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***Ferdinand Ries
The Piano Quartets***

***Trios for Three Violins
by Friedrich Hermann***

***A Brief Survey of
Quintets for Winds and Piano***

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A Very Brief Survey of Quintets for Winds and Piano

Kenneth Smith

In the first place, it is highly unlikely anyone has either played through or heard every quintet ever written for winds and piano. I certainly haven't. But I probably have played through more than most readers of this journal. Perhaps a few more than a dozen. Of these, I have selected what I consider to be the best or at least the ones I found the most attractive. However, I did not wish to title this article "Smith's Favorite Quintets for Winds and Piano", hence the above title. That said, I do think that works I will be discussing in detail in this article are more than most readers are ever going to get around to playing. So, let us begin.

One cannot write an article about works of this genre without at least mentioning **Beethoven's Quintet for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon and Piano in E flat Major, Op.16**. Beethoven was all of 14 when he wrote it and the only reason anyone ever plays it is because it is by Beethoven. It does not take a great expert to quickly realize this is not among his best works by any stretch of the imagination. Most scholars reckon that Beethoven modeled his quintet after that of Mozart's K.452. It has to be more than a coincidence that Beethoven's quintet is scored for

the same instruments and is in the same key as Mozart's and appeared shortly after Mozart's was published. And, of course, Beethoven greatly admired Mozart and not long after went to Vienna to try to become his student. The first movement, Grave; allegro ma non troppo, opens with a fanfare in unison, followed by a pompous introductory dialog between the piano and the strings resembling a French overture. The Allegro is simple and not without some charm and a mandatory cadenza at the end. The middle movement, Andante cantabile, has an appealing theme and much unnecessary ornamentation mostly in the piano. The finale, Allegro ma non troppo is jocular with another unnecessary piano cadenza. Yes, the work is certainly an accomplishment for a 14 year old, but really, other than one play through, there is, in my opinion, no point in coming back to it. If it were not by Beethoven, it is unlikely it would be performed in concert or ever have been recorded.

Adolphe Blanc (1828-1885), pictured on page six, was born in the French town of Manosque. His musical talent was recognized early and he entered the Paris Conservatory at age 13 first taking

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The Piano Quartets Of Ferdinand Ries

By R.H.R. Silvertrust



Nowadays, the name Ferdinand Ries if it is known at all is as the student, friend and first biographer of Beethoven. However, in his time, Ries was one of Europe's leading pianist soloists and was regarded as one of its most prominent composers. Sadly, today, little is known of this great man.

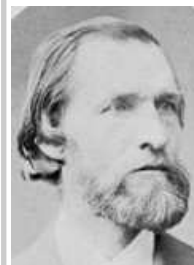
Ferdinand Ries (1784-1838) was born into a musical family in the German city of Bonn. His grandfather Johann Ries was Court Trumpeter for the Elector of Cologne and his father, Franz Anton Ries, an excellent violinist as pianist, held the position of Kapellmeister (music director) for the Archbishop of Cologne when resident in Bonn. Ries received violin and piano lessons from his father and cello lessons from the famous virtuoso Bernhard Romberg who was then resident in Bonn. At the age of 14 in 1798, he left the family home to make his way, traveling to Munich where he briefly studied with Peter von Winter and eked out a living as a music copyist. After saving enough money, he traveled to Vienna, the music capital of the German speaking lands, in 1803 where he hoped to continue his studies.

In his possession was a letter of introduction written by the then well-known composer Carl Cannabich. This and the fact that Beethoven had actually taken lessons as a boy from Ries' father, were enough to secure him a place as a student. When Beethoven took Ries on, he had but one other student, Carl Czerny. And on these two young men, he lavished great attention and took great care of each, offering what

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Trios for Three Violins By Friedrich Hermann

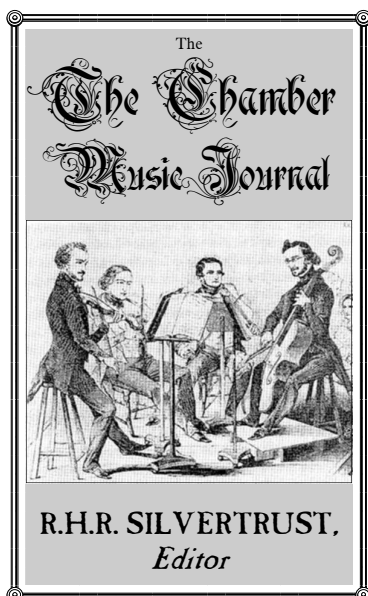
by Arnold Feiwelsohn



Friedrich Hermann (1828-1907) was born in the German city of Frankfurt am Main. He was a student at the Leipzig Conservatory, studying composition with Mendelssohn and

Niels Gade and violin with Ferdinand David. After graduating he obtained the position of principal violist of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, and at the age of 19 started teaching at the Conservatory where he later became a professor. Besides his work with the Conservatory and the Orchestra, Hermann was a member of the Gewandhaus Quartet. In 1878, in order to devote himself to teaching, composing, and editing, he resigned all appointments except the Conservatory. His work as an editor is well known and includes compositions by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven as well as those by the famous violinists such as Kreutzer, Beriot and Rode. In addition to his work as an editor, he composed a symphony, a quartet for wind instruments, and several other chamber music works, which clearly shows his affinity with the new emerg-

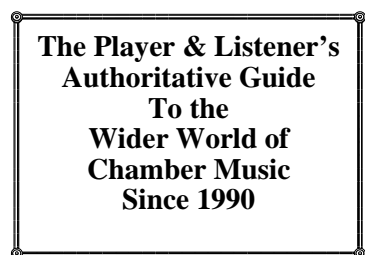
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The Piano Quartets for Ferdinand Ries *continued from page 2*

support he could, including securing positions for them as piano tutors to aristocratic families. He also took care to send them to his own composition teacher Johann Georg Albrechtsberger studies in harmony and composition. Over time, Beethoven took quite a liking to young Ries trusting him to act as his secretary and allowing him to handle correspondence with publishers and even to negotiate with them. He also worked worked as a copyist for his teacher. After only one year with Beethoven, Ries made his public debut as a pianist in Vienna on July 1804, playing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No.3. Beethoven even allowed Ries the honor of writing his own cadenza for the performance, which was received with great acclaim.

When the French invaded Vienna in September 1805, Ries, then 21, was afraid he would be conscripted into the Grande Armee. As a result he returned to Bonn for a year where he stayed with his family. But Bonn was under French control and he was eventually called up to serve only to be rejected as he had lost sight in one eye when he had contracted smallpox as a child. He used his time in Bonn to compose and several of his compositions, including his first two piano sonatas which were dedicated to Beethoven were published, thanks in part to his father's important position in city, by the prominent Bonn music publisher Niklaus Simrock. In 1807, Ries spent the next eighteen months in Paris barely making ends meet, making little headway as either a performer or composer. As a result he returned to Vienna in August 1808. He spent his time helping Beethoven with the premieres of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies along with other works, but by 1809 when the French one again threatened Vienna and Austria and its allies were regrouping, The Austrian military was conscripting all able bodied men under a certain age even if they could only see out of one eye, so once again Ries fled Vienna and returned to Bonn where he spent the next eighteen months, using his time to compose.

In January 1811, Ries left for Russia on an extended concert tour which took him to the German cities of Kassel and Hamburg and then on to Copenhagen, Stockholm and finally St. Petersburg. There, he met his old cello teacher Bernhard Romberg, with whom he gave concerts throughout western Russia, including cities such as Kiev, Riga and Tallin. However, in the summer of 1812, with Napoleon advancing on Moscow, Ries left on a tour across Europe which eventually took him to London where he arrived April 1813. He was to spend the next eleven years there.

Upon his arrival in London, he was welcomed and given the support of one of the city's leading musicians Johann Peter Salomon, co-founder of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. As luck would have it, Salomon, also originally from Bonn, had been his father's violin teacher and erstwhile fellow Bonn musician. It was Salomon, in his role as one of London's leading impresarios, who had been instrumental in bringing Haydn to the city on two occasions as well as several other prominent composers. Salomon quickly included Ries as a regular performer in his Philharmonic concert series. Ries' performances were met with glowing reviews and as a result, he was quickly able to establish himself as a sought after piano teacher in the wealthy districts of the city. The following year in 1814 he married Harriet Mangeon, one of his students from a

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well heeled London family. As his reputation continued to grow, in 1815 he became a member of the Philharmonic Society and in the same year was elected to be one of its directors. Ries never lost touch with Beethoven and after the peace of 1815, he often represented Beethoven's interests with the various London publishers striving to publish his works. In 1817, he convinced the London Philharmonic Society to extend a commission to Beethoven for a symphony that resulted in famous 9th Symphony. He was also instrumental in getting London publishers to bring several of Beethoven's late compositions. Just how important Ries' efforts in London were for Beethoven can be deduced from a letter in 1825 Beethoven to a London publisher after Ries had departed the city for good: *"Since my friend Ries is no longer in London, I don't send anything there myself, as the correspondence and arrangements take up too much of my time."*

Ries' own compositions from his London years basically fall into two categories. He composed most of his orchestral works during this period. Six of his eight symphonies were composed for concerts of the Philharmonic Society. On the other hand, because of his reputation as a pianist and teacher, he wrote a considerable amount of lighter music, mostly for the piano such as fantasies, rondos, and variations, often adapted from well-known opera arias or popular folk song melodies. There was not much demand for chamber music during this period and he wrote very few string quartets and instrumental sonatas.

In the years following 1820 Ries quarreled with his fellow Philharmonic directors over the infrequency of his works being programmed. As a result, in 1821, he resigned his position as a director and began to think about settling in Germany. Three years later, in 1824, he left London for good and settled in small, quiet German village of Godesburg not far from Frankfurt. It was a good place to raise his young family. In Godesburg during 1825 and 1826, he wrote five string quartets (Op. 150, Nos. 1 and 2 and Op. 166, No.1 and WoO 34 and 36). String quartets had been a genre that Ries had rarely touched during his time in London.

But after a few years Ries tired of Godesburg and the thriving musical life of the big city of Frankfurt am Main became an irresistible draw. In Frankfurt the existence of a renowned Opera House especially attracted him as he had plans to begin writing operas, So in

1827, he moved there for the rest of his life. His reputation in Germany as an composer and conductor was such that he received many commissions for all sorts of works and also offers to serve as music director of various orchestras. Several of these offers he turned down, including a very attractive offer to lead the Orchestra and Singakademie in Aachen. But in 1827, he accepted the directorship of the famous and annual Lower Rhenish Music Festival, a position he held for eight years between 1827 and 1834. Then in 1834, he he agreed to serve as director of the Frankfurt Orchestra.

His final years were spent touring and promoting his operas which were only moderately successful. His travels took him to Italy, Ireland and London. But by 1837 his reputation began to fade and when he died suddenly after a short illness in 1838, his death passed almost unnoticed by the musical establishment and magazines outside of Frankfurt, London and Vienna.

With regard to his piano quartets of which there are three, Ries could hardly have had Beethoven as his model. Beethoven had composed three piano quartets in 1785 at the age of 15 which were not published until after his death and even if Ries had known of them, they would have been of little or no import as they do not really amount to much. Beethoven's so-called Op.16 piano quartet is nothing more than his arrangement of an earlier work, a quintet for winds and piano. That said, it does not mean that the compositional style which he had learned from his teacher and Beethoven's contemporaneous works did not influence him.

His first effort, Piano Quartet No.1 in f minor, Op.13 was completed in 1808 either while he was still in Paris or perhaps upon his return to Vienna in August. It is only in three movements, which leads one to conclude that Ries perhaps was thinking of it as a mini concerto. The work begins with an Adagio introduction in which several loud chords punctuate the proceedings. The main section, Allegro, has the aura of early Beethoven. The string writing is effective, but the piano part is rather virtuosic, not really surprising given the fact that most works of this genre at this time were written by composers who were pianists. One sees this in Mozart's and Hummel's works along with those of several lesser composers. Little changed when Mendelssohn entered the scene and it was really only with the advent of Brahms that the piano became less dominating and more of an equal blending in. The middle movement,

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Andantino, begins with a long solo in the piano, then the strings as a choir repeat the main subject, again we hear early Beethoven. The finale is a Rondo, allegretto moderato, Of the three movements, the thematic material of this movement is the most compelling and memorable. Overall, if someone had told you that Beethoven had written this work in 1801, you would have believed them.

Piano Quartet No.2 in E flat Major, Op.17. dates from 1809 when Ries was still in Vienna. It, too, is in three movements and as such shows no real advance in Ries' idea of a piano quartet from the one composed a year earlier. Once again, he invokes the spirit of his famous teacher without actually quoting After hearing this quartet, one might conclude that Ries was familiar with and influenced by Beethoven's Archduke Piano Trio and Triple Concerto. The Triple Concerto yes, since it was composed in 1803. The Archduke Trio no, because Beethoven did not finish it until 1811. So perhaps it is not beyond the realm of imagination to think Beethoven could have been influenced by Ries who may well have shown him his second piano quartet. The opening movement, Allegro, begins calmly enough with a lovely lyrical theme but soon the music is ratcheted up to a bravura temperature with the level of sound almost reaching that of a concerto. The piano begins the second movement, Adagio mesto, with a Bach-like prelude, which introduces a rather sad reflective melody brought forth by the strings individually. The Quartet concludes with an exuberant, lively Rondeau, allegro moderato. Here is a Piano Quartet

ing romantic virtuoso style that was part and parcel of 19th century string playing. Among his chamber works are several trios for three violins, a genre which is relatively small. His wonderful handling of the three voices in these works is clearly demonstrated by his ability to interweave three similar timbres. His **Capriccio No.1 in d minor for Three Violins, Op.2** is the first of three which he wrote for this unusual combination. It dates from 1845. It was premiered at a concert at the Leipzig Conservatory where he was teaching and intended to showcase his talented students. Hermann took the part of third violin for the performance. It begins with a short Adagio introduction. The main section, Allegro, opens with a frantic subject which eventually is followed by a more lyrical melody. The two themes alternate with each other eventually leading to a brilliant conclusion. **Capriccio No.2 in G Major for 3 Violins, Op.5** was published in 1856. It opens with a short rhythmic introduction. Although the entire piece is marked Allegro molto, there are three sections. The middle section is less virtuosic and more lyrical, providing a fine contrast. This music slows down to a full stop on a fermata rest before the furious pace is renewed. Just before the thrill-

which combines the styles of the late Vienna classics with the newly emerging early romantic. An occasional airing in the concert hall would not be amiss and amateurs, as long as they have a first rate pianist, should give it a try.

Piano Quartet No.3 in e minor, Op.129 dates from 1820. More than a decade had passed from his two earlier piano quartets composed while living in Vienna and still in close contact with Beethoven. By the time he wrote this work, he had been in London seven years and given what he had heard and seen in the intervening years, one might well expect some advance in his thinking. One notices this right away in the fact that the quartet is in four movements, not three. Concerti have remained in three movements even up to the present time. Chamber music works tend to have four movements. The opening Allegro begins with a kind of short introduction promising much and several stormy sections follow. We find better use of the strings and in the use of the piano. Though the music still requires a pianist with nimble fingers, it does not require a virtuoso. The thematic material is lyrical and dramatic but really is not much further advanced than the earlier quartets. The second movement, a stately Andante, is very fine. The part-writing stands out. The third movement, Scherzo allegro vivace, dances along merrily and is only interrupted by a lovely, slow trio section. A dramatic and exciting Presto concludes the quartet. Of the three, this to my mind is the finest and most deserving of concert performance. Amateurs will also find it ingratiating.

ing coda. Hermann inserts a slower con espressione passage which heightens expectations for the close. **Capriccio No.3 in A Major for 3 Violins, Op.13** was published in 1859. It opens with an ornate and lengthy Andante. The main section, Allegro scherzando, has a graceful subject for its main theme. A second is more lyrical. There is an exciting animato section and a thrilling conclusion. The **Suite in d minor for 3 Violins, Op.17** dates from 1881. It is in five movements, each of a different character. The opening movement, Grave, Energico ed appassionato, ma in tempo moderato begins with a passionate outburst. The dramatic tension is only occasionally relieved by a few brief lyrical episodes. Next comes a fleet-footed Scherzo with a brief emotional trio section. The third movement, Canzonetta, Allegretto tranquillo is a pastorale. A jovial, rollicking Giocoso is placed fourth. The finale, Marcia funebre—Presto begins with the strings muted and playing a dour, funereal march. The main section, Presto, is wild and exciting. Toward the end, the funeral march briefly returns before the coda in which the Presto has the final word.



a diploma in violin and then studying composition with the then famous composer Fromental Halevy. Although for a time, he served as a music director of a Parisian theater orchestra, he primarily devoted himself to composing and most of his works were for chamber ensembles. During his lifetime, these works were much appreciated by professionals and amateurs alike and in 1862 he won the prestigious Chartier Chamber Music Prize. Besides the fact that his works are pleasing and deserving of performance, Blanc's historical importance cannot be underestimated. He was one of the very few in France trying to interest the public, then with only ears for opera, in chamber music. He paved the way for the success of the next generation of French composers. Among his chamber works are three string trios, four string quartets, seven string quintets—four for 2 violins, viola, cello and bass or two cellos, the other three for 2 violins, 2 violas and cello—fifteen piano trios, three piano quartets, four piano quintets, a quintet for winds and piano and a septet for winds and strings. His **Quintet for Flute, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon and Piano in E flat Major, Op.37** was composed in 1859 and dedicated to one Michele Carafa. The dedication seems somewhat strange in that Carafa, an Italian nobleman and opera composer who spent most of his life in Paris, was not a wind player. And though he could play the piano, he was no great performer and was not known to have taken part in chamber music soirees. Nor is it likely that he commissioned the work as he was not a wealthy man. The work is in three movements. The first is a massive Allegro as long as the second and third movements taken together. It is charming, graceful and elegant though overly long. Although there is little in the way of drama, it is beautifully written and the piano is nicely integrated into the whole. The short middle movement is a playful lively Scherzo. Blanc keeps the winds in the forefront. It is a little toe-tapping gem which could even be used as an encore. The finale, Allegro, begins with a slow introduction which builds a sense of expectation, however, when the Allegro finally arrives, the music, though charming, is somewhat of a let down as it lacks any real feeling of excitement for a long time. This is not to say that there is none, but it takes Blanc a while to get to it. All in all, a good work worth getting to know.



Franz Danzi (1763-1826) was born near and grew up in Mannheim. Danzi studied cello with his father and composition with Abt Vogler before he joined the famous Mannheim orchestra of the Elector in 1778. His career spanned the transition from the late Classical to the early Romantic styles. Danzi knew Mozart and mentored Carl Maria von Weber. In 1783, Danzi succeeded his father

as one of the conductors of Elector's orchestra. He eventually rose to the position of Kapellmeister at the courts in Munich and later Stuttgart. He was a prolific composer who wrote works in virtually every genre. Danzi's chamber music includes sextets, quintets, quartets and trios, some for strings, some for wind instruments and some for a combination of the two. These works are generally in a style that reflects his own early experience in Mannheim. He wrote three works for winds and piano. I am only familiar with the first, his **Quintet in d minor, Op.41 for oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon and piano**. It was not published until 1810 but was almost certainly composed decades earlier. Like Beethoven, the instrumentation is the same that Mozart used in his K.452 Quintet. What's more, the style is rather Mozartian. Interestingly, the work was published in two versions, one with string quartet and piano, the other with winds and piano. The opening movement begins with an expressive, but somber Lar-

ghetto introduction which leads to an elegant Allegro in which arpeggios in the piano are contrasted to long, flowing phrases in the winds. This creates considerable interest which is furthered by the winds occasionally interrupting the piano solos. The oboe is given a role similar to what the first violin would have in a quartet. The middle movement, *Andante sostenuto*, starts with a stately subject in the winds alone. As in the first movement, there is a striking contrast between the busy moving piano part and the more flowing wind lines. The finale, a charming and elegant Mozartean Allegretto concludes the quintet. This is a fun work to play, perhaps on the same evening one plays the Mozart. Much better than the Beethoven, it would do well in concert.



Heinrich von Herzogenberg (1843-1900) was born in Graz, the provincial capital of Steiermark (Styria) and was the son of a minor Austrian imperial bureaucrat. He had the typical education then given to children of the middle and upper classes in the German-speaking world: Gymnasium and university. At the University of Vienna, he initially pursued law studies but soon dropped out to study composition with Otto Dessoff, who was a

professor at the Vienna Conservatory and a friend and staunch admirer of Brahms. And it was through Dessoff that Herzogenberg met Brahms. Herzogenberg's relationship with Brahms was straightforward and constant, that of admirer and friend. Brahms' was rather more complex. Brahms found Herzogenberg useful but generally was rather critical of his music and paid little attention to Herzogenberg's opinions. After completing his studies, Herzogenberg worked for some years as a composer in Graz. He helped to found the Bach-Verein (Bach Society) of Leipzig and served as its director for a decade. It was this which gained him what reputation he achieved and eventually led to a professorial appointment at the Berlin Hochschule für Musik in 1885. Although he wrote in most genres, the common consensus is that his best works are those for chamber ensembles, including two string trios, five string quartets, a string quintet (2 Violas), two piano trios, two piano quartets, a quintet for piano, and winds and a trio for piano, oboe and horn. Herzogenberg's reputation has suffered in large part because so many of his works show the influence of Brahms, whom he greatly admired. This has led some critics to regard him merely as a copycat. The irony is that so many of his works are every bit as good as those of Brahms. The **Quintet for oboe, horn, clarinet, bassoon and piano, Op.43 in E Flat Major** dates from 1888, during the time he was a professor of composition in Berlin. The instrumentation and key are the same as Mozart's K.452, but the sound, as one would certainly hope for a work written a century later, sounds nothing like Mozart. It is a big work and opens with an Allegro, the main theme to which clearly exhibits some of the influence of Schumann but in an updated fashion. It is a sunny, martial theme, somewhat triumphant in nature. There is absolutely no trace of Brahms, in my opinion, whatsoever. The instruments are used incredibly well. Herzogenberg demonstrates his compositional skill by avoiding the common solution used by less imaginative composers when writing for piano and winds, or piano and strings, i.e., the pitting of the piano against a massed chorus of the other instruments. The second theme of the Allegro has a dream-like quality to it. In this excellent movement of many moods, Herzogenberg integrates all of the instruments seamlessly. A long, leisurely, Adagio follows. After a short introduction by the piano and statement of the peaceful main theme, the upper winds reply. In the development, the bassoon, oboe and clarinet are given especially lovely phrases that have an almost string-like quality to them. Except for a very brief moment or two, quiet reigns. imagine if you will, a lily pond on a warm, lazy day. This is a gorgeous and appealing movement, a real achievement in view of the fact that the music is de-

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



Hans Huber (1852-1921) was born in the Swiss town of Eppenberg. Between 1870-74, he studied at the Leipzig Conservatory with Carl Reinecke and Ernst Richter. After graduating he held a number of positions before being appointed a professor at the Basel Conservatory, where he served as director between 1889-1917. Huber's music was firmly rooted in the Romantic movement inspired at first by Schumann and Brahms and then later by Liszt and Richard Strauss. He was widely considered Switzerland's leading composer during the last quarter of the 19th and first decade of the 20th century. He composed in virtually every genre and many of his works were for long years part of various repertoires and the only works by a Swiss composer that were regularly performed outside of Switzerland. Huber's **Op.136 Quintet in E flat Major for Flute, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon and Piano** dates from 1914. Once again, the key is the same as Mozart's K.452 but the instrumentation is slightly different substituting a flute for the oboe. The first movement, Adagio con intimo sentimento, begins in a pastoral mood but then moves to an even more introspective section. The second movement, Scherzo, allegretto, is lively and attractive. Then comes a short but very captivating Intermezzo, Allegro con fuoco. The finale, Allegro moderato, recalls the earlier movements in a very ingenuous fashion, creating a fresh and lively movement. This is a first rate work, integrating all of the instruments. It is au courant for the time, even forward looking sounding neo classical. It should definitely be on your list.



Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859-1935) was born in the town of Gatchina, near St. Petersburg. He studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. After graduating, he obtained the position of Director of the Tiflis (Tbilisi) Music Academy. He spent the next seven years in the Georgian capital, also holding the post of conductor of the city's orchestra. It was during this time that he developed his life-long interest in the music of the Georgian region and many of his compositions reflect this, the most famous being his *Caucasian Sketches*. In 1893, he became a professor at the Moscow Conservatory and later served as its director for two decades. He composed in all genres. **An Evening in Georgia for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon and Piano, Op.71** was composed in the mid 1930's toward the end of Ippolitov-Ivanov's life and it appears to be a fond recollection of the time he spent there. It was composed as a relatively short one movement divertimento and is rich in folk melodies and rhythms with

hints of the exotic. He shows his mastery of technique in his expressive handling of each instrument's timbre. With both a flute and an oboe and no horn, the bass is left to the bassoon and piano. It begins quite slowly, with the oboe in the lead, and immediately sounds quite oriental. After a while the tempo picks and the work becomes much more lively and upbeat. Charming, it is more interesting for its exotic themes than for anything else.



Albéric Magnard (1865-1914) was born in Paris to wealthy parents. His father François Magnard was a bestselling author and editor of the Paris newspaper *Le Figaro*. After military service and graduating from law school, he entered the Paris Conservatoire, where he studied counterpoint with Théodore Dubois, Jules Massenet and Vincent d'Indy. Magnard's musical output numbered only 22 works with opus numbers. Larger compositions such as symphonies were his main area of interest, however, he did write a piano trio, a string quartet and some instrumental sonatas. Magnard's musical style is typical of French composers contemporaneous to him, but occasionally, there are passages that foreshadow the music of Gustav Mahler. Magnard's use of cyclical form was influenced by Cesar Franck. His **Quintet for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon and Piano, Op.8** dates from 1894. It is a big work painted a broad canvas. The first movement, *Sombre*, shows the influence of Debussy as well as some of the lush tonalities of the late Romantics. Beginning almost in mid-phrase, it is anything but somber. Rather it is light and impassioned. There is considerable tension, including a fugal section in the middle before the movement calmly concludes. The second movement *Tendre*, on the other hand is somber, beginning with a long meditative duo between the clarinet and the piano. The *Leger*, which follows, fulfills the function of a scherzo and trio, sounding as if written by a latter day French Mendelssohn, beginning at first in a spooky mood before brightening. The finale, *Joyeux*, begins resolutely and sounds almost like battle music, making a boisterous and triumphant conclusion to the work. Not at all easy to play and certainly very difficult to sightread, it is nonetheless a very interesting and accomplished work worth your while if you are fond of the music of the French Impressionists.

Mozart, after performing his **Quintet for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon and Piano, K.452**, wrote to his father that he thought the work was the best thing he had ever written. A pretty tall claim. But of course, his best works were to come during his last seven years. The first movement begins with a *Largo* introduction that immediately places the four wind instruments on equal footing. At the outset the winds and piano have a dialogue, but then the winds converse among themselves. The *Allegro moderato* is light and sparkling with wide variety of tone-color. The instruments are blended in very fine fashion. The second movement, *Larghetto*, is lyrical and has the aura of found in Italian operas from that period. The winds are in the forefront most of the time while the piano plays an accompanying role for the most part. But come the third movement, *Allegretto*, the piano is front and center. The main theme is dance-like. The piano writing in this finale is more concertante, it dominates the discussion, and even when accompanying it fills the texture with figurations that draw attention to itself. Near the end Mozart includes a *cadenza* scored for the whole ensemble but intended to have an improvisatory sound to it, that is not virtuosic at all but rather relaxed. Every group consisting of an oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon and piano should, by all means, play this work. If not the first work of its type, it was the first to be noticed by other composers.



Ernst Pauer (1826-1905) was born in Vienna and studied piano there with Franz Xaver Mozart (son of Wolfgang) and composition with Simon Sechter. He then traveled to Munich where he continued his studies with Franz Lachner after which he briefly took up a position as an editor for the famous publisher Schott. In 1851, he visited London giving a series of concerts to great acclaim and leading to his taking up residency in England. He founded a concert series in London and was one of the city's leading pianists. Eventually, he was appointed Professor at the Royal College of Music and also served on the music faculty of Cambridge University. As a player, he was regarded as a direct link with great Viennese traditions. He composed a great deal of music in most genres, which in its time was widely respected. In addition, he was considered one of the finest arrangers of his time. His **Quintet in F Major for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon and, Op.44** dates from 1856 and was composed while he was working in London. It was intended for performance at his concert series with himself serving as pianist. The instrumentation is the same that Mozart used but the key, of course, is different. It is in four movements, beginning with a lively and spirited *Allegro con brio* which is followed by a rather classical *Menuetto* complete with trio. Next comes a languid *Adagio* which provides an excellent contrast with what has come before. The exciting finale, *Allegro con molto leggerezza*, tops off this fine work. This is a first class work for piano, perfect for both professionals and amateurs. In the concert hall, it is sure to please the audience.



Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908), one of the most famous of all Russian composers, needs no biographical introduction. His account of how he came to compose his **Quintet for Flute, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon and Piano in B flat Major** found in his autobiography is worth recounting here.

"After I had completed the String Sextet which I wrote for the 1876 competition sponsored by the Russian Musical Society, I took it into my head to write a Quintet for Piano and Winds for the same competition. I composed the Quintet in three movements. The First Movement, Allegro con brio, in the classic style of Beethoven. The Second Movement, Andante, contained a good fugue for the wind instruments with a very free accompaniment in the piano. In the finale, Allegretto vivace, I wrote in rondo form. Of interest is the middle section where I wrote cadenzas for the flute, the clarinet and the horn to be played in turns. Each was in the character of the instrument and each was interrupted by the bassoon entering by octave leaps...And what was the fate of my Sextet and Quintet? The jury awarded the prize to Napravnik for his Piano Trio. My Sextet received an honorable mention, but my Quintet and every other work submitted by all of the other composers were discarded without comment. I heard later that Napravnik had been lucky to have had a pianist assigned to his trio who was a superb sight reader and thus had performed his trio beautifully, whereas my Quintet was ruined by another pianist who could not sight read nor make heads or tails of it. Had my Quintet been fortunate in the pianist assigned to it, I am sure it would have attracted the jury's attention."

Sour grapes? Hardly. What Rimsky wrote is probably true for this quintet is an appealing work which can be recommended both to professionals for concert and to amateur players..



Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894) was reckoned to be the greatest pianist in the world after Liszt. He was one of those rare concert virtuosi whose contribution to music went far beyond performing. In 1862, he founded the St. Petersburg Conservatory and served as its first director. His efforts in developing Russian musical talent were perhaps the greatest of any single individual. Not only did he introduce European educational methods but he also established standards that were as rigorous as any conservatory in Europe. Rubinstein was a prolific composer writing in nearly every genre. Chamber music figures prominently amongst his works. He wrote 10 string quartets, 5 piano trios, a string quintet and a string sextet as well as several instrumental sonatas and this piano quintet. His **Quintet for Flute, Clarinet, Horn Bassoon & Piano in F Major, Op.55** dates from 1860. The first movement, *Allegro non troppo* begins as if it were a concerto for piano and wind quintet. Yet as the fine melodies are developed, the ensemble writing improves tremendously and by the time the coda appears, there is no doubt one is hearing a first class piece of chamber music. In the following *Scherzo, allegro assai*, the piano is given a somewhat virtuosic role, but once past the opening measures, one is able to see that it is an integral part of the overall ensemble. There are several original touches, including an excellent contrasting trio. The third movement, *Andante con moto*, is a theme and set of variations given a Schumannesque treatment. In the finale, Rubinstein shows he has taken the measure of the group for which he is writing and the integration of the parts is excellent. This is an attractive work good for concert and can be recommended to amateurs if they have a very good pianist available.



Fritz Spindler (1817-1905) was born in the tiny German town of Wurzbach in Thuringia. He studied piano and composition with Friedrich Schneider in Dessau after which he moved to Dresden where he remained for the rest of his life. He was, during his lifetime, best known as a fine piano teacher, but he also devoted himself to composition and has more than 400 works to his credit. Most were for piano and enjoyed considerable popularity and are

played by piano students even today. His transcriptions of operas for piano were also quite popular in their day. Besides his works for the piano, he composed a piano trio, a string quartet, a quintet for winds and piano, as well as some instrumental sonatas, two symphonies and a piano concerto. The **Quintet in F Major for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon and Piano, Op.99** was dedicated to one of his students, the Russian Countess Daria de Beauharnais and dates from 1888. The opening movement is written on a large scale and begins with a lengthy slow introduction, *Langsam*, which eventually leads to the more lively main section, *Lebhaft und munter*. The very short second movement, *Sehr leidenschaftlich und frei*, is for the piano alone and serves as a cross between a cadenza and an introduction to the slow, funereal third movement, *Sehr getragen und langsam*. The finale, *Mässig bewegt, doch frisch*, is full of excitement with opportunities for all. This is a fine work with good writing and melodies, but it could certainly have done without the second movement which is for piano solo, no doubt to honor his student, a piano playing countess. If performed, it would be my recommendation that the second movement would be left out. Nothing would be lost by so doing.