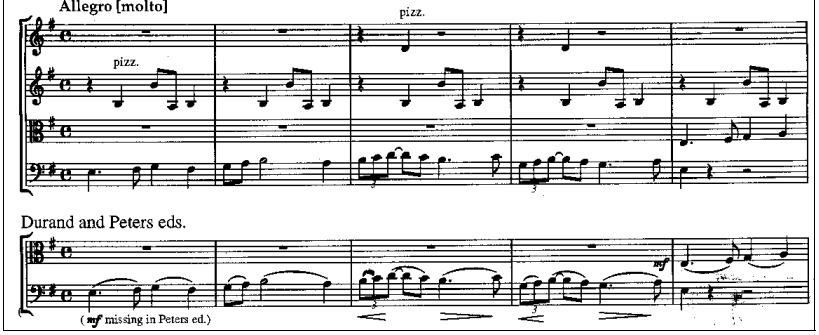


In the second movement the seed motive (EX 1) rises to the octave (EX. 2), and the Lydian tetrachord, here the last four tones of the ascent, becomes the pivot for modulations through successive tonal areas, set off twice by a singing line in Phrygian mode first presented by the viola in bar 16 (EX. 3). The leading tone on the fourth degree of the tetrachord propels the music toward arrivals, rising in chromatic succession, that are at first interrupted, then finally achieved in bar 142. The spirit seems close to that of the second movement of Fauré's next-to-

EX. 3
autograph, from meas. 16, viola



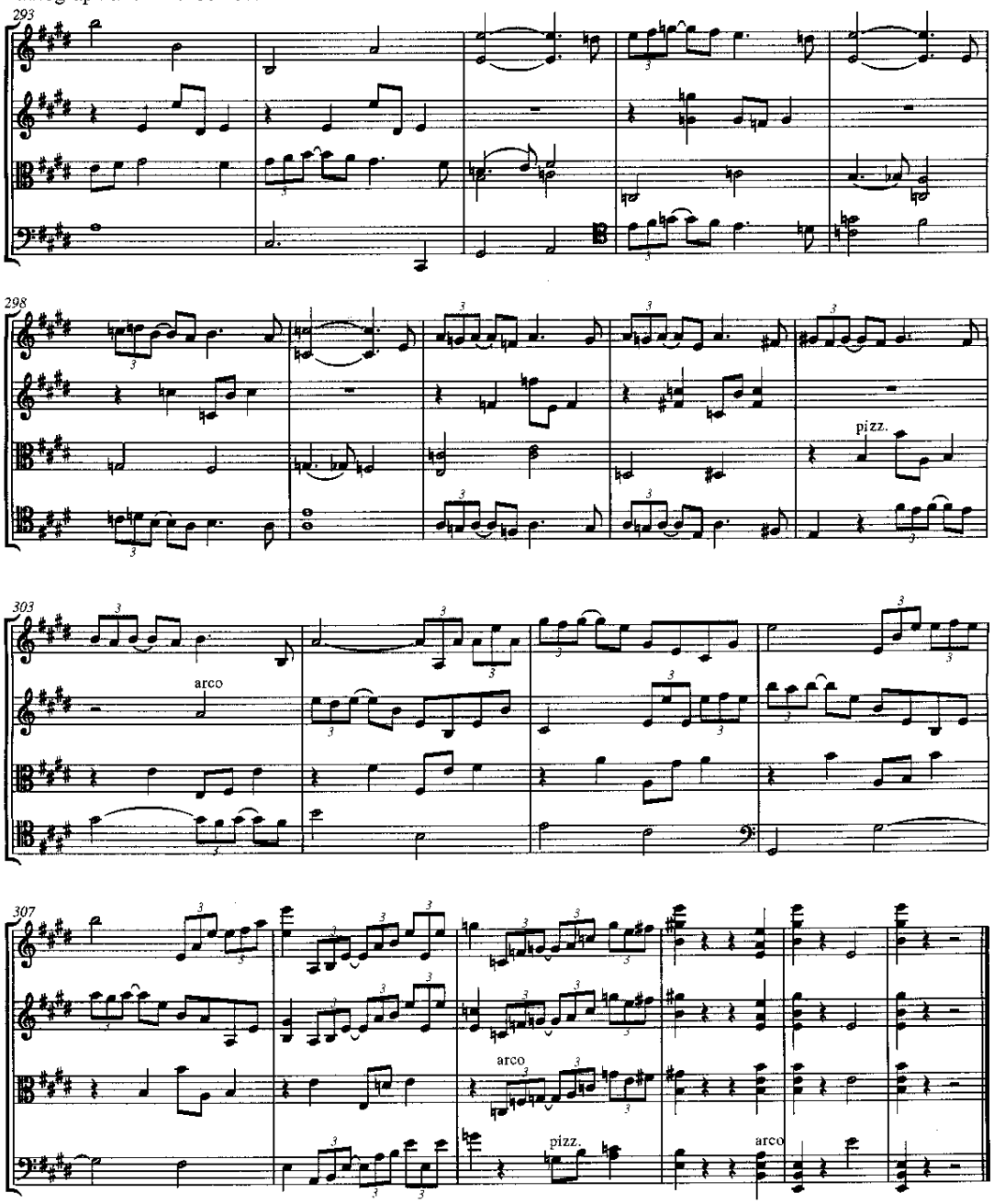
EX. 4
Third Movement, beginning
autograph and Erickson ed.



last work, the *Piano Trio*, Op. 120, which also shares some of the same figurations and the pianistic off-beats of the accompaniment.

A fugue-like subject dominates the third and final movement of the *Quartet*, opening in the cello and pursued in imitation throughout the movement by all voices, interrupted twice by a singing line that continues to carry the music impetuously forward. Nectoux says this movement is generally taken too slowly; in the final stages of composition, Fauré had considered inserting a short fourth movement, possibly a scherzo, but decided not to, and described what eventually became the last movement as "in the spirit of a scherzo, like the last movement of the Piano Trio." With the repetitive *pizzicato* drumming away as if in a frenetic dance of *djinns*, this movement has a restlessness and urgency unsurpassed in Fauré's total output. Of the two conjunct motives (EX. 4), the second is a challenge to rhythmic accuracy, with its triplet tied to a duplet. The Ducasse edition adds slurs, which engender a tendency to play the first two triplets as 16ths, as well as reducing the energy of the figure. Played without slurs, as in the autograph, the articulated figure leads more logically to the *melée* at the end, with the triplets and duplets piled on among the voices in one of the most exciting conclusions in the quartet literature. (EX 5) The effect resembles, most of all in Fauré's music, his *Fantasie*, Op. 111, for piano and orchestra.

EX 5
Third Movement, conclusion
autograph and Erickson ed.



How does this quartet come to stand in such contrast to the French quartets of Fauré's contemporaries and to the direction established by the quartets of **Debussy** (1893) and **Ravel** (1903) more than 20 years earlier than the Fauré, a direction which set the tone for so much quartet writing up to the 1940s? The pianist and historian Paul Collaer portrays Fauré's development and place in the spectrum of his contemporaries in *The History of Modern Music* (1963, translated from the French), as he concludes a comparison of the French rationale of reposeful creativity with the dominating Western drive for progress: "Starting with a more tradi-

tionalist conception than Debussy's, Fauré came closer in his later work to the new music than did Debussy – the architectural direction of his composition, his spirit of reduction, the conciseness of his harmonic language, the importance he gives counterpoint, and in the clarity of his melodic lines. His evolution, which began with gracious affability, ended in a serene grandeur, like the grandeur that comes with knowledge. No drama or movement remains. The *Second Quintet* and the *String Quartet* attain the immobility of perfection."

The stylistic language of the French string quartet before Debussy appears to have been as randomly conceived as 19th-century French politics, as there was no "national" French school of composition in the Classic and Romantic eras. In the face of public indifference to instrumental music, excellent and pioneering individual composers who emulated Italian or German models include **Pierre Vachon** (1731-1802, three sets of six each, mentioned in Cobbett's); **Louis Jadin** (1768-1853); and **Georges Onslow** (1783-1852). Violinists such as **Viotti, Kreutzer, Joseph Boulogne** (the Chevalier de Saint Georges) and **Baillot** wrote estimable quartets, the latter (three quartets, Op. 34, 1823) possibly the most original and "French," meaning at that time influenced by the popular song, dance, and march. **Pierre Crémont** (1784-1846), a highly regarded and traveled violinist and clarinetist, left a quartet of 1819. The Leipzig-influenced expatriate **Théodore Gouvy** (1819-98) wrote five quartets (and a cello quintet), several recorded recently, as reviewed in the Cobbett *Journal* (Winter '00 and '04). **Adolphe Blanc** wrote and published quartets and other chamber music in a High Classical style. Cobbett himself reports that **Jean-Baptiste Bréval** (cellist at the Conservatoire, 1756-1825), wrote thirty string quartets and much other string music, recommending the six quartets, Op. 1, published by Leduc, which include a "foreshadowing of Mendelssohn's fairy music." **Charles Cotel**, an esteemed pedagogue of harmonic practice at the Conservatoire and a successful opera composer of Beethoven's generation, left both quartets and quintets. **Cherubini** and **Reicha**, at the center of the Conservatoire but not trained in France**,** are outside the scope of this article (several of Reicha's pupils, who were cellists, wrote quartets). **Louise Farrenc** (1804-75), another student of Reicha, has left a manuscript quartet, as reported in the current Grove's (the cited library does not confirm that it holds that manuscript), but the author of the Grove's entry was later assured that the manuscript was copied from another composer's work..

Until the Third Republic, and the attendant crisis in national esteem precipitated by the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, chamber music in France was dominated by the German repertory and of little importance in the culture. To attain any degree of recognition, a composer had to at least attempt the opera. Fundamental change in the musical culture was driven by the influence of Niedermeyer and his school (which remains active), and by the formation of the Société nationale de musique in 1871 to encourage French instrumental music. Saint-Saëns was joined, after its founding, by Jules Massenet, Fauré, Edouard Lalo, Alexis de Castillon, Ernest Guiraud, Henri Duparc, and César Franck. **Lalo** (1823-92) revised his early Op.19 quartet of 1855 and had it published in 1880 as Op. 45. **Castillon** (1838-73) wrote estimable chamber music and songs and contributed greatly to the development of a national style by his songs before his untimely death; his Op. 3 quartet of 1871 (Durand, 1900) is vigorous and original.

Saint-Saëns' two quartets (1899, 1919) are enjoyed today, but do not contribute to what one might identify as a national style; essentially a classicist, he is perhaps the most eclectic of French composers. **Franck's** quartet (1889) is by far the outstanding work of this group, although his opaque style is of a different world from that associated with Fauré.

The towering figure of Franck in instrumental music, though not perceived by the French listening public, engendered a sonorous and chromatically dense compositional school associated with the organ. From the middle of the 19th century, some of the best instrumental composers in France held positions as church organists. The principal composition teachers (the three Gs: Gevaert, Gedalge, and Guilmant) wrote monumental treatises on counterpoint and fugue. Besides Franck, Saint-Saëns and Fauré, those organists who wrote quartets (not all of the Franck persuasion) include **Boëly** (four highly regarded quartets in the style of Bach, 1861); **Dubois** (1909); and **Vierne** (Op. 12, 1894, mentioned in the Cobbett *Journal* of Autumn 02). Franckians **Jean Huré** (1877-1930) and **Vincent d'Indy** (an organist at St. Lie for four years) wrote, respectively, two quartets (1916, 1920) and three quartets (1890, 1897, and 1928). Franck's student **Guy Ropartz** wrote principally chamber music and left three quartets (1893, 1912, and 1925). Another Franck student, **Emile Bernard** (1903, pub. posth.), shows an independence of all influences, according to Cobbett.

More modern quartets contemporary with the Debussy and the Ravel, or subsequent to them up to the time of Fauré, include those of Les six: **Milhaud, Honegger** (1916, 1917), **Durey** (1917, 1922, and 1928), and **Tailleferre** (1918). **Koechlin** has three quartets from the early 1920s. **Witkowski** has an excellent quartet of 1902. Moderately estimable composers who wrote one

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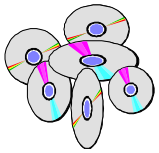
quartet each include **Ducasse** (1909), **Roussel** (1932, paired with the Fauré on a Lowenguth Quartet recording), the naval officer **Jean Cras** (1909, published 1921), **Lucien Niverd** (1922, described in Cobbett's as "neo-classic"), and **Pierre Menu** (*Sonatine*, 1920, dedicated to his teacher Ducasse). **Albéric Magnard's** quartet (1904) is very difficult; from a recording, I find the work relatively violent and moody, like *Verklaerte Nacht* or Mahler without the virtue of cohesiveness. The highly estimable conductor **Paul Paray** trained as a composer and left an excellent quartet, published in 1919 but never recorded, to my knowledge. **Adolphe Piriou** (b. 1878), a student of d'Indy and author of most of the Cobbett's entries on French composers, includes **Robert Siohan** (1920) and Franck's student **Marcel Labey** (1919). His own quartet (Op. 21, n.d. available to me) is praised in Cobbett's. The Englishman **John Gerrard Williams** (No. 2, 1923) and the American expatriate **Blair Fairchild** (Op. 27, 1911) followed the Debussy model. The Alsatian-born American **Charles Loeffler's** *Music for Four Stringed Instruments* (1923), an eclectic blend of all the major French composers, is described eloquently by Carl Engel in *Cobbett's*: "The quartet is of an almost metaphysical aloofness: the soul here is already detached from its earthly shell, and the sounds are like an echo of mortal strife, passion, sacrifice, and victory." Loeffler and Fauré enjoyed a mutuality, though no meeting is recorded: Fauré's *Second Cello Sonata*, Op. 117 (1921), is dedicated to Loeffler, and the last movement of Loeffler's *Partita* for violin and piano (his last composition, 1930) is an homage to Fauré.

What makes a French quartet sound "French"? Is it a combination of the elements I have described, or an ineffable "je ne sais quoi" in the culture, or the artistic personality of the composer (or players)? Whatever the answer, the three quartets which may be taken as models of the internationally influential French style as it evolved from the *fin de siecle* are the Debussy, the Ravel, and the Fauré. They are all discernibly different from each other, but among many elements they share, especially pertinent to this article are the liberation from the tyranny of the leading tone of the 7th scale degree and the inclusion of the techniques of organum. While these elements may be attributed to the influence of the Niedermeyer school, they are also in the broader spectrum of a 19th century expansion of tonal language to the chords of added thirds (the 9th, 11th, and 13th), and to the change from the axis of tonic and dominant, particularly by Chopin, Liszt, Franck, and Wagner, to the division of the octave into equal parts – the diminished 7th chord, the sequence of major thirds as key centers for modulations (rather than the scale tones), and the augmented tritone, extended by an additional whole tone, as in Franck's harmonic signature, to the chord of the augmented 5th , filled in as the whole-tone scale and, eventually, diminuted to Schoenberg's division of the octave into semitones with equal function. A predilection for the pentatonic scale, as an abbreviated form of the whole-tone scale as well as redolent of folk song, informs much writing leading into the 20th century. The pure line, especially strong in Fauré and Ravel, and a central theme of Nadia Boulanger's teaching, expresses the French balance of the rational and the passionate.

Rhythmically, too, the suspension of tones tied from a weak to a strong beat, and the alternation of triplets and duplets, are characteristic of each composer, almost to the point of a mannerism. In Fauré's last movement this becomes a kind of *rubato* figure; Ravel evens it out to the quintuplet figure of his last movement, in a nod to ethnic rhythms of his own Basque heritage and of the Javanese gamelan, which made such an impression on Ravel and Debussy with its introduction to France beginning with the 1889 International Exposition. Ravel's excursions into the music of the Orient are an expression of France's obsession with the Orient, echoing Napoleon's penetration of Egypt (whose effect and rationale are described vividly in Edward Said's *Orientalism*), and paralleling such works as Felicien David's *Melodies orientale* (1835), Saint-Saëns' *"Egyptian" Piano Concerto*, No. 5, and the *Algerian Suite*, Koechlin's representations of Kipling and his promotion of world music, and the Mediterranean flavor in Jean Cras' *String Trio*, not to mention the plethora of French operas with oriental settings and themes. Given this context, it is easy to see a North African or Near Eastern reference in the driving accompaniment of the last movement of Fauré's *Quartet*, though Nectoux denies such reference.

Interpretations of Fauré's *Quartet*, both in print and in performance, have restricted the perception of Fauré's imagination to a lyrical and smoothed approach that stereotypes the French style, at least that of Fauré. But the autograph seems enough evidence for where ligatures are required in order to preserve the unities and contrasts presented at the beginning, as notated by the composer. As with pre-Classical works, the affect of the music should be enough to reveal to the player, allowing for personal artistic taste, the appropriate execution (as Quantz and other respected writers of Bach's day explained). Since my first recasting of the *Quartet*, I have reduced my own ideas of what needs to be added to the composer's score by the editor to the point where to supply even fewer, or shorter, slurs would, in my view, bring the music to the articulated effect of, say, a piece by Handel, surely an anomaly in modern French music. But then, at what point does articulation necessarily interfere with the line, if the execution conveys the intent? In developing a French music, composers turned to ancient French models, such as Dufay in vocal music and Couperin in instrumental, from a time before the tyranny of the slur. Finding parallels with the modern concept of *legato* is an elusive task at best.



Diskology: Wind Trios by Ibert, Milhaud, Tomasi & Villa Lobos
Anton Webern: Complete Works for String Quartet & String Trio

Somm CD# 013, subtitled *20th Century Miniatures*, presents five works for wind trio (oboe, clarinet & bassoon) from four composers. The first work is *Cinq Pieces en Trio* composed in 1935 by **Jacques Ibert** (1890-1962). Two andantes are sandwiched between three allegros. Though Ibert called it Five Pieces, there is a unity to the work and it could just as easily have been called Trio. It is a slight work with the shortest movement lasting less than a minute and the longest under three. The sprightly march-like opening *Allegro vivo* is especially attractive. The *Andantino* which follows is a reflective entrat for the *Allegro assai,* a modern minuet with a charming cuckoo passage. A second *Andante* leads to the finale, *Allegro quasi marziale* which really is not all that martial but is nevertheless effective in bringing this bright charming work, written mostly in a neo-classical style, to a successful close. The first of two works by **Darius Milhaud** (1892-1974) is a short one movement work entitled *Pastorale,* Op.147. It also dates from 1935 and was dedicated to the famous French wind ensemble, Trio d' Anches. Milhaud, during the 1920's associated himself with the group of composers which has come to be known as *Les Six* and was especially influenced by Francis Poulenc. It is stylistically similar to Ibert's *Cinq Pieces* but as one might expect from the title, gentler. The second work, *Suite d'Après Corrette*, Op.161b was originally intended as incidental music to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The *Suite* consists of eight short movements: *Entrée et Rondeau, Tambourin, Musette, Serenade, Fanfare, Rondeau, Menuet*, and, *Le Coucou.* The shortest is less than half a minute, the longest barely two minutes. Milhaud explained, *"I wrote a suite...based on the themes of Corrette a petite maître of the 18th century very freely handled both as regards to harmony and melodic line."* The result, for the most part, is a neo-baroque suite, modern yet still traditional. **Henri Tomasi** (1901-71) is the least known composer represented here although he did compose quite a lot of music and did enjoy a brief career as a conductor. His 1936 trio, entitled *Concert Champêtre* (rustic concerto) was also dedicated to the Trio d'Anches. Again, we have a work similar in spirit to the Ibert and in style to Milhaud's *Suite*. In five movements—*Ouverture allegro giocoso, Minuetto, Bouree-Decide, Nocturne-Andante and Vif.* At times the music is more baroque in feel than the Milhaud but at other times it might almost be styled as neo-renaissance. This trio is also a very good work. But I must say that I would not want to hear a concert with all three of these works on the same program because they are too close in style which creates an unfortunate monotony. The final work on disk is the *Trio* of **Heitor Villa Lobos** (1887-1959) Unsurprisingly, it sounds nothing like the other works and its not clear to me why it wound up on this disk. The work was composed in 1921 two years before his first visit to France. Although, he had met Milhaud during the latter's visit to Rio, this work shows no similarity whatsoever to the Frenchman's music. In three movements—Animé, Languissamente and Vivo—the trio at nearly 20 minutes is five times longer than the rest of the works. The music, while engaging, is hard to classify, though tonal, it is neither neo-classical nor neo-romantic. It is a strange mix of French modernism and African rhythms. Poulenc's sonata for clarinet and bassoon is also on disk. A very worthwhile CD.

Anton Webern (1883-1945) is, of course, well-known and needs no introduction, but this is certainly not true for much of his chamber music for string quartet and string trio, which is why **Nimbus CD 5668** is a very interesting and exciting recording. Along with his well-known *Five Movements* and *Six Bagatelles* (Opp. 5 & 9) for string quartet, we are presented with three very interesting works which predate his abandonment of traditional tonality. These are his *Langsamer Satz for String Quartet* and his *String Quartet* (without opus) both dating from 1905 and his *Rondo for String Quartet* composed in 1906. There are also his two works for string trio, Op.20 and Op.Post., which are almost never performed. Also on disk is his last quartet, Op.28, which, while not as popular as the Opp. 5 & 9, nevertheless does receive the occasional performance. My discussion will omit reference to these better known pieces. The tonality of the *Langsamer Satz* is that of the late romantic period. The inspiration for the work was the woman Weber eventually married. The music is emotionally charged and filled with yearning. It is a very attractive work which shows the influence of Richard Strauss, Hugo Wolf and (not suprisingly) the early work of his teacher, Arnold Schonberg. A very lovely movement of what was to have been a complete quartet. The parts were available in the 1990's from Carl Fischer and may still be available. The *String Quartet* also from 1905 is tonally more advanced than the *Langsamer Satz* but still entirely tonal. While one can still hear some influence of Strauss, that of Schonberg's *Verklarte Nacht* period is more evident. While still remaining tonal, it is clear that Webern is experimenting with tonality, pushing it ever farther by means of wayward chromaticism. This quartet is Webern's longest chamber work for strings, twice as long as *Langsamer Satz,* but still only about 15 minutes. In one movement, a style favored by Schoenberg, the overall mood of this work is quiet, mysterious and introspective, despite a few very brief stormy episodes. This is a very engaging work, in no way a student work, and clearly points the direction in which Webern was travelling. The one movement *Rondo,* dates from 1906 and is a little more lyrical than the *String Quartet,* but its most striking feature is its prominent use of unusual effects such as ponticello, pizzicato, harmonics and tremolos to create tone color. Such works as Hugo Wolf's *Intermezzo* for string quartet and the string sextet *Varklarte Nacht*

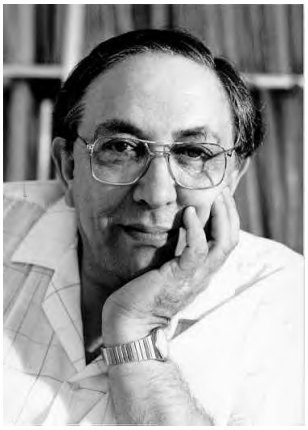
Three String Quartets by Anton Zimmermann
Carl Reinecke: Two Piano Quartets & A Piano Quintet

must have served him as examples, especially the Wolf. Which sounds very similar. The main theme is almost a Viennese waltz, but heavier and quite serious in mood. Of the three early works, this is perhaps the most interesting, as Webern approaches the exits of traditional tonality and form. Webern wrote two short works for string trio, neither of which is heard in concert, perhaps because there are few string trios performing before the public. The two short works for trio, *Trio Movement Op. Post.,* composed in 1925 and the two movement *String Trio* completed in 1927 were his first chamber music since 1914 and in the interim he had long since said farewell to the style of his early works as his well-known *Bagatelles* and *Five Movements for String Quartet* clearly show. The short *Trio Movement* was intended to be part of a complete string trio but was discarded. Webern adopted Schonberg's serial technique using the 12 tone system for both works. One does not notice it because the effects such as glissandi and pizzicato are what draw the listener's attention away. The music, as in his better known late works, is quite transparent. He might almost be styled the Mozart of 12 tone technique. It is a short series of episodic incidents. This was music which Webern meant to be played by more than professionals and it is not overtly hard technically. A very worthwhile disk.

Over the past few years, there have been several releases of string quartets by unknown or little known 18th century composers. **Naxos CD 8.553942** presents three more, these by the Austro-German **Anton Zimmermann** (1741-1781). Nine years younger than Haydn and 14 years older than Mozart, Zimmermann barely lived long enough to hear the major innovations which Haydn made in his Op.33 quartets, let alone those which Mozart made in the quartets he dedicated to Haydn a few years later. Not a lot is known about Zimmermann's early life. Born in Silesia, Zimmermann is thought to have worked in Moravia as an organist before coming to Pressburg where he remained until his death. Located within easy reach of Vienna, Pressburg was then the capital of Hungary and as such had a thriving musical life. His Op.3, a set of six quartets, of which the first three are recorded here, were published in 1777 toward the end of Zimmermann's short life. The jacket notes refer to him as "an acclaimed contemporary of Haydn and Mozart" but today I think most listeners would leave out the word acclaimed. In my opinion, there is nothing which is the least bit interesting about this music, which I think, other than for historical reasons, need not be heard. Again the notes state that Zimmermann drew on Haydn as inspiration for his compositions, but the only similarity I could find was the fact that like some of Haydn's Opp.1-3 quartets, these have five movements, two minuets placed second and fourth. Unfortunately, these melodically uninspired works are nowhere near as fine as Haydn's Op.1 and I think that probably says it all. Clearly not everything which is being rediscovered or revived is necessarily worthwhile. Sadly, this is a case of the jacket notes being better than their subject matter.

Despite having found the favor of Mendelssohn, Schumann and Liszt, **Carl Reinecke** (1824-1910) remains one of the truly fine 19th century composers who has never received the acclaim he really deserved. A great "all rounder", Reinecke, besides being a composer who belongs in the front rank, was a first rate pianist, an esteemed teacher, conductor of Leipzig Gewandhaus orchestra for over 30 years and head of what was arguably the top conservatory in Europe. **CPO CD 999 618** brings us three works. A piano quartet from his early-middle period, his great piano quintet from his prime and a second piano quartet which was one of his last works. The 1853 **Piano Quartet No.1 in Eb, Op.34** was clearly influenced by Schumann and the exhilarating first movement, *Allegro molto e con brio* is a kind of homage to the Schumann Op.44 Quintet. A soulful and lovely *Andante* with extraordinarily fine writing is placed next. What a happy and wonderful original-sounding movement is the succeeding, bouncy joyful *Intermezzo.* What a shame such music is not better known! In the Mendelssohnian finale, *Allegro molto vivace*, the piano runs away with the first theme, the slowly and more lyrical second theme returns to ensemble style. Predating the Brahms Opp.25, 26, for its time, this was perhaps the best piano quartet composed. Fifty two years separate **Piano Quartet No.2 in D, Op.272** from No.1. Much of Reinecke's late chamber music, written while he was in his 80's, is truly extraordinary in its power and vision. In the Op.272, he set himself a different goal, subtitling the work "in an easier style". His goal was to produce a work of only moderate technical difficulty (the music is by no means easy, especially the fluent piano part), which would serve as an introduction to the contemporary virtuoso works but which above all would hold its own as music. The full-blooded and romantic opening *Allegro* harks back to a post-Schumann style that nonetheless predates late Brahms. The following *Scherzo moderato* with its very lyrical trio is quite original. A gorgeous, reflective and pastoral Adagio comes next. The gemütlich finale, *Rondo allegretto*, while not full of passion, is nonetheless charming and effective. Reinecke succeeds entirely in achieving his goal. A perfect little work. His only **Piano Quintet in A, Op.83** dates from 1866, the same year as Brahms'. The big opening movement begins with a very mystic *Lento* which gives way to a richer-sounding but still Schumannesque *Allegro con brio.* The wealth and richness of the musical ideas well justifies the movement's length. The slow opening to the *Andante con variazione* recalls the introduction to the first movement. Four variations follow each with a different mood. Another excellent scherzo, *Intermezzo allegretto,* quite in the vein of Mendelssohn comes next. In the buoyant finale, *Allegro con spirito,* the ghost of Schumann hovers over the opening thematic material before Reinecke moves beyond his old mentor in the superb development. Chromaticism, reminiscent of that in Schumann's Quintet, figures prominently in the second theme. It is almost as if Schumann had been granted extra years to further develop his musical thinking. A very satisfying work deserving of a place in the repertoire. A recommended CD.

A Quintet for Clarinet and Strings by Wilfred Josephs From Reynaldo Hahn: A Piano Quintet and Two String Quartets



Wilfred Josephs (1927-97) was born in Newcastle in the north of England. He studied at the Guildhall School of Music in London and later with Max Deutsch in Paris. Josephs has written in virtually every genre winning awards and acclaim for his highly original and appealing music. Besides his formal compositions, he has also composed for television and film. His **Clarinet Quintet** featured on **Metier CD 92058** dates from 1985. It is for the clarinet in A. Josephs has written that he preferred the clarinet in A to that in B flat not only for the extra C sharp at the lower end of its range—something of which he wished to take advantage—but also because he felt it had a warmer if less brilliant sound than the clarinet in B flat. This is a big work, about a half hour in length. Although Josephs was thoroughly trained in the compositional style of the 2nd Viennese School, this is neither an atonal nor a serial composition. In tonality and mood, the Quintet reminds me of Max Reger's clarinet quintet but this is not to say it sounds like Reger, it doesn't. Perhaps this work's most unusual feature is that it has two first movements which Josephs numbered 1a and 1b. 1a is an *Andante.* Its opening is characterized by a legato melody. in the clarinet against interruptions by the strings, Besides Reger there are touches of Paul Dukas to be heard. 1b is a *Moderato* and follows 1a without interruption. Its gentle mood is not very different from 1a but the upper strings play a more prominent role in singing. At one point we hear a 4 measure quote from a late Beethoven quartet. Cello pizzicato is especially important in both parts. Josephs comments that in no way should the *Andante* be considered an introduction and that it is of equal importance to the following *Moderato.* Together, both are entitled *Partitura.* The second movement, *Scherzo, vivo,* is livelier, and has a urban neoclassical feel to it. The third movement, *Notturno, adagio,* is the longest and despite its delicate nature, the center of gravity of this work. Here the clarinet presents a soft lovely melody in its high register while the strings, for the most part, play a soft and mysterious accompaniment. This is very languid music which almost creates a sense of suspended animation. The finale, *Dispartitura, moderato,* (Josephs tells us in his notes that it means a departure), begins calmly but in a pleasant mode. Then there is bustling, a preparation to leave perhaps, in any event the music becomes energetic for a while. The ending is peaceful and quiet. This is an unqualified masterpiece—a must hear, must play work that needs to enter the repertoire. Also on this highly recommended CD are Josephs 2 clarinet sonatas.

I have come across the name of **Reynaldo Hahn** (1875-1947) but only in connection with his operetta *Ciboulette,* (reputedly a masterpiece) but I had never heard any chamber music by him although *Cobbett's Cyclopedia* does mention his **Piano Quintet in f# minor** which dates from 1921 and is one of two works presented on **Naïve Auvidis CD 8787**. Born in Venezuela, Hahn's family moved to Paris when he was three. He studied at the Conservatory under Massenet who considered him a genius. Handsome and worldly (see photo), Hahn drew his friends from a much wider circle than other musicians (e.g.: Marcel Proust and Sarah Bernhardt) and was greatly interested in the literary scene as well as the theater. Having a gifted voice and being an excellent pianist, Hahn needed no assistant for vocal concert evening. He was also a deft conductor who eventually directed the Paris Opera. The big and highly dramatic opening movement of the three movement Quintet, *Molto agiatato e con fuoco* is, in a word, brilliant. How could music this attractive and exciting land in oblivion? In the moody, pensive and beautiful *Andante non troppo lento.* The merest whiff of Faure can occasionally be heard. Toward the end, a lovely vocal melody, briefly, like the sun pushing through heavy clouds, lightens the mood. The thematic material of finale, *Allegretto grazioso* is elegant and genteel and has an almost neo-rococo .feel to it but cannot match the excitement of the opening movement. The middle has a slighly more buoyant rondo and the coda slow builds momentum to a very satisfying conclusion. This is a superb work which must be revived.

Reading what Hahn had to say about the string quartet——*"Chamber music in the form of a simple string quartet is fundamentally incomplete, such a combination makes versatility out of the question; each part is a layer. Supposing that one of those parts briefly takes the lead, the result will never be any more than an accompanied solo; if two parts break free, it will be an accompanied duo, if three do so, there will not be enough basses, and if all four move at once, you end up with instability."*—you would not think he would choose to write one, but in the Autumn of 1939, he took up the challenge and wrote two. **String Quartet No.1 in g minor** is the only one published and represents a modest tonal advance over his quintet but is firmly rooted in traditional tonality. The *Andante molto moderato* is by turns pensive, lively and charming. The two parts of the *Récit et chanson de Provence—lent* which follows are starkly contrasting—an ascetic recitativo followed by a lovely setting of a folk tune from Provence. An *Andantino* which comes next is bluesy, melancholy music with the lightest touch of French impressionism. The neo-classical last movement, *Allegro assai,* is light in mood and full of energy. **String Quartet No.2 in F Major** written immediately after does not sound very different. *Animé* is stylish and light and also neo-classical in mood, much in the way of Saint Saen's 2nd Quartet. The excellent second movement, *Trés mouvementé* is a lively scherzo featuring wonderful use chromaticism. The work's center of gravity, *Posément, trés modérè* is played muted. Though mostly quiet there is at times a sense of urgent yearning. The nervous finale, *Trés vite á un temps,* shows some tonal harshness juxtaposed with extremely beautiful melodies. Hahn loved Mozart and these quartets seem an attempt to write as a 20th century French Mozart might have done. Highly recommended.

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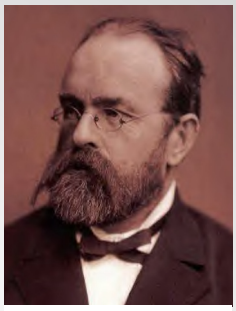
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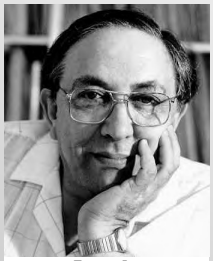
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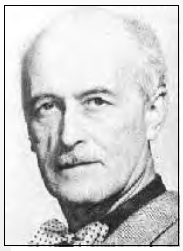
Ibert


Milhaud

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

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