



## ***The Cobbett Association for Chamber Music Research***

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

### **The Search For Rare Music Can Be Fruitful**

Inquiries about where to find rare music are still coming in from our members, and we have some additional information to offer.

It must be understood, as much as we would like to, the Cobbett Association is unable to publish, buy or sell rare chamber music. But, we do our best to help our members locate sources of such music.

In its research and evaluation of non-standard chamber music, the Association borrows music from various private and public libraries. In locating and borrowing out-of-print music, we have found the Inter-Library loan system and the Philadelphia Free Library to be two of the best sources.

We again refer you to our article on "How to Find Rare Music" which appeared in our Newsletter #2 dated January, 1991. This article will furnish more detail. If you cannot locate your copy, let us know and we will send you a reprint of the article.

In addition to those listed in the article, we wish to add two more sources for music in print — The Virtuoso Printed Music Service, 912 165th Avenue, Bellevue, WA, 98008 - 6024; Tel: 800-551-0147 and Brodt Music Co., P.O. Box 9345, Charlotte, NC 28299. Tel. 800-438-4129. Brodt has been around for over 58 years and both companies sell music of all publishers.

For out of print music, the Library of Congress, Washington DC, is another good source not mentioned in the previous article. If you are travelling in Europe and have the time, don't forget to check with large music dealers, used book and music stores, as well as major libraries.

Whenever we describe or evaluate a non-standard chamber music work, we now list

the original publisher. Even though this company may no longer be in business, this can be a clue which will help a current dealer find it for you.

### **The British Are Coming!!**

Yes, by Jove, the British are coming! Starting with our July, 1993, newsletter, we will be doing profiles on important, neglected British composers and their chamber music.

W.W. Cobbett (1847-1937), the great English patron of chamber music for whom this Association is named, set up a series of competitions and commissions. These stimulated the creation of much high quality chamber music among young British composers. Their works will be reviewed in future issues.

### **String Quintets To Be In Limelight**

Enclosed with the coming July, 1993, newsletter will be a description and evaluation of non-standard string quintets, including those with two violas or two cellos. Our research has uncovered many excellent works in this category that are unfairly neglected simply because few musicians know about them.

### **Piano Trio Evaluations**

Enclosed with this newsletter is Part 4 of our evaluations of trios for piano, violin, and cello. This comes to a total of 228 trios evaluated during 1992 and 1993. Supplements to this report on trios may be made at a later date when additional rare trios come to our attention and are evaluated.

## Deeply Indebted To The A.C.M.P.

The Cobbett Association is deeply indebted to The Amateur Chamber Music Players, Inc. since most of its Advisory Council members met through the ACMP directory which is issued every other year. Many members of the Cobbett Association are also members of the ACMP.

Our members not affiliated with the ACMP should consider the many benefits this wonderful organization offers. Its membership has grown to over 4,000 amateur musicians (and many professionals) since its beginning in 1947.

The directory offers an excellent opportunity for members to contact other members for ensemble playing. This enables them to expand their circle of musical friends both at home and abroad and to have rewarding musical sessions. It has been a great benefit to travelers.

A special directory of ACMP members in foreign countries is also published every other year.

For information on membership, write the ACMP, 545 8th Ave., New York, NY 10018.

## Who Are The Standard Chamber Music Composers?

People sometimes ask us how we define "non-standard" chamber music composers, since we only include their works in our research and evaluations. To answer this, we will list below the composers which we consider to be "standard". They are well known to all and their music is played very frequently. Although they are great composers, we devote our efforts to promoting others whose chamber works have merit and have been neglected.

**Baroque:** Bach, Handel, Purcell, Telemann, and Vivaldi.

**Classical, Romantic, & Impressionistic:** Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Dvorack, Tchaikowsky, Debussy, and Ravel.

**Modern:** Bartok, Prokofiev, and Shostakovich.

## Alexander Schneider Will Be Missed

Alexander Schneider, 84, the prominent violinist, conductor, and teacher, died in New York on Feb. 2, 1993.

Born in Lithuania and educated in Europe, Schneider came to America with the Budapest Quartet which he had joined in 1932. In 1944, he left the Budapest and founded the Albeneri Trio, and later the Schneider Quartet which recorded many of Haydn's works. He rejoined the Budapest in 1955, but continued to work on his own, organizing chamber groups, and teaching young musicians.

Schneider ("Sascha" to his friends), was known for his ability to discover and develop young, talented, musicians. He once said, "For me, my purpose is to get young people to learn how to make music. When you make music, it has to come from your heart, from your soul, or it has no meaning. It's an extraordinary experience when I see the results."

In concerts, Schneider collaborated with most of the great musicians of the century. He will certainly be greatly missed!

## Thank You!

We want to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the continued support we are receiving from our loyal members. It is only because of your contributions that the Cobbett Association is able to continue its research programs and share the information with you.

This newsletter is published in January, April, July, and October by the Cobbett Association for Chamber Music Research, 6827 Roxbury Dr., Sarasota, FL 34231  
Phone: (813) 922-6986

Coordinator & Research Specialist  
Robert H. Maas

Secretary and Editor  
Alice L. Maas

### Advisory Council Members

Helen Blachly, Dr. David Canfield, John Cataldo, Bonnie Cataldo, Martha DeYoung, Ann Sharp Edelson, Dr. Herbert Fiss, Elizabeth Harter Martin, Mary Sanks, Raymond Silvertrust, Catherine Saurer Smith, and Eleanor Leek Smith.

# Glazounov Generates Remarkable String Power



Alexander Glazounov (1865-1936) is recognized throughout the world as a master musician, but he is often overlooked in America. His works are seldom played in concert, and only those amateurs who are adventurous enough to stray from the beaten path, ever discover his genius as a chamber music composer.

Glazounov studied with Rimsky Korsakov and Balakirev and became a leader in the Russian national school. At first he followed in the paths of Glinka and Tchaikowsky, but later moved toward the Western tradition and embraced a more eclectic style. He is credited with bringing about a reconciliation between Russian and Western music, and his later symphonies show some influence of Liszt and Wagner.

Glazounov composed over 100 works including symphonies, ballets, and even some piano solos. His violin concerto has enjoyed much popularity, but his attractive string quartets have been unjustly neglected, especially in America.

He began a conducting career in 1888 and eventually conducted all over the globe, including an appearance in 1929 with the Detroit Symphony. After this he returned to Paris where he remained until his death in 1936.

His program music attracted much attention because of his skill in drawing from varied sources such as Russian Orientalism, Greek modes, Finnish melos, and Ecclesiastical modes.

Many string players believe Glazounov's greatest contribution is in chamber music. One key to his success in this field is the string power he generates through the skillful use of double stops for all instruments involved, thus producing remarkable sonority. Both players and listeners are often amazed at the sound he achieves with only four stringed instruments.

Violists love Glazounov's chamber music style, for he often begins a movement

featuring the viola all alone, so the somber tone of the viola is allowed to set the stage.

Glazounov's chamber works are playable, easily understood, and very listenable. It is unfortunate that they are seldom heard on the concert stage. Professional ensembles which include them in their programs will be surprised at the favorable response they have from the audience. Amateurs will enjoy exploring Glazounov's works which will enrich their playing experience.

His first three quartets have originality, express a Russian idiom, and are written in a romantic vein with a very festive spirit.

The later quartets show a marked development and move into a more abstract and Western style.

Fortunately, all these chamber works have been published by Belaiev and have also been recorded on the Melodiya record label, either on L.P.'s or C.D.'s.

## String Quartets

**No. 1 in D, Op. 1 (1882)** A light hearted work written when Glazounov was only 17. It has a simple scherzo, a short expressive andante with no development, and a finale with Russian native dance tunes. Moderate difficulty -- Good musical value.

**No. 2 in F, Op. 10 (1883)** Allegro non troppo with Slavonic type themes, interesting modulation, and a short development before recap.; scherzo has syncopated rhythms across bar lines and a tranquil and melodious trio for contrast; adagio molto has lovely expression and a warm melody; finale-allegro moderato is in festive, Slavonic style with a real workout for the 1st violin with its arabesques. All four have plenty to do. Moderate - Very Good

**Five Novellettes for String Quartet, Op. 15.** Most chamber music players have enjoyed playing these delightful masterpieces which can be played separately with good results. They are an excellent example of his skill in program music. They have graced many a wedding reception to the

delight of the guests. The opening piece, *Alla Spagnola*, with its Spanish flavor is followed by an exotic Oriental. Next is a serious and beautiful Interludium in *Modo Antico*. A charming Valse follows, and the brilliant finale, *All' Ungherese*, is in typical gypsy style. Mod. - Exclt.

**No 3 in G (Quatuor Slave), Op. 26,** begins with a moderato in sonata form. The Interludium is a short serious movement, the theme of which is announced by the cello. The *Alla mazurka* is developed and introduces a festive atmosphere. The finale (*Une fete slave*) is brilliant, rich in texture, and keeps all four quite busy. It is orchestral in nature. Moderate - Very Good

**Suite for String Quartet in C, Op. 35.** This is an extraordinary work, richly scored, in a lighter vein with much contrast in moods. It begins with an introduction and fugue which is followed by a lively scherzo. Next is an Oriental which features rare, exotic flavor and a big viola solo. Following is a theme and variations for contrast, and the fifth movement is a suite of simple waltzes. Moderate - Excellent

**No. 4 in A Minor, Op. 64 (1894).** This one is much in public performance in Europe. It is abstract in nature, has a mood of sorrow and desperation, and is filled with lush, expressive string writing. Much personal expression is present. The cyclic form is used since melodies in the 1st movement appear in various forms in the other movements. All this is handled very skillfully. Andante-allegro has impressive introduction and exposition. The next andante is beautiful, melodic, and has lush harmonies. The scherzo-vivace is delightful and exuberant and is almost perpetual motion. The finale-allegro is a joyful movement with much fast passage work for all. Difficult - Excellent

**No. 5 in D, Op. 70 (1899)** Dedicated to Leopold Auer, this quartet is even more lyric and dramatic than No. 4. It is more similar to Tchaikowsky's style than Glazounov's other chamber works. Andante-allegro -- the main theme is very melodious and stated by the viola; scherzo-allegretto is well balanced with a development and recap.; adagio (*con licenza*) is a dreamy and thoughtful movement played with much

freedom of expression; finale-allegro-presto is in typical sonata form and has an air of merriment with much fast passage work for all four. Difficult - Excellent

**No. 6 in Eb, Op. 106 (1921).** Dedicated to the Glazounov Quartet. This was written after a lapse of 20 years since he last composed chamber music. In this quartet he rises above the technical aspects of composition and virtuosity and concentrates on the inner expressiveness of true chamber music. Allegro; intermezzo in Russian style (*allegretto*); andante piangerole is mournful with rich expression and exceptionally beautiful texture of harmony; theme and variations (*allegro*) is in a Russian idiom with much imagination and instrumental color. Moderate - Excellent

**No. 7 in C, Op. 107 (1930).** The style here is similar to his early quartets with the Russian flavor still there. The program title of each movement lends intrigue to this work. The 1st movement, *Remembrance of the Past*, is an adagio and allegro giocoso. The 2nd, *The Breathe of Spring*, is an andante affectuoso -- very lyric and expressive. The 3rd, *In the Mysterious Forest*, is an allegro scherzando with a quaint style and mystery added. The 4th, *Russian Festivity*, is a moderato. This was written to express Russian glory and it does with its victory theme.

#### String Quintet

**Quintet in A for 2 vl, va, & 2 vc, Op. 39, (1892).** This was written after he had developed a more classical and eclectic style, as contrasted to his early nationalistic style. Allegro-- a lyric mood dominates, and dramatic features gradually develop. He uses modulation by 3rds, a favorite tonal device of his. Scherzo-allegro moderato -- a brilliant virtuoso piece with a song-like lyric trio for a middle section. Andante sostenuto -- cello begins with a sorrowful cantilena and others provide dramatic chords for a very sustained and melodious movement. The finale-allegro moderato -- the only movement with Russian color is in rondo form with the main theme resembling a lively Russian folk dance. Near the end is a *pui tranquillo* section composed of several themes in polyphonic development. This is another fine work that shouldn't be missed. Mod. - Excellent.

# The Mendelssohn Is Not The Only Good Octet

Some of our members have asked if there are any good string octets besides the Mendelssohn. They say they have been playing the Mendelssohn over and over again for many years and are longing for a change.

We were curious as well, so we put on our best research hat, consulted with colleagues in Europe, checked our archives, listened to some recordings, and came up with several recommendations.

There is actually a rich storehouse of works for this combination, and searching for the music will certainly be worthwhile. There seem to be more and more occasions when you have four violins, two violas, and two cellos, especially at chamber music workshops and festivals or when you have a bunch of visitors in town. Participating in such a sonorous group of strings can be a thrilling experience.

Directors of Chamber Music Workshops should endeavor to find more of these works so they will be able to offer an alternative to the Mendelssohn. This is an excellent work, but adventurous players want to learn something new.

Here are the octets we reviewed. The estimated level of difficulty and musical value rating, as well as the original publisher, is listed after each work.

**Afanasiev, Nicolai (1821-1898) Russian.** Double quartet in D. Is really an octet with some Russian flavor, resembling Glazounov. Allegro moderato, scherzo-allegro vivace, andante sostenuto ending with a fugue and vl 1 cadenza, finale-allegro non troppo (orchestral). Moderate - Good (Pub: Rahter, 1875)

**Bargiel, Woldemar (1828-1897) German.** Octet in C Minor, Op. 15A. Melodious in chamber music style with Schumann influence. Adagio intro and sonata allegro appassionato, andante sostenuto intro and allegro (scherzo), finale-allegro molto marcato in rondo form. Moderate- V.G. (Pub: B & H)

**Enesco, Georges (1881-1955) Famous Romanian violinist & composer.** He was a type of eclectic romantic who used impressionism, nationalism, and neo-classicism, and eventually used his own native music in a free melodic style. His Octet in C, Op.

7 is a strange impassioned work presenting ensemble problems and is not suitable for amateurs. The 4 long mvmts played without a break are tres modere, tres fongueux, lentement, de valse bien rythmee. There is a national flavor worked in with impressionistic effects. Very Difficult - Good (Pub: Enoch-Paris, 1905)

**Gade, Niels (1817-1890) Danish violinist.** Octet in F, Op. 17. Good house music with pleasant melodies and enjoyable to play, even though it is not profound. Allegro molto con fuoco, andantino quasi allegretto, scherzo allegro moderato, and finale-allegro vivace. The finale is in a joyful mood. Moderate difficulty - Good (Pub: B & H, 1949)

**Gliere, Reinhold (1875-1956) Russian.** Octet in D, Op. 5 (1900). Written in the romantic Russian tradition of Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov. Full of melody, rich resonance, and emotional appeal, this work tends to be orchestral in places. Allegro moderato with the themes in sequence, first in major and then in minor, with a development section; allegro in G Major in ternary form replaces a scherzo and features a 5-note theme, first in major, then minor, which is passed between the instruments; next an andante in G Minor, a very lyric, beautiful, and tranquil movement; the finale -- almost orchestral -- has a vigorous theme and is very rhythmic. Moderate - Excellent (Pub: Belaiev)

**Gradener, Carl (1812-1883) German cellist.** Octet in Eb, Op. 49. In the German romantic school with Schumann influence. The late Wilhelm Altmann, noted German musicologist, commented that this octet is excellent in every respect and is effective for public performance. Moderate - Very Good (Pub: F. Schuberth)

**Gradener, Herman (1844-1929) German.** Son of Carl Gradener. Composed in a Brahmsian style as reflected in his Octet in C Major (1881). Altmann recommended it for public performance or house music and considered it one of his best works. Moderate - V.G. (Pub: Brockhaus)

**Malling, Otto (1848-1915) Danish organist and composer** who is little known. His Octet

in D Minor, Op. 50, is homophonic and light in texture. It is fairly melodious, makes good house music, and expresses a national feeling. Mod. - Good (Pub: Hansen, 1893)

**Raff, Joseph** (1822-1882) German. This prolific composer attracted the attention of Mendelssohn and became a protege of Liszt. Many of his compositions were popular in his day, but now suffer from neglect. Sarasate liked his violin pieces very much and played them in concert. Raff is known for his programmatic romanticism. His Octet in C, Op. 176, is written in classical tradition with romantic expression. Allegro, Allegro Molto in 6/4 (scherzo), Andante moderato in 3/8 in F with a minor section which is melodious and tranquil, Finale vivace (alla breve) Moderate - V.G.

**Schuberth, Carl** (1811-1863) German cellist. Octet in E, Op. 23 (4 vl, 2 va, vc, and cb) This fairly melodious work is suitable only for house music and is typical of the early German romantic school. Further information not available. Moderate - Good (Pub: J. Schuberth, 1848)

**Svendsen, Johan** (1840-1911) Norwegian. Octet in A, Op. 3, (1867). A rarely played but excellent work by this famous composer and conductor. Richly scored, with a national style and strong romantic elements. Excellent dynamic contrast throughout, with youthful exuberance. Themes featured are probably related to Norwegian folk music. Allegro risoluto - effective with vigorous Nordic theme; Allegro scherzoso - striking rhythms with big driving force in Grieg style; Andante sostenuto - a sensitive romantic movement with lovely theme and passionate expression passed among the instruments; finale, allegro assai con fuoco - very rhythmic with themes related to first movement. Difficult - Excellent (Pub: B & H, 1867)

**Thieriot, Ferdinand** (1838-1919) German. Pupil of Brahms and Rheinberger. Octet in C, Op. 78, (1903). You won't find Thieriot in Grove's Dictionary, and his listing in Cobbett's books is without comment. However, Altmann considered this an acceptable work, if not great. Allegro, adagio in A (lovely and melodious), scherzo-presto in 3/8, andante mesto-allegro con

fuoco (a vigorous and moving allegro with modulations). Moderate - Good. (Pub: Simrock)

### Spohr's Double Quartets

Louis Spohr (1784-1859), prolific German violinist and composer, is best known for his violin concertos. His lyricism and romantic development played an important part in music history. He is credited with adding double quartets to the chamber music repertoire. These are among his best achievements in chamber music, and he loved the antiphonal effects produced.

There is some Beethoven and Mendelssohn influence in his themes, but he developed his own style of melodic line and configuration which is evident in the double quartets. Spohr does not fuse the two quartets into a regular octet, but treats them as two separate groups similar to a double choir and reserving the combination of all instruments for the climaxes in the work.

**Double Quartet No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 65.** (1822) A very brilliant and worthwhile work. Difficult vl 1 part - Good (Pub: B & H)

**Double Quartet No. 2 in Eb, Op. 77** (1827) First violin dominates and there is too much accompaniment. Not recommended. (Pub: Costallat)

**Double Quartet No. 3 in E Minor, Op. 87** (1833) Best known of the four and played most often. Was occasionally played by Joachim. Thus, it has a permanent place in the repertoire. It features melodies of great beauty, is in classical form, and has a romantic style with excellent polyphony in the variations. Difficult - Excellent (Pub: Costallat)

**Double Quartet No. 4 in G Minor, Op. 136** (1849) Considered best of the four by Wilhelm Altmann. There is less virtuoso treatment of the 1st violin and better balance between the instruments. It qualifies for public performance. Difficult - Excellent (Pub: Simrock & Costallat)



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