

INTERPRETATIONS

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'THEY PLAY MORE LIKE ANGELS THAN MEN'¹ THE *QUATUOR DE FLONZALEY* AND CONSIDERATIONS ON ITS PERFORMANCE STYLE

Abstract: The *Quatuor de Flonzaley*, founded in 1903, is considered one of the first professional string quartet ensembles in the modern sense of the word. The ensemble's public performances and its recordings were extremely successful and received enthusiastic reviews. Its specific performance style became exemplary for other early 20th century string quartet ensembles. The paper provides insights into the history of the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* and its socio-cultural context, considerations about aspects of current performance studies and an analysis of the ensemble's specific and trend-setting performance style.

Key words: *Quatuor de Flonzaley*, performance studies, string quartet performance style, string quartet (ensemble)

The following considerations deliver insights into an ongoing research project on the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* and its performance style.² The first version of this paper was presented at the joint conference of the International Association of Music Li-

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1 James Gibbson Huneker in: *The New York Times*, 27th November 1918, 11.

2 The pilot study has been sponsored by a research grant of the Hochschule Musik Luzern (Switzerland), while the Swiss National Science Foundation has recently approved a grant proposal that will allow the realization of an in-depth research project and the publication of the results. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to both institutions for their generous support.

braries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML), and the International Musicological Society (IMS) in Amsterdam in 2009. The present paper is an enlarged version of the Amsterdam presentation and includes further considerations,³ particularly referring to questions concerning music as a performative act, i.e. music as performance.

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The *Quatuor de Flonzaley* was among the first ensembles that intensively and systematically explored the use of modern audio-visual media like gramophone recordings, broadcastings and musical films. At the moment, a little more than 80 recordings can be documented, produced between 1903 and 1929 – averaging approximately five recordings each year.⁴ The majority of these recordings were made at a speed a little slower than 78 R.P.M., and there is no indication that the same speed was always used. The use of modern audio-visual media supported, promoted and upheld the dissemination of the ensemble's specific performance style.

From a sociological point of view, the contribution made by the New York - based Flonzaley Quartet with respect to the establishment of a consistently public and professional string quartet tradition in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century can hardly be overstated. In 1910 the correspondent of the *New-York Daily Tribune* pointed out that the

'Flonzaley concerts have now become an important feature of New York's musical life',⁵ and in 1914 the quartet ensemble had 'achieved a nation-wide repute' according to the correspondent of Philadelphia's *Evening Public Ledger*.⁶ Still today it is considered as 'an ensemble holding the status of the Juilliard String Quartet decades later'.⁷

In contrast to the situation in late nineteenth century Europe, a publicly professional string quartet tradition was developed only rudimentarily in the United States, mainly by the achievements of the *Kneisel Quartet* founded in Boston in 1885.⁸ It is certainly interesting that even in 1908, the correspondent of *The Wash-*

3 I am very grateful to Diane Glazer, Olivier Senn, Dorothea Baumann, Pio Pellizzari, and Guido Olivieri for their comments during the development of this paper.

4 Jon M. Samuel, 'Discography of the Recordings by the Flonzaley Quartet', *ARSC Journal* 19/1 (1987), 28-62.

5 *New-York Daily Tribune*, 7th December 1910, 7.

6 *Evening Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), 8th December 1914, 11.

7 Carol J. Oja, *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2000, 212.

8 Tully Potter, 'From chamber to concert hall', in: Robin Stowell (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, 58-49; and Daniel G. Mason, *Tune in, America: A study of our coming musical independence*, New York, A. A. Knopf, 1931, 7. Although Mason mentions a wrong founding year (1886) he provides interesting insights in the mission and achievements of the *Kneisel Quartet*.

ington Times explicitly mentioned that the Flonzaley Quartet is a 'purely professional organization – incidentally one of the best in existence'.⁹ Generally, 'string-quartet playing in the United States (was) largely an amateur activity'¹⁰ before the appearance of the Flonzaley Quartet and despite the achievements of the *Kneisel Quartet*.¹¹ In this respect the Flonzaleys played an active role and spared no efforts to 'popularize the music of small ensembles'¹² in the United States, especially by well-organized regular concert tours throughout the country during its entire period of existence.

By 1910, the Flonzaley Quartet had already established such an excellent reputation that its performance style became a recognized benchmark, particularly with regard to the judgments of performances of other quartet ensembles.¹³ In this context, the enthusiastic Flonzaley concert announcement in *The Washington Herald* in 1909 that culminates in the statement that the 'perfection of their ensemble work has elicited praise from musical authorities throughout the country'¹⁴ is quite understandable. Similarly, Philip Hale, the eminent music critic of Boston, reiterates this idea, stating the 'quartet is indisputably without a rival'.¹⁵ Generally, in the 1920s the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* was considered by many to be the undisputedly 'most famous string quartet in the world'.¹⁶

From a socio-organizational perspective, the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* was one of the first quartet ensembles in the modern sense of the word, consisting of four professional performers, normally following an often rigorously organized rehearsal schedule before each performance. The ensemble organized yearly concert series on a regular basis over several years in addition to their concert tours.

9 *The Washington Times*, 9th August 1908, 3.

10 Joseph McLellan, 'Classical recordings: The Evolution of the String Quartet, from the Flonzaley to the Emerson', *The Washington Post*, 8th August 1993.

11 'What it [the *Kneisel Quartet*] gave us, here in the United States, constitutes a position of a national capital. If we have come to love string-quartet music, if cities the country over furnish audience for work done in this medium, it is chiefly because of the whole-hearted, thirty-two-year-long labor done by Franz Kneisel and his associates. They came to us as part of the great influence bequeathed us by mid-European musical life'. Paul Rosenfeld, *Musical Chronicle (1917-1923)*, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Comp, 1923, 20.

12 James Taylor Dunn, 'St. Paul's Schubert Club. Musical Mentor of the Northwest', *Minnesota History Magazine* (summer 1964), 51-64, quote p. 57.

13 See for instance the concert review of a concert of *The Olive Mead Quartet* in the *New-York Daily Tribune*, 20th April 1910, 5. Irving Kolodin, on the other hand, stated that in the late years the 'Flonzaleys seemed to have become a committee of experts matching exquisite swatches of tonal texture', Irving Kolodin, *The Musical Life*, London, Gollancz, 1959, 63.

14 *The Washington Herald*, 13th March 1909, 5.

15 Philip Hale in *The Boston Herald*, quoted in *The Pullman Herald*, 23th April 1920, 2.

16 *The Miami Student*, 8th December 1926, 1.

The Quartet gave approximately 2.500 performances in the United States, and a little more than 500 in Europe during their twenty-six years of existence.¹⁷

The ensemble was also intensively concerned with performance issues, as mirrored, for instance, in the publication of Alfred Pochon's treatise *A Progressive Method of String-Quartet Playing* that was originally published with G. Schirmer Inc. in 1928 and translated into many languages afterwards.¹⁸ The Flonzaley Quartet, in addition, prepared and systematically explored the string quartet oeuvres of the traditional string quartet literature, but also supported and promoted premieres and commissions of contemporary string quartet music. The Flonzaleys, for instance, gave the first U.S. performance of Arnold Schoenberg's String Quartet D Minor op. 7 and premiered Igor Stravinsky's *Trois pieces pour quatuor à cordes* (Paris 1915), Ernst Bloch's first string quartet (New York 1916) and Georges Enescu's first string quartet in E-flat Major, dedicated to the Flonzaley Quartet (Bucharest 1921), and commissioned Stravinsky's *Concertino* that it premiered on 23th November 1920 in New York City's Aeolian Hall.¹⁹

Modern in the true sense of the word aptly characterizes the ensemble's close relationships to the press media and to a rather large community of admirers and supporters. On this background the celebration of the ensemble's tenth anniversary in 1914 was a true media event as, for instance, mirrored in the numerous reports published surrounding this event that coincided with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the musical activities of the Coppet family, the family of the ensemble's founder, Edward de Coppet (Ex. 1).

17 Walter Levin, 'Migrant Musicians and the American Chamber Music Scene, 1930-1950', in: Reinhold Brinkmann and Christopher Wolff (eds.), *Driven into Paradise: The Musical Migration from Nazi Germany to the United States*, Berkeley (CA) and Los Angeles, California University Press, 1999, 322-339, particularly p. 325.

18 Alfred Pochon, *A Progressive Method of String-Quartet Playing*, New York, G. Schirmer, 1928.

19 With regard to this commission Stravinsky wrote in 1956: 'When I left Switzerland to settle in France I brought away some sketches of an idea suggested by M. Alfred Pochon, leader of the Flonzaley String Quartet. (...) M. Pochon wished to introduce a contemporary work into their almost exclusively classical repertoire, and asked me to write them an ensemble piece, in form and length of my own choosing, to appear in the programs of their numerous tours. So it was for them that I composed my *Concertino*, a piece in one single movement, treated in the form of a free sonata allegro with a definitely concertante part for the first violin, and this, on account of its limited dimensions, led me to give it the diminutive title: *Concertino* (piccolo concerto)'. Igor Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1956, 139. Richard Aldrich wrote a review of this premiere, that praised the Flonzaley performances but was highly critical about Stravinsky's composition, *The New York Times*, 24th November, 1920, 22.

Example 1: Celebration of the 25th anniversary of musical activities of the Coppet family and 10th anniversary of the Flonzaley Quartet²⁰



The ensemble's public performances and its recordings for the then leading recording labels, such as Victor and HMV, were extremely successful and received enthusiastic reviews.²¹ All these features played a decisive role in the establishment of the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* as one of the leading string quartet ensembles at the beginning of the twentieth century.²²

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Yet, this development was not foreseeable at the beginning of the career of the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* that was established through the joint initiatives of the banker Edward de Coppet and the violinist Alfred Pochon in 1903. Of Swiss origin, de Coppet was born in New York in 1855 to a very wealthy family with broad interests in supporting the arts. De Coppet's father, Louis de Coppet, was born in the Swiss city of Lausanne where he was a co-founder of the local conservatory of music, the *Conservatoire de Lausanne*. In the mid-nineteenth century he moved

20 All the illustrations reproduced in this paper belong to the *Fonds musical Alfred Pochon*, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire, Lausanne (Switzerland), unless otherwise indicated.

21 The first recording with Victor was produced on 22th December 1913, according to <http://www.davidsarnoff.org/soo-maintext.html> (accessed 22th November 22). All the recordings by the Flonzaley Quartet were regularly reviewed with high praise in numerous internationally acknowledged journals, such as *The Gramophone*.

22 General biographical information, including notes on the recording history of the Flonzaley Quartet, is provided in Daniel G. Mason, 'Edward J. de Coppet', *The Musical Quarterly*, 2/4 (1916), 516-522, Daniel G. Mason, *Music as a Humanity and Other Essays (The Appreciation of Music Series, vol. IV)*, New York, H. W. Gray Comp., 1926, 65-70, Edwin T. Rice, 'The De Coppet music room in New York and Switzerland', *The Musical Quarterly* 23/4 (1937), 413-420, and Alissia Nembrini, 'Flonzaley Quartet - Four of a kind', *Classical Recording Collector* 44 (2006), 18-24.

to the United States and became a successful banker. He established the famous banking house DeCoppet & Doremus in New York City, and later handed over the operative affairs of the bank to his son, Edward de Coppet.

The fiscal stability and the interest in the arts of the Coppet family were significant conditions for the success story of the Flonzaley Quartet that lasted for twenty-six years until 1929.²³ Already in 1905, a correspondent of *The New York Times* pointed out that the almost unlimited financial support of de Coppet allowed the quartet's members to be 'wholly relieved from business or financial problems and devote their whole time to perfecting their quartet playing'.²⁴ This was a crucial difference compared to the *Kneisel Quartet* whose members were, for instance, all involved in and often completely consumed by challenging teaching obligations.

Yet, de Coppet's initial intention was to establish a private string quartet, or a quartet-in-residence, allowing the members to entirely devote themselves to quartet playing without obligations for public concerts. With this plan in mind de Coppet not only intended to transform his amateur quartet, founded in 1886, into a professional ensemble, but also to hold fast to the tradition of domestic string quartet playing. Two central figures were of essential influence concerning de Coppet's private music activities. On the one hand, Pauline Bouis de Coppet, Edward's wife,²⁵ who was an outstandingly accomplished pianist; and, on the other hand, her brother, Charles Bouis, a very talented violinist and former pupil of César Thomson, who would play an important role in the establishment of the later Flonzaley Quartet. They both strongly supported de Coppet's mission and repeatedly assisted in the performances. The group of amateur musicians regularly met at de Coppet's apartment on West 60th Street (1886-1887) and later at 314 West 85th Street (1887-1916). De Coppet, although a gifted pianist, took the part of a 'director, prescribing the works to be prepared, marking the parts for the guidance of the players, and following every rehearsal with the score in hand', when not being engaged in turning the pages for the pianist.²⁶ The repertoire at de Coppet's private music gatherings consisted not only of what today is considered, as the canon of string quartet literature, such as the music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, as well as Schubert, Mendelssohn and Schumann. Equally important in the repertoire performed at the Coppets was the chamber music of Luigi Cherubini, Louis Spohr, Václav Jindřich Veit, George Onslow, Robert Volkmann, Antonín Rubinstein, Friedrich Gernsheim, and Antonio Bazzini, to name a few of many, as clearly documented by de Coppet's careful recordings of the program

23 For further information on Edward de Coppet see Daniel G. Mason, 'Edward J. de Coppet', op. cit., and Edwin T. Rice, op. cit.

24 *New-York Daily Tribune*, 19th November 1905, 7. See also *New-York Daily Tribune*, 7th February 1905, 7, and Daniel G. Mason's essay 'An Ideal Patron' on de Coppet in Daniel G. Mason, *Music as a Humanity and Other Essays*, op. cit., 65-70.

25 They met in Nice and got married in 1883.

26 Edwin T. Rice, op. cit., 414.

of each evening.²⁷ In addition, then contemporary chamber music literature was included as a matter of course, such as music by Piotr Ilich Tchaikovsky, Aleksandr Borodin, Aleksandr Glazunov, Edvard Grieg, Johan Svendsen, Camille Saint-Saëns, Carl Goldmark, Richard Strauss, Antonín Dvořák and Johannes Brahms.

This policy was continued by the Flonzaley Quartet, not only with respect to the private, but also their public appearances. The private performances by the Flonzaley Quartet from 1903 onwards were, in addition, regularly joined by internationally acclaimed professional musicians, as was also the case when the Flonzaleys gathered for private performances at Coppet's summer residence in Switzerland, including Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Felix Weingartner, Wilhem and Marcella Sembrich-Stengel, Josef Hofmann, Ernest Schelling and Harold Bauer.

The strong association with aspects of bourgeois music culture in de Coppet's salon is in stark contrast with the New York salon of Walter and Louise Arensberg, for instance, that existed from 1914 to 1921. De Coppet's salon clearly fits into the model of nineteenth century musical salons whose purpose was to provide a framework for elitist cultural, and intellectual activities in which music participated and enforced the shaping of a high (conservative) bourgeois agenda. This process can be interpreted as highly charged with the ideology of America's *Gilded Age* (1865-1901) that was, among other features, characterized by a lavish exhibit of wealth of America's upper class.²⁸ The Arensberg salon, on the other hand, was the melting pot of progressive and highly liberal activities and strongly associated with 'an inconceivable orgy of sexuality, jazz, and alcohol'.²⁹ Louise Arensberg 'sometimes avoided the gatherings herself, preferring the opera to the unrestrained salon behavior'.³⁰ The distinctions between the salons of de Coppet and Arensberg exemplify, what Michael Broyles has described as the relationship of two interrelated tensions that shaped American musical life around the turn of the last century: 'one between a populist and an elitist attitude toward music, and another between a conceptualization of music as entertainment and music as a moral force (that uplifts and ennobles its listeners)'.³¹

27 See: *ibid.*, 415.

28 Alan Howard Levy, 'The Search for Identity in American Music, 1890-1920', *American Music*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1984), 70-81, Reginald Twigg, 'Aestheticizing the home: Textual strategies of taste, self-identity, and bourgeois hegemony in America's 'gilded age'', *Text and Performance Quarterly*, vol. 12, no. 1 (1992), 1 - 20, and John D. Bunker and Joseph Bunker (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, Armonk (NY), Sharpe Reference, 2005.

29 Quoted in Diane Glazer, 'Among Friends: Italian Futurism comes to America', *New Sound* 34 (2009), 4. Further information on the Arensberg salon is provided in Robert Crunden, *American Salons: Encounters with European Modernism, 1885-1917*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1993, 409-444, and Stephen Voynce, 'Make the World Your Salon: Poetry and Community at the Arensberg Apartment', *Modernism/Modernity*, vol. 15, no. 4 (2008), 627-646.

30 Diane Glazer, *op. cit.*, 4.

31 Michael Broyles, *'Music of the Highest Class': Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston*, New Haven (CT), Yale University Press, 1992, 10.

De Coppet's salon also clearly preserved the nineteenth century European spirit that Louis de Coppet brought to New York. Henry James, Jr. recalled in his autobiographical account *A Small Boy and Others*, published in 1913, that Louis de Coppet 'pressed further home to me that 'sense of Europe' to which I feel that my very earliest consciousness worked (...) He opened vistas'.³²

Edward de Coppet's musical mission evidently tended to the fabrication of high-culture and the accumulation of 'cultural capital', as Pierre Bourdieu has analyzed it. According to this concept representative, prospective and putative members of groups with high social status collect cultural capital by linking themselves with distinctive signs of culture, such as being able to do and read music and to speak appropriately about it, to attend musical performances, etc.³³ In this respect Coppet's activities (also regarding his policy concerning and support of the Flonzaley Quartet) strongly contributed to what is generally considered as the concept of emergence of high culture and cultural distinction in the United States between the last decades of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century.³⁴ However, it is noteworthy, that such societal and cultural tendencies and processes of status and image fabrication can easily be distended or interpreted in a one-sided manner as Ralph P. Locke has convincingly argued on the basis of broad source material.³⁵ Studies of cultural criticism often overstress the individual value and ideological impact and often show a tendency to monolithic and tendentious views and dismissive arguments about the cultural achievements of high society. They symptomatically undervalue the interest of upper-class efforts 'in supporting an aesthetically rich culture of whose broad civic value they were utterly convinced'³⁶ and the emphasis 'on making the experience of art music as aesthetically gratifying as possible'.³⁷ Given that, the fact is often underrated that the music performed in private and public concerts was known and appreciated by many people in those days, and many shared an affectionate and participatory relationship with music independent of specific social ranks and distinctions.

32 Henry James, *A Small Boy and Others*, New York, Charles Scribner, 1913, 34.

33 Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, transl. Richard Nice, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1984, 13-18, 74-76, and 503-518 (original French edition as *La distinction. Critique social du jugement*, Paris, Les éditions de minuit, 1979).

34 See Paul DiMaggio, 'Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth Century Boston: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America', *Media Culture Society*, vol. 4, no. 1 (1982), 33-50, and 'Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth Century Boston, Part II: The Classification and Framing of American Art', *Media Culture Society*, vol. 4, no. 4 (1982), 303-322, and Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1986.

35 Ralph P. Locke, 'Reflections on Art in America, on Stereotypes of the Woman Patron, and on Cha(lle)nges in the Present and Future', in: Ralph P. Locke and Cyrilla Barr (eds.), *Cultivating Music in America: Women Patrons and Activists since 1860*, Berkeley (CA), University of California Press, 1997, 295-324.

36 *Ibid.*, 299

37 *Ibid.*, 298.

As explored, the repertoire performed at the de Coppel's private concerts was anything else than only satisfying elitist taste. In addition to the promotion of contemporary chamber music, they included as a matter of course compositions of composers who are considered only today as 'second-rate'. Such compositions obviously satisfied the taste of many people who assisted in the Coppet concerts. Both tendencies became a significant feature of the program policy of the Flonzaley Quartet. By far, they not only performed the traditional and canonized chamber music literature, but also generally included contemporary and popular pieces. The latter were mostly arrangements of popular songs such as the well-liked English song: *Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes*³⁸ and the two American spirituals *Go down, Moses* and *Swing low, sweet chariot*.³⁹ Most of these arrangements were accomplished by Alfred Pochon, who also published them in four volumes in the 1920s (Ex. 2).⁴⁰ Such a publication is a clear indication of the popularity of this kind of music.

Example 2: Table of contents of Alfred Pochon, *Flonzaley Favorite Encore Albums* (c. 1920-1928)

FLONZALEY FAVORITE	
Encore Albums	
By	
ALFRED POCHON	
CONTENTS	
ALBUM No. 1	ALBUM No. 2
1. <i>DRINK TO ME ONLY WITH THINE EYES</i> (From English Folk Songs) — ALFRED POCHON	1. <i>ANDANTE</i> (From Young Quarters No. 43) — JOHN PETER WILHELM
2. <i>THE MILL</i> (From Young Quarters)	2. <i>MIDNIGHT</i> (From Young Quarters No. 2) — MICHAEL
3. <i>BERNARD</i> — HARRY FISCHER	3. <i>SCHEEREN</i> (From Young Quarters No. 8) — MICHAEL
4. <i>GANSTER</i> (From Young Quarters)	4. <i>AMANTINE</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HAYDN FISCHER
5. <i>OLD LACK JOE</i> (From Young Quarters)	5. <i>ESTER</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HAYDN FISCHER
6. <i>CADONNETTA</i> (From Young Quarters)	6. <i>SONG OF THE FOLK BROTHER</i> (From Young Quarters)
7. <i>ALL UNHAPPY</i> (From Young Quarters)	7. <i>LARGHETTO</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — MICHAEL
8. <i>ANGEL GARDIE</i> (From Young Quarters)	8. <i>SOFTLY</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — MICHAEL
9. <i>LARGHETTO</i> — HARRY FISCHER	9. <i>BERNARD</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER
10. <i>SPICE OF THE THIRTEENTH</i> (From Young Quarters)	10. <i>TRIO REEL</i> — GUSTAV KERN
ALBUM No. 3	ALBUM No. 4
1. <i>MUSNETT</i> (From No. 3, "The Quartet") — Gustav Kern — Alfred Pochon (Lyrics & Music)	1. <i>NEED SPIRITUALS</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER
2. <i>REVEREND</i> (From Young Quarters, No. 3) — HARRY FISCHER	2. <i>DEEP RIVER</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER
3. <i>ALL ABOUT</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER	3. <i>FORGOTTEN</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER
4. <i>SHILOH</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER	4. <i>TRIO REEL</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER
5. <i>SCORCH</i> (From Young Quarters, No. 3) — HARRY FISCHER	5. <i>ADJUST</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER
6. <i>TRUCKS ON THE STRAW</i> (From Young Quarters, No. 3) — HARRY FISCHER	6. <i>THE BUNNY BUNNY</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER
7. <i>KILBURN</i> — HARRY FISCHER	7. <i>BARBER'S SENSE</i> — HARRY FISCHER
8. <i>WINDY HILLS</i> (From Young Quarters, No. 3) — HARRY FISCHER	8. <i>GO DOWN, MOSES</i> (From Young Quarters, No. 3) — HARRY FISCHER
9. <i>SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT</i> (From Young Quarters, No. 3) — HARRY FISCHER	9. <i>TRIO REEL</i> (From Young Quarters, Op. 3, No. 2) — HARRY FISCHER

38 Recorded for Victrola (RS) 64874 in 1920. The lyrics to the song are from Ben Jonson's poem *To Celia* of 1616. The original tune for two trebles and a bass is by John Wall Callcott from about 1790. The song was arranged many times throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its enormous popularity is also reflected in the many extant recordings, among them Elisabeth Schwarzkopf with Gerald Moore, Kathleen Ferrier, and David Keith Jones.

39 Both spirituals were recorded for Victrola (6549) in 1926.

40 Alfred Pochon, *Flonzaley Favorite Encore Albums*, 4 vols., New York, Carl Fischer, c. 1920-1928.

The correspondent of *Time Magazine* provides another glimpse at the diverse offerings so typical of their concerts. After the performance of two string quartets by Haydn and Brahms in a concert at New York's Aeolian Hall, on 21st January 1925, the members of the Flonzaley Quartet 'smiled among themselves, stroked the glossy wood of their instruments, began to play a strange composition. It was Ernest Schelling's *Divertimento*, for string quartet with piano obligato. (...) There were critics who instantly dubbed it a tour de force, a term which critics find invaluable and sometimes even apt'.⁴¹ This type of program fits into a concept or policy that aims at popularizing chamber music rather than into a concept that regards chamber music, particularly the literature for string quartet, as an expression of elitist culture.

* * *

Equally essential for the establishment of the Flonzaley Quartet was de Coppet's acquaintance with the Swiss violinist Alfred Pochon. They met in Switzerland in 1894 and, some years later, in 1901, de Coppet offered Pochon the position of first violinist of his private string quartet ensemble, which Pochon accepted. Pochon's artistic competence and his well-documented pragmatic instinct were decisive concerning the transformation of de Coppet's amateur quartet into an ensemble consisting of professional instrumentalists only. In order to achieve his plans Pochon approached several prominent exponents of contemporary European musical life and asked them for advice. Among them were César Thomson (Pochon's former violin professor at Liège Music Conservatory), Joseph Joachim, Vincent d'Indy, and Georges Enescu. His requirements of only appointing first-rate musicians raised certain obstacles as, for instance, the reply of Thomson's wife, Louise Thomson proves. She unmistakably stated in her letter of 2nd March 1903 that a musician fulfilling Pochon's exceptional expectations would hardly accept a position in a private quartet ensemble,⁴² thereby clearly indicating that first-rate musicians would rather aim for a solo and public career. On behalf of her husband, Louise Thomson interestingly enough suggested Adolfo Betti as a possible quartet member, in the same letter although she was convinced that he did not want to leave Brussels.⁴³

However, Betti accepted Pochon's invitation to join the quartet and, with further recommendations, Pochon was able to create a convincing quartet ensemble, consisting of Betti as first violinist, Ugo Ara as viola player and Iwan D'Archambeau at the violoncello in addition to himself at the second violin (Ex. 3 and 4).

41 *Time Magazine*, 2nd February 1925. See also *The New York Times*, 21st January 1925, 19.

42 'Un violoniste de premier rang n'accepterait pas cette position et Vous ne voulez pas autre chose'. Letter of Louise Thomson to Alfred Pochon, 2nd March 1903 (*Fonds musical Alfred Pochon*, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire, Lausanne).

43 'Le seul serait Betti, et Betti ne veut pas quitter Bruxelles où il est maintenant très bien lancé', *ibid.*

Example 3: Le Quatuor de Flonzaley (from left to right.) Adolfo Betti (1st violin); Alfred Pochon (2nd violin); Iwan D'Archambeau (violoncello); Ugo Ara (viola), around 1905



Example 4: Le Quatuor de Flonzaley with its patron, Edward de Coppet (center), New York 1903



While Betti, Pochon and D'Archambeau stayed with the quartet until its dissolution in 1929, Ara was replaced by Louis Bailly in 1917, because of Ara's decision to join the Italian army in World War I.⁴⁴ Bailly performed himself with the quartet until 1924, when he was replaced by Félicien D'Archambeau, the cellist's brother, for one season and later by Nicolas Moldavan.

44 Ara returned for a short period to the Flonzaley Quartet in 1919, but due to a severe and long-lasting fatigue caused by his military service he was not able to take up again with the high requirements and eventually resigned completely.

The disclosure of the collaboration with Bailly, a former member of the *Capet Quartet* in 1903,⁴⁵ was the cause of a severe disagreement between Bailly and the other members of the string ensemble. Betti, Pochon and D'Archambeau showed increasing resistance in continuing to collaborate with Bailly, because they considered his personality difficult and arrogant.⁴⁶ Bailly, on the other hand, refused to participate in the long preparation sessions during the summer months because of his many engagements as viola soloist, and also showed increasing resistance towards performing the popular arrangements in public concerts that, as already mentioned, Pochon had prepared.⁴⁷ Given all that, Bailly's contract was eventually discontinued because of 'artistic incompatibility'.⁴⁸ On 2nd March 1924, Bailly applied for an injunction to bar his former colleagues from continuing to perform under the old name, if they appointed another viola player, arguing that the ensemble was a commercial partnership governed by the laws of New York State. His application was first approved, but eventually rejected by the New York State Supreme Court in May 1925, which ruled that the name of the ensemble was to be considered Edward de Coppel's invention and that the ensemble was not to be regarded as a commercial partnership, but rather as 'a cultural enterprise' similar to 'a museum or an artistic institution' whose purpose is the 'promotion of high quality education'.⁴⁹ The Court of Appeal of the Supreme Court to which Bailly had addressed his cause approved this decision. The disagreement caused huge publicity and involved many prominent representatives of the musical world who had filed affidavits in favor of the Flonzaley Quartet, including Marcella Sembrich, Franz Kneisel, Ernest Schelling, Victor Herbert, Fritz Kreisler, Josef W. Mengelberg, Richard Aldrich and Rubin Goldmark. This impressive list of music celebrities, the attention the public took in the case⁵⁰ and – last but not least – the very remarkable assessment expressed in the Supreme Court's characterization of

45 The Capet Quartet was founded by Lucien Capet in 1893 and was active until the sudden death of its founder and leader in 1928. The ensemble was especially renowned for its interpretations of Beethoven quartets. Bailly performed with this quartet from 1903 until 1910. He later became a member of the *Geloso Quartet* (1911-1914).

46 As officially communicated to the public Bailly was disagreeable. Sometimes he would not even speak to his colleagues', and in addition and no less important his ideas about string quartet playing obviously did not fit with the requirements of the other three members; Bailly tended to take it as 'a matter of solo, and not ensemble, work'. *Time Magazine*, 5th May 1924. After the disclosure of the contract with the Flonzaley Quartet Bailly was appointed teacher and later chair of the chamber music department of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia (1925-1941). From 1943 to 1957, he taught violin, viola and chamber music at the Conservatoire de Musique du Québec. Further information on Bailly's private and professional life is provided in Maurice Riley, 'Louis Bailly (1882-1974)', *Journal of The Violin Society of America*, vol. 3, no. 3 (1977), 33-49.

47 Maurice Riley, op. cit., 35-36.

48 *The New York Times*, 16th April 1924, 27.

49 See Sentence of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, 1925.

50 The U.S. press extensively covered the story. See for instance *Time Magazine*, 28th April and 5th May, 1924, and *The New York Times*, 16th April, 1924, 27.

the Flonzaley Quartet as a 'cultural enterprise', promoting the 'formation of high quality' clearly mirror the illustrious esteem and exceptional social status of the ensemble. The Supreme Court's sentence also implicitly refers to the outstanding educative function of the Flonzaley Quartet, strikingly evident in the ensemble's efforts to introduce contemporary chamber music in the United States. An interesting example in this context is the Flonzaley Quartet's New York premiere of Arnold Schoenberg's String Quartet in D Minor op. 7th on 26th January 1914, which the correspondent of *The New York Times* considered as 'a Revolutionary German's Work.'⁵¹ This performance was the very first exposure of an American audience to a large-scale work by Schoenberg, and the Flonzaleys shunned no effort to prepare the audience for this special event. They organized two open rehearsals prior to the concert;⁵² one of which (28th December 1913) was preceded by a pre-concert lecture given by Kurt Schindler, the conductor of New York's Schola Cantorum and a music editor with G. Schirmer Inc., who personally met Schoenberg in 1903.⁵³ Schindler's lecture, including extensive analytical notes about Schoenberg's String Quartet, was published immediately afterwards and, therefore, it was available to everyone interested in the piece and the upcoming performance.⁵⁴ With respect to the educational mission, it is noteworthy that the Flonzaley Quartet regularly gave performances for students from its first days,⁵⁵ and also made special college- and university-concert tours to expose students to chamber music.⁵⁶ When the ensemble disbanded, Harvard University organized an honorary banquet 'as a tribute to the great influence of the quartet in spreading

51 The New York Times, 27th January 1914, 9. See also the review of the concert in the *New York Post*, 27th January 1914, and Lawrence Gilman, 'Music and Drama: Significant Happenings of the Month', *The North American Review*, vol. 199, no. 700 (1914), 452-458.

52 This was by far no exclusive or one-off exercise as similar examples prove in which the Flonzaley Quartet organized publicly open rehearsal sessions to prepare the audience for performance of unknown musical pieces. See for instance *New-York Daily Tribune*, 17th March 1909, 7 in which the preparation of Hugo Wolf's String Quartet in D Minor is described (in the article wrongly attributed as D Major).

53 Kurt Schindler studied musicology in Berlin and immigrated to the United States in 1905. He assisted in the inaugural meeting of the *Vereinigung schaffender Tonkünstler* in Vienna that was initiated by Schoenberg and Alexander Zemlinsky, but was only active for the concert season of 1904-1905. Dika Newlin, *Bruckner – Mahler – Schoenberg*, New York, King's Crown Press, 1947, 225.

54 Kurt Schindler, Arnold Schönberg's Quartet in D Minor, Op. 7; An Introductory Note by Kurt Schindler as Delivered by Him at the Private Performance by the Flonzaley Quartet at the Cort Theatre, New York, December 28th, 1913, Followed by an Index of Musical Themes, New York, G. Schirmer, 1914.

55 See for instance the advertisement of Carnegie Hall concerts in 1905 in *The Sun* (New York), 30th November 1905, 5.

56 See for instance the announcement of the ensemble's performance at Washington State University at Pullman (WA) in *The Pullman Herald*, 16th April 1920, front page, and at Sage Chapel of Cornell University in *Cornell Alumni News*, vol. XXVII, no. 15 (1925), 185.

an appreciation for chamber music'.⁵⁷ The student-concerts were not only for educational purposes but were interconnected with the already explored aspiration to create a musical life that would be widely shared within a broad community – a desire that strongly influenced and shaped the upper class' promotion and sustaining of chamber music activities for decades around the turn of the last century and which supported the popularization of all types of 'classical' music.

* * *

The Flonzaley Quartet took its name from de Coppet's summer residence, Villa Flonzaley, near the city of Lausanne, Switzerland (Ex. 5). This place served as a retreat as well as the venue for extensive and in-depth rehearsal sessions.⁵⁸ The long period of practice became a hallmark of the Flonzaley Quartet as the habit to 'spend hours in tuning and rehearsing before every public performance'.⁵⁹

Example 5: *Le Quatuor de Flonzaley* in front of Villa Flonzaley, around 1920



According to an interview that Pochon gave in 1954 for Radio Lausanne,⁶⁰ the debut of the quartet took place in the Viennese home of de Coppet at Reich-

57 Walter Raymond Spalding, *Music at Harvard. A historical review of men and events*, New York, Coward-McCann, 1935, 255.

58 The habit to retreat for extensive rehearsal and preparatory sessions at Villa Flonzaley came to an abrupt and definite end in 1914 when World War I broke out in Europe.

59 *The Miami Student*, 8th December 1926, 1.

60 The interview's typescript with handwritten entries and corrections is preserved in the *Fonds musical Alfred Pochon*, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire, Lausanne (Switzerland).

stratsstraße No. 3 in 1903,⁶¹ clearly intended to be a private rather than public debut. For the next two years the ensemble performed only privately or for charities. Finally in late 1905 the public career of the quartet began to develop with the quartet's very first public concert at New York's Carnegie Hall on 5th December 1905, comprised of Schubert's quartet in A Minor D 802, Grieg's quartet in G Minor op. 27, and the variation-movement of Sergei Taneyev's third string quartet in D Minor op. 7.⁶² From that moment on, the long-lasting collaboration with the manager, Loudon Charlton, was established.

Despite moving into the public sphere, the Flonzaley Quartet continued performing privately at de Coppet's homes in New York and Switzerland. According to Edwin T. Rice, a former member of de Coppet's music amateur gatherings and frequent guest of the New York salon, the Flonzaleys gave approximately two hundred private concerts between 1904 and 1916.⁶³ In addition these private gatherings became so popular 'that it was necessary to divide the audience into groups attending on successive evenings'.⁶⁴

With its first public appearance, the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* established itself as a coequal and rival of the *Kneisel Quartet* which first operated from Boston.⁶⁵ In 1905, it moved its center of activities to New York City, when its founder, Franz Kneisel, was appointed head of the violin department of the newly established Institute of Musical Art, today known as the Juilliard School of Music. In 1917, the ensemble suspended its activities.⁶⁶ Referring to a performance in New York City's Mendelssohn Hall on 1 March 1910 the correspondent of *The New York Times* explicitly acknowledged the significant socio-cultural role of the Flonzaley Quartet as 'an important addition to the musical activities of New York' because of its 'highest aims and accomplishment and with a method and style all their own'.⁶⁷ And the correspondent of the *San Francisco Call* enthusiastically states 'that no musical organization that has visited this city has ever won the hearts of music lovers as quickly as this quartet of string players'.⁶⁸ With respect to the competition with the *Kneisel Quartet* the rather metaphorical statement of the correspondent of the

61 The program consisted of Joseph Haydn's string quartet B-flat Major, op. 64/3 (performed by the Flonzaley Quartet), Johann Sebastian Bach's Sonata E Major BWV 1016 for violin and piano (performed by Adolfo Betti and Pauline de Coppet), and Pogajeff's Theme and Variations op. 3 in A Major (performed by the Flonzaleys).

62 See the program announcement in *New-York Daily Tribune*, 3rd December 1905, 7.

63 Edwin T. Rice, op. cit., 419.

64 Ibid.

65 The rivalry between the Kneisel and Flonzaley quartets was a friendly one. It is documented, for instance, that the *Kneisel Quartet* appeared many times at Coppet's private musical events, particularly when the Flonzaleys were on tour. See Edwin T. Rice, op. cit., 419.

66 As far as the history and achievements of the *Kneisel Quartet* are concerned see Paul Rosenfeld, op. cit., 20-26.

67 'The Flonzaley Quartet', *The New York Times*, 2nd March 1910, 9.

68 *The San Francisco Call*, 22nd April 1910, 5.

New-York Daily Tribune of 1910 is very illustrative: 'Kneisel weather seems to have descended upon the Flonzaleys, but the patrons of the younger quartet proved no less loyal than those of its elder brother have proved in past years, and as a result Mendelssohn Hall, despite the storm, held one of the largest audiences of the season'.⁶⁹

After the death of Edward de Coppet on 30th April 1916, which was widely considered as a true loss to cultural life,⁷⁰ his son, André de Coppet was bequeathed with the estate, including the continuation of the Flonzaleys' activities. André de Coppet (1892-1953) was himself a successful and wealthy Wall Street financier, like his grandfather and his father. In 1920, he married Clara Barclay Onativia, the daughter of Henry Anthony Barclay, one of the most wealthy and influential members of New York's high society.⁷¹ Despite the economically crucial situation of the 1920s, Coppet must have had considerable assets. He continued his father's commitment to the *Quatuor de Flonzaley*, supporting it with an annual average contribution between US \$30,000 and \$40,000 until its dissolution in 1929. Along with Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, de Coppet also made a significant contribution to finance a special ten-week United States and Canada marathon concert tour for Arturo Toscanini and members of the *Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala* in 1920-1921, including 133 concerts.⁷² He also founded the very profitable agave plantation *Dauphin* in Haiti, in 1926 (sold to the still existing *Haitian American Sugar Company* [HASCO] in 1955), and collected prestigious and rare autographs between 1926 and 1939, which he donated by his last will to the French *Archives nationales* in 1953.⁷³

The disbanding of the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* was concluded with a transcontinental farewell tour, consisting of 112 concerts, that ended on 14th April 1928 in London. Yet, the very last performance of the quartet was given in Manhattan on 17th March 1929, assisted by the composer and conductor Ernest Schelling at the piano.⁷⁴ The reasons for the dissolution were not communicated officially. It probably came as a surprise to many of the ensemble's admirers and supporters,

69 *New-York Daily Tribune*, 7th December 1910, 7. See also a similar review in the *New-York Daily Tribune*, 6th January 1909, 7.

70 *The New York Times*, 2nd May 1916, 13.

71 R. Burnham Moffat, *The Barclays of New York: Who they are and who they are not - and some other Barclays*, New York, R. G. Cooke, 1904, and the obituary in *The New York Times*, 3rd March 1905, 14.

72 See the numerous letters by Loudon Charlton, André de Coppet etc. preserved in the *Fonds musical Alfred Pochon*, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire, Lausanne (Switzerland), and Harvey Sachs, *Arturo Toscanini*, from 1915-1946, Turin, E.D.T. Edizione di Torino, 1987, 6-7.

73 A similar donation, including numerous personal documents was made to the Manuscripts Division of the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections of Princeton University Library.

74 See *Time Magazine*, 11 March 1929, *The Baton*, vol. VIII, no. 4 (1929), 2, and *The Gramophone*, May 1930, 552.

when taking into account the ensemble's incredible achievements and extraordinary success.

It seems that the increasing economic crisis in the 1920s and the subsequent Wall Street Crash of October 1929 can hardly be accounted for the disbanding of the quartet.⁷⁵ Other factors certainly were more influential. By September 1928, Pochon was already seriously involved in plans for founding a new string quartet ensemble in close collaboration with Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, as evidenced by letters preserved in the *Fonds musical Alfred Pochon* at the Département de la musique of the Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire in Lausanne (Switzerland).⁷⁶ These plans eventually materialized with the founding of the *Stradivarius Quartet* in 1929, financially supported by the German-born banker Felix Warburg (1887-1937)⁷⁷ who had lived in New York City since 1894.⁷⁸ Both Pochon and Moldvan of the Flonzaley Quartet were members of the *Stradivarius Quartet*, and later from 1935 to 1939, Flonzaley Quartet's former violoncellist, D'Archangeau joined the ensemble.

On the basis of the actual status of archival research no crucial disagreements among the musicians or between them, and the quartet's patron can be evidenced that could account for the disruption of the quartet. Perhaps the contractual regulation that prohibited the members of the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* from giving private or solo performances or from entering any teaching obligation may have been

75 See John Brooks, *Once in Golconda: A True Drama of Wall Street 1920-1938*, New York, Harper & Row, 1969, and Maury Klein, *Rainbow's End: The Crash of 1929*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2001.

76 For further information on Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge as a patroness of music see Cyrilla Barr, *Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge: American patron of music*, New York, Schirmer Books, 1998, and Se Yun Lee, *The Coolidge commissions: Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge and the genesis of six European string quartets*, Ann Arbor (MI), UMI Dissertation Services, 2003.

77 The quartet existed until 1950 and was in addition to Pochon (2nd violin) and Moldavan (viola) joined by Wolfe Wolfensohn (1st violin) and Gerald Warburg (violoncello), the son of Felix Warburg. The quartet's name reflected the fact that Felix Warburg provided the musicians with precious musical instruments of his rich collection: Gerald Warburg normally played a violoncello (also known as 'La Belle blonde') made by Antonio Stradivari in 1727, and Pochon performed on a violin of the same luthier, made in 1723, and known as 'L'espagnol'. Isaac Landman (Ed.), *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, New York, Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, 1942, vol. 8, 57.

78 A similar policy, including financial support, was exercised by Warburg (in addition to the Kahn, Guggenheim and Lewisohn families) regarding the Musical Art Quartet. This quartet was founded by Sascha Jacobsen (1st violin) and completed by Paul Bernhard (2nd violin), Louis Kaufman (viola), and Marie Roemaet-Rosanoff (violoncello). It is generally considered as a predecessor of the Juilliard String Quartet and was acknowledged by many as the legitimate successor of the Flonzaley Quartet (*Time Magazine*, 21st July 1930). Although being an outstanding ensemble, the members of the *Musical Art Quartet* were criticized for 'lacking in human qualities and particularly in grace, which has made it impossible for them to endear themselves to a large circle of people who would be willing to back them financially' as Felix Warburg, one of the most dedicated patrons of the ensemble, stated. Quoted in Andrea Olmstead, *Juilliard. A History*, Urbana (IL), University of Illinois Press, 1999, 106.

increasingly considered as an obstacle.⁷⁹ It is likely that due to this regulation Pochon, for instance, rejected an offer in 1928 to be appointed Director of Peabody Conservatory of Music, one of the most prestigious music education institutions in the United States. D'Archambeau started a splendid solo career immediately after the dissolution of the quartet, while Betti began to teach at the esteemed David Mannes Music School in New York (today known as the Mannes College of Music, a division of The New School network) that was founded in 1916 by David Mannes, concertmaster of the New York Symphony Orchestra, and Clara Damrosch, Mannes' wife and the sister of that orchestra's director, Walter Damrosch.

Perhaps the major cause of the quartet's disbanding was, just the fact that after more than twenty five years of successful collaboration the moment for accepting new challenges had finally arrived.

* * *

As far as the 'new style' of the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* is concerned, one of its features constantly emphasized by the media was the remarkable homogeneity of the sound. The correspondent of the *Washington Times*, for instance, pointed out with respect to a concert of the ensemble in the Masonic Auditorium in Washington D.C. on 13th March 1909, that 'beauty of tone grace of interpretation and a keen understanding of each others and the composers' moods served to present the program in a delightful light. (...) Their joint work is the height of artistic attainment'.⁸⁰ And, with respect to the farewell performance in Manhattan in 1929, the correspondent of *Time Magazine* stated that 'for balance, clarity and unity they have been and still remain the best of their kind in the U. S., without challenge'.⁸¹ Although, these and similar judgments can be evaluated as personal opinions of critics, the constancy with which the instrumental balance was emphasized over the years of the quartet's career is remarkable.

Homogeneity or instrumental balance is a crucial feature not only of modern string quartet playing but also of string quartet aesthetics, as described in the famous metaphor comparing string quartet playing to a conversation of four equal partners that has been closely associated with string quartet performance since the

79 The different work agreements concluded between Edward and André de Coppet and the members of the Flonzaley Quartet also clearly regulated the rehearsal obligations that generally consisted of two hours, six times per week. See the several work agreements preserved in the *Fonds musical Alfred Pochon*, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire, Lausanne (Switzerland).

80 *The Washington Times*, 14th March 1914, 11. See also the concert reviews in the *New-York Daily Tribune*, 12th January 1910, 7, *The San Francisco Call*, 18th April 1910, 5, *The Sun* (New York), 7th December 1910, 9, *The Times* (London), 3rd November 1913, the *Evening Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), 9th December 1914, 11, and *The Times* (London), 5th May 1924, as well as the review by Richard Aldrich, 'The Flonzaley Quartet', *The New York Times*, 19th January 1921, 21.

81 See *Time Magazine*, 11th March 1929.

late eighteenth century.⁸² This idea is represented not only in the score but also in the sound that has to be performed as if produced on one musical instrument of sixteen strings.⁸³ Homogeneity is the leading principle or ideal to which each individual voice must adhere. The principle of homogeneity coordinates the different parameters that are essentially involved in the interpretation of a string quartet composition as a performative event, for instance rhythm, dynamics, pitch, sound balance, intonation, timbre, etc. Yet, the analysis of these parameters that significantly shape both a single performance and the quartet style of an ensemble in general, and which are, in the case of the Flonzaley Quartet, preserved on recordings, still poses a challenge.

A significant challenge of recording analysis arises from the fact that the recordings of the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* employ early recording technology and thus have a significant noise component. They are also limited concerning both sound spectrum and sound level. These difficulties also arise in modern recordings since no recording is a 'transparent' medium that preserves all acoustic features of a musical performance equally but the lack of acoustic clarity is significantly more noticeable with historic recordings.⁸⁴ The recordings of the Flonzaley Quartet switched from mechanic to electronic recording techniques in the 1920s, an additional factor needing to be taken in account.

These and other challenges may be the major reason for the lack of standardized solutions for analytic techniques. The software LARA, i.e. the Lucerne Audio Recording Analyzer, currently provides the most advanced analytical method. In contrast to comparable applications LARA allows not only the mechanic visualization of sound features with the aid of current techniques of digital signal processing but also the analysis of abstract musical characteristics due to an elaborated marker system and newly developed display formats. Currently LARA, originally developed by the music department of the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, is able to display micro-rhythms and timing with an unprecedented level of detail. With respect to the follow-up Flonzaley research project, sponsored by the Swiss National Science Foundation, LARA's current capabilities will be extended to allow in-depth information concerning intonation,

82 Ludwig Finscher, *Studien zur Geschichte des Streichquartetts I. Die Entstehung des klassischen Streichquartetts von den Vorformen zur Grundlegung durch Joseph Haydn* (Saarbrücker Studien zur Musikwissenschaft, Bd. 3), Kassel etc., Bärenreiter, 1974.

83 I owe this very striking image of a string quartet ensemble as an instrument of sixteen strings to Bernard Fournier, *L'esthétique du Quatuor à Cordes*, Paris, Fayard, 1999, 25.

84 See Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, 'Using recordings in the study of musical performance', in: Andy Linehan (ed.), *Aural history: Essays on recorded sound*, London, British Library, 2001, 1-12.

sound balance and timbre.⁸⁵ These aspects are crucial for any computer-based analysis and evaluation of a string quartet ensemble's specific performance style and will enrich the insights made within this paper.

Scientific analysis of recording also must take into account that specific features of a recording not only need to be contextualized within the history of sound recording but also with respect to changing aesthetics, as Robert Philip has convincingly pointed out.⁸⁶ Particularly concerning the aesthetic requirements, specifying the relationship between recording and musical text remains an elusive element, i.e. one of the core topics of performance studies. This topic can be approached with a concept that Nicholas Cook has elaborated and which consists of the enlightening notion that the idea of 'text' by which traditional musicology is highly governed, is imaginary and to-push this idea further-even lacks any evidence of being an authoritative instance.⁸⁷ Such an approach is enforced by the fact that without 'text' no 'original' exists but only 'interpretative constructs', as Cook puts it, which can only claim the status of a 'script'. Cook convincingly argues that 'thinking of music as "script" rather than "text" implies a reorientation of the relationship between notation and performance'.⁸⁸ Such a reorientation seeks, in my opinion, to leave far behind what Kevin Korsyn has identified as 'privileged contexts' in which a piece of music is qualified as if 'created outside time and then parachuted into history'⁸⁹ and to understand performances in relation to specific temporary and historical performance conditions and its notated script. This shift in perspective also needs to take into account the series of already existing audio-

85 Further information on LARA is provided at <http://www.hslu.ch/lara> (last access October 2nd, 2009). Exemplary applications of LARA are provided, for instance, in Dorothea Baumann, 'Rhythm, Meter, and Time in Stravinsky's Concept of Form', in: *Proceedings of the International Symposium 'Modern Musicology in the World of Science', 29th August to 4th September 2009* (forthcoming), and Oliver Senn, Lorenz Kilchenmann, and Marc-Antoine Camp, 'Expressive Timing – Martha Argerich plays Chopin's Prelude op. 28/4 in E minor', in: Aaron Williamson et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Performance Science 2009*, Utrecht, European Association of Conservatoires AEC, 2009 (forthcoming). I would like to thank all the authors for having provided me with a copy of their papers.

86 Robert Philip, *Early recordings and musical style: changing tastes in instrumental performance, 1900-1950*, Cambridge etc., Cambridge University Press, 1994. See also Gerooge Broock-Nannestad, 'Early use of sound recordings in the analysis of performance practice and in phonetics', in: Ingrid Fuchs (ed.), *Kongressbericht Internationaler Musikwissenschaftlicher Kongress zum Mozartjahr 1991 in Baden-Wien*, Tutzing, Schneider, 1991, 505-514, and Eric F. Clarke, 'Empirical methods in the study of performance', in: Eric F. Clarke and Nicholas Cook (eds.), *Empirical musicology: Aims, methods, and prospects*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2004, 77-102.

87 Nicholas Cook, 'Music as Performance', in: Martin Clayton et al. (eds.), *The Cultural Study of Music: a critical introduction*, New York and London, Routledge, 2003, 204-214.

88 *Ibid.*, 206.

89 Kevin Korsyn, 'Beyond Privileged Contexts: Intertextuality, Influence and Dialogue', in: Nicolas Cook and Marc Everist (eds.), *Rethinking Music*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1999, 55-72, quote 55. See also Kevin Korsyn, *Decentering Music: A Critique of Contemporary Musical Research*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003.

scripts generated by other performances (live performances and/or recordings of performances) by which 'the horizon of expectations' is established in the sense of Hans Robert Jauss' reception theory. Jauss' theory clearly shows that listening to a piece of music never happens without individually and socially coined historic and aesthetic assumptions.⁹⁰ Consequently, Lawrence Rosenwald defines the identity of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony as 'something existing in the relation between notation and the field of its performances'.⁹¹ Generally, the focus on performance clarifies that one can basically listen to the same musical piece twice but not to the same music. This is also true with recordings when aspects of perception are taken into consideration. Charles Burney was already aware of this particular feature regarding live performances, as evidenced by his remarks on the Mannheim Orchestra of 1773.⁹² On this background, Senn, Kilchenmann and Camp convincingly advocate the concept of 'inverse interpretation' that focuses first and foremost on the analysis of the performance itself. The results of this analysis form the basis for conclusions about which aspects of the composition are accentuated by the performance.⁹³ Such a perspective not only takes into account the crucial relationship between performance and noted music, but also recognizes the principle independence of the performance, leaving far behind the traditional notion of performance 'as supplementary to the product that occasions it'.⁹⁴

Generally, the shifts in perspectives caused by concerns of performance studies may remind musicology of Walther Bulst's revealing insight that is, with slightly different wording, applicable to music scholarship, i.e. that 'no music was ever created to be interpreted in a scholarly manner by musicologists'.⁹⁵ Rather music – in most cases – aims for performance that not only often displays a certain resistance to text,⁹⁶ but also challenges musicology to open its barriers against interdisciplinary considerations to successfully maintain 'the music in musicology'.⁹⁷ In

90 Hans Robert Jauss, 'Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft', in: *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation*, Frankfurt/Main, Suhrkamp, 1970, 144-207 (English as 'Literary history as a challenge to literary theory', in: Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti, Minneapolis, Minneapolis University Press, 1982, 3-45).

91 Lawrence Rosenwald, 'Theory, text-setting, and performance', *Journal of Musicology* 11 (1993), 52-65, quote p. 62.

92 Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and United Provinces*, London, T. Becket etc., 1775, vol. 1, 95 (2nd corrected ed.)

93 Oliver Senn, Lorenz Kilchenmann, and Marc-Antoine Camp, op. cit.

94 Nicholas Cook, op. cit., 204.

95 The original quote is 'no text was ever written to be read and interpreted philologically by philologists'. Quoted in Hans Robert Jauss, op. cit., footnote 66.

96 See Charles Bernstein, Introduction to Charles Bernstein (ed.), *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed World*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1998, 3-28, particularly p. 21.

97 Quote from the title of the book chapter by José A. Bowen, 'Finding the Music in Musicology: Performance History and Musical Works', in: Nicolas Cook and Marc Everist (eds.), *Rethinking Music*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1999, 424-451.

this respect, musicology would benefit from insights acquired in theater studies and ethnomusicology, for instance, referring to topics of music as performance.

The world-famous French stage director Ariane Mnouchkine observed, for example, that 'the goal of text analysis is to attempt to explain everything. Whereas the role of the actor (...) is not at all to explicate the text'.⁹⁸ From more recent ethnomusicological viewpoints, on the other hand, Michelle Kisiulik and Jeff Todd Titon have stressed the personal participation in generating musical meaning.⁹⁹ Similar ideas are methodologically relevant within musical performance studies as they not only emphasize the need for more interdisciplinary openness in musicology but also stress that any understanding of music as performance requires serious re-evaluation of traditional paradigms of traditional performance studies. Such studies first and foremost are bound to a conceptual paradigm in which musical performance is considered in the crossfire of issues referring to music as text and *music as interpretation* instead of researching the various relationships created through *music as a performative act*:¹⁰⁰ among performers, among the different performances of the same musical piece, between performance as script (as preserved in specific performances or recordings) and music as script (as preserved in various editions), between performance and listener (researcher), through which a performative act is generated, in which the listener/researcher is 'experiencing and understanding music'.¹⁰¹

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A first analysis of selected recordings shows that the style of the *Quatuor de Flonza-ley* is characterized by a highly transparent and lean sound. This new sound qual-

98 Quoted in Susan Melrose, *A semiotics of the dramatic text*, London, Macmillan, 1994, 225.

99 Michelle Kisiulik, *Seize the dance! BaAka musical life and the ethnography of performance*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1998, and Jeff Todd Titon, 'Knowing fieldwork', in: Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley (eds.), *Shadows in the field: New perspectives for fieldwork in ethnomusicology*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, 87-100.

100 See for instance Hermann Danuser (Ed), *Musikalische Interpretation (Neues Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft*, vol. 11), Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1992, and Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, *Musikalische Interpretation: Hans von Bülow (Beiheft zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, vol. 46), Stuttgart, Steiner, 1999, and Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, 'Furtwängler und Schumann. Überlegungen zum Gegenstand der Interpretationsforschung', in: Andreas Ballstaedt and Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen (eds.), *Werk-Welten. Perspektiven der Interpretationsgeschichte, Schliengen*, Edition Argus, 2008, 44-71.

101 Such a concept of musical performance analysis owes much to the writing of Nicholas Cook and his interdisciplinary approach to questions concerning the analysis of performances and his tolerance for pluralism and ambiguity. In addition to the already quoted essay by Cook see also Nicholas Cook, *Music, imagination and culture*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1999, 'Analysing Performance and Performance Analysis', in: Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (eds.), *Rethinking Music*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1999, 239-261, and 'Stravinsky conducts Stravinsky', in: Martin Clayton et al. (eds.), *Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky*, London: Routledge, 2003, 176-191.

ity can be explained by another significant feature of the quartet's style, i.e. a judicious use of vibrato and the reduction of portamento playing, particularly with respect to the expressive portamento. The reduction of portamento playing in these recordings corresponds with the general skepticism towards it, in the course of the twentieth century that eventually resulted in the expansion of a method of shift of position by stretching and contracting the hand.¹⁰²

It is noteworthy that both vibrato and portamento playing, including glissandi, were employed by the Flonzaley Quartet as ornaments with structural functions, thereby following a tradition of nineteenth century performance practice.¹⁰³ Leopold Auer, a former student of Joseph Joachim and later a famous violinist, violin teacher and conductor, once stated that portamento playing 'whether produced on the same or different string, is, when used in moderation and with good taste, one of the great violin effects, which lends animation and expression to singing phrases. But the *portamento* becomes objectionable and inartistic (...) when it is executed in a languishing manner, and used continually'.¹⁰⁴

The vibrato, on the other hand, was a melodic ornament to call attention to structurally important and stressed pitches. It was – similar to the portamento – used very rarely. Joseph Joachim explicitly opposed a too consistent use of vibrato and approved it only when 'indicated by the inner necessity of expression'.¹⁰⁵ Joachim clearly favored the use of vibrato in an ornamental manner and dismissed the modern practice of constant vibrato as it was introduced by Fritz Kreisler according to Carl Flesch.¹⁰⁶ A unique audio-example of these principles is Joachim's very late recording of two of his arrangements of Brahms *Hungarian Dances*.¹⁰⁷ Generally, portamento and vibrato were ornaments 'in nineteenth-century playing used to accentuate certain pitches, to give shape to a melodic passage, or to call attention to a particular cantabile style. In all cases, the performer was called

102 Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, 2 vols., trans. Eric Rosenblith, New York, C. Fischer, 1924, vol. 1, 13-19, 32, passim (original German ed. as *Die Kunst des Violinspiels*, Berlin, Ries & Euler, 1923).

103 Jon W. Finson, 'Performing Practice in the Late Nineteenth Century, with Special Reference to the Music of Brahms', *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 70, no. 4 (1984), 457-475.

104 Leopold Auer, *Violin Playing as I Teach It*, New York, Frederick A. Stokes, 1921, 63 (italics in the original). Auer left his position as violin teacher at St. Petersburg Conservatory of Music because of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and moved to the United States where he became a renowned violin teacher first at Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and later at the Institute of Musical Art in New York City (today Juilliard School of Music). He also published the manual for violin playing *Graded Course of Violin Playing* (New York, Boston and Chicago, Carl Fischer, 1926) consisting of eight volumes.

105 Joseph Joachim (and Andreas Moser), *Violinschule/Violin School*, 3 vols. (German with English translations), Berlin, Simrock, 1905, vol. 11, 96.

106 Carl Flesch, op. cit., vol. 1, 40.

107 Recorded for Victor (D 803) in 1903.

upon to use discretion and judgment in the employment of both ornaments 'to differentiate certain notes or passages in a given piece'.¹⁰⁸

The Flonzaley Quartet's recording of Johannes Brahms' Piano Quintet F Minor op. 34 with Harold Bauer at the piano provides an example of portamento and vibrato performance.¹⁰⁹ The following reprint of the first movement of Brahms' quintet from the old *Gesamtausgabe*¹¹⁰ (Ex. 6) includes marks (red arrows) where all the string instruments play vibrato as Jon W. Finson has already outlined.¹¹¹

Another striking example in this respect is the famous *Canzonetta* movement of Felix Mendelssohn's string quartet in E flat Major op. 12 that the quartet added as a bonus to its 1928 recording of Franz Schubert's G Major string quartet D 887 for HMV that consists of four LPs. The interpretation of Mendelssohn's *Canzonetta* impresses with homogeneity of articulation, lean sound and the careful and thoughtful application of both vibrato and portamenti.

These results are enforced by the use of rhythmical concessions, i.e. the application of the so-called *tempo rubato*. In both bar 2 and – even more so – in bar 6 of the opening of Mozart's string quartet D Minor K 421, the first violinist (Adolfo Betti) slightly delays the upward shift, as Lawrence Dreyfus has remarked,¹¹² to intensify and highlight the structural meaning and importance. As Finson pointed out, rubato was in nineteenth and early twentieth century musical performance practices 'a device applied to the motivic and melodic structure of a piece in order to outline that structure for the audience'.¹¹³

The discussion about melodic ornaments needs to be contextualized within considerations of particular physical features of the instrument and the instrument's construction history. As far as stringed instruments at the time of the Flonzaley Quartet are concerned, it is neither the violin's sound box nor the neck that were subjects of intense considerations but rather the strings. Since the eighteenth century and into the first decades of the twentieth century the E, A, and D strings were of pure gut. The G string instead was silver- or copper-wound around a gut core, particularly to lessen mass.¹¹⁴ The introduction of steel-wire strings in early twentieth century that first affected the E string was initially met

108 Jon W. Finson, op. cit., 471.

109 Recorded in Camden in 1925 for HMV (DB 970) and reissued on BIDDULPH LAB 72/3. Many recordings of the Flonzaley Quartet are preserved at the Fonoteca Nazionale Svizzera in Lugano (Switzerland) where Alfred Pochon's sound archive is stored.

110 *Johannes Brahms: Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 8: *Klavier-Quintette und Quartette*. Hans Gál. (ed.), Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel, 1926-27 (Plate J.B. 25).

111 Jon W. Finson, op. cit., 469.

112 Laurence Dreyfus, 'Mozart as *Early Music*: A Romantic Antidote', *Early Music*, vol. 20, no. 2 (1992), 297-309, particularly p. 301.

113 Jon W. Finson, op. cit., 473.

114 Heather K. Scot (Ed.), *Violin Owner's Manual*, San Anselmo (CA), String Letter Pub., 2001, 84, and Anthony Baines, *The Oxford Companion to Musical Instruments*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1992, 322-323.

Example 6: Johannes Brahms, *Piano Quintet F Minor op. 34*, 1st movement

1. Violine *Allegro non troppo* *mf* *riten.* *a tempo*

2. Violine

Violsche

Violoncelli *mf*

Pianoforte *Allegro non troppo* *mf* *riten.* *a tempo*

con forza

con forza

Example 7: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *String Quartet D Minor K 421*, 1st movement

The image displays a musical score for the first movement of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's String Quartet D Minor K 421. The score is arranged in four systems, each corresponding to a different instrument: Violine I, Violine II, Viola, and Violoncello. The tempo is marked 'Allegro moderato'. The key signature is D minor, and the time signature is common time (C). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'sotto voce', 'f', 'p', and 'mf'. The first system shows the initial entry of the instruments, with the Violine I part starting with a melodic line and the other instruments providing harmonic support. The second system continues the development of the themes, with dynamic contrasts between the instruments.

with considerable skepticism. In 1919, David Mannes stated that he ‘can see the artistic retrogression of those who are using the wire E, for when materially things are made easier, spiritually there is a loss’.¹¹⁵ The famous Hungarian violinist and composer Tivadar Nachez argued, in the same direction when he stated, that he ‘cannot use the wire strings that are now in such vogue here. I have to have Italian gut strings. The wire E cuts my fingers, and besides I noticed a perceptible difference in sound quality. Of course wire strings are practical; they do not ‘snap’ on the concert stage’.¹¹⁶ Although the critics of wire strings acknowledged their advantages of being more reliable, less affected by climatic conditions and of guaranteeing a higher degree of purity of intonation than gut strings, they, on the other hand, emphasized the distinctly different quality of sound and higher degree of tone color of gut strings. This may explain why the Flonzaley Quartet insisted on using gut E, A, and D strings. The results of this decision are clearly audible in Flonzaley’s recording of Haydn’s string quartet op. 64 No.5 (*Lark-Quartet*).¹¹⁷

115 Quoted in Frederick H. Martens, *Violin Mastery: Talks with Master Violinist and Teachers*, New York, Frederick A. Stokes Comp., 1919, 158.

116 *Ibid.*, 172.

117 Released on Victrola (74726), recorded in 1921.

It is important to emphasize that different string materials are of huge impact on different playing styles, including the aforementioned melodic and structural ornaments, as Elias Dann pointed out in 1977 with respect to the portamento. 'The well-executed portamento on a pure gut string in a romantic legato melody played in a large hall may have been fairly unobtrusive and entirely in place as it emulated vocal style; a portamento done in the same way on an aluminum-wound string stands out too obviously and may be objectionable'.¹¹⁸ Such a statement is noteworthy, because it reminds us that the analysis of specific stylistic features of string quartet playing should be considered as much in the context of the history of recordings, and of changing musical taste as with respect to the instrument's technical features and its history of construction. And against this, background also contemporary critical statements as quoted in the title and throughout this paper have to be contextualized.

* * *

Generally, all the discussed devices (vibrato, portamento and rubato) require numerous considerations, arguments and coordination among the members of an ensemble. Undoubtedly, the fact that the Flonzaley Quartet basically maintained the same musicians throughout its existence as shown in following list, with replacements in the viola position only, made a significant contribution to the achievement of homogeneity of articulation, intonation and sound.

1 st violin	Adolfo Betti: 1903-1929
2 nd violin	Alfred Pochon: 1903-1929
Viola	Ugo Ara: 1903-1917
	Louis Bailly: 1917-1924
	Félicien D'Archambeau: 1924/25
	Nicola Moldavan: 1925-1929
Violoncello	Iwan D'Archambeau: 1903-1929

This accomplishment was further supported by the fact that three of the founding members of the quartet – Betti, Pochon, and Ara – were pupils at Liège Conservatory of the famous Belgian violinist César Thomson. Himself a student of Henryk Wieniawski and Henri Vieuxtemps and professor of violin not only in Liège but also later at Ithaca College in New York and the Juilliard School, Thomson became an influential and leading force in the further dissemination of the Franco-Belgian violin school founded by Charles Auguste de Bériot in the nineteenth century. Striking evidence of his students' respect can be gleaned from many sources including the vivid passage of Betti's *Leaflets Of My Diary*:

118 Elias Dann, 'The Revolution in the History of Violin: A Twentieth Century Phenomenon', *Journal of The Violin Society of America*, vol. IV, no. 1 (1977/78), 48-56, quote p. 53.

'Although I have listened to him (Thomson) day after day in the class (...); although even there, in the limited scope of this pedagogic task, I had admired beyond words his uncanny knowledge of the violin's problems, his unrivalled mastery of the bow, yet it was only when I heard him in a taxing program of one of the Conservatoire's concerts that I realized the full stature of the performer. Listening to the re-creations of Vieuxtemp's fourth concerto, of Tartini's *Devil Sonata* and of Paganini's *Non più mesta* - I realized that the experience would probably never be duplicated. The virtuosity of the man was outstanding. For once the *Devil Sonata* really sounded devilian (sic!), and the fantasy of Paganini had all the wizardry that the immortal Genoese used to impart to his utterances'.¹¹⁹

Example 8: *Le Quatuor de Flonzaley* (with Louis Bailly) and César Thomson (right), around 1920

Against this background, it is no exaggeration to claim that based on educational background the Flonzaley Quartet was a Franco-Belgian quartet ensemble, when taking also into consideration that its cellist, D'Archambeau, was educated first at Verviers Conservatory and later under the guidance of Edouard Jacobs at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels. In this respect one may accept the statement of a critic that '(the) Flonzaleys must certainly eat of the same loaf, drinking of the same cup'.¹²⁰

Already in the nineteenth century, the Franco-Belgian violin school was associated with a certain affinity of avoiding virtuosity in favor of an amplified trend



119 Adolfo Betti, *Leaflets Of My Diary*, typescript with handwritten corrections, *Fonds musical Alfred Pochon*, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire, Lausanne (Switzerland).

120 Quoted in *The Time Magazine*, 11th March 1929.

towards correctness, elaborated melodic and structural transparency¹²¹ and broad but lucid sound.¹²² With respect to Charles-Auguste de Bériot, a leading figure of the early days of the Franco-Belgian violin school, Eduard Hanslick pointed out that his violin playing was never powerful or forcing means but rather always elegant and dignified.¹²³ In a certain way the Flonzaley Quartet clearly enforced this tendency by making that its 'trade mark', so to speak.

Decisive in this respect was also the intensified study of the musical score itself that became in a certain way mandatory for the Flonzaley Quartet. As already mentioned, extensive rehearsal sessions were part of the quartet's preparation phase. One can hardly overstate this feature, when taking into consideration that such a work ethos was very unusual. In the nineteenth century many string quartet ensembles relied on sight-reading during performances. The French Maurin-Chevillard-Quartet, that was founded in 1852, seems to be one of the first ensembles that introduced extensive rehearsal sessions and elaborated preparation phases.¹²⁴

According to Pochon only such a preparatory stage guaranteed the performative mediation of the composer's intention. The Flonzaley players considered the musical score as deficient because of the shortcomings of the musical semiotic system, as Pochon has pointed out in the remark that 'musical notation still lacks clarity'.¹²⁵ This belief, very widespread at that time, was notably explored by Igor Stravinsky in his *Poétique Musicale* of 1942.¹²⁶ In the sixth lecture Stravinsky pointed out:

'But no matter how scrupulously a piece of music may be notated, no matter how carefully it may be insured against every possible ambiguity through the indications of tempo, shading, phrasing, accentuation, and so on, it always contains hidden elements that defy definition, because verbal dialectic is powerless to

121 *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, no. 43, 25th October 1865, 700.

122 *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung*, no. 30, 24th September 1851, 305.

123 Eduard Hanslick, *Geschichte des Concertwesens in Wien*, Vienna, Braumüller (Reprint, Hildesheim and New York, Olms, 1979, 338).

124 See Antonio Baldassarre, 'Der klarste Träger musikalischer Ideen, der je geschaffen wurde'. *Untersuchungen zur Gattungsgeschichte des Streichquartetts zwischen 1830 und 1870*, PhD dissertation, University of Zurich, 2003, 473-474.

125 'La graphique de la musique manqué encore de la clarté', Alfred Pochon in his 1954 interview for Radio Lausanne, typescript preserved in *Fonds musical Alfred Pochon*, Département de la musique, Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire, Lausanne.

126 Igor Stravinsky, *Poétique Musicale sous forme de six leçons*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1942. Translated in English by Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl in 1947 as *Poetics of music*. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1947. Stravinsky's essay was originally designed as a lecture within the famous cycle of the Charles Eliot Norton Lectures of Harvard University, held in the semester of 1939/40. Today, it is known that the final version of the lectures were written by Roland-Manuel, on the basis of discussions with Pierre Souvtchinsky and Stravinsky. Valérie Dufour, 'La "Poétique musicale" de Stravinsky: Un manuscrit inédit de Souvtchinsky', *Revue de Musicologie* 89 (2003), 373-392.

definite musical dialectic in its totality. The realization of these elements is thus a matter of experience and intuition, in a word, of the person who is called upon to present the music'.¹²⁷

Stravinsky's huge concerns about issues of musical notation eventually prompted him to significantly revise earlier scores.¹²⁸

As far as the Flonzaley Quartet is concerned, the belief in the deficient nature of notation and the musical text resulted in what I prefer to call an 'engaged interpretation', understood as an intentional concretization of the codified layers of a musical composition in which the performers played a leading role. Such an approach not only argues against principles of the emerging and anti-Expressionist aesthetics of New Sobriety at the those days but also more importantly advocates for an active involvement of the musical interpreter in the concretization process of the musical score. The notion of deficiency of the musical codification system was a leading force in the development of the Flonzaley's new string quartet style, that eventually evolved into a new standard in string quartet playing. This development was, in addition, based on the notion that the musical interpretation as a performative act is the result of the interpreter's ability and inner readiness to incorporate and express as well the intended narrative of the music in the concrete performance. Or to state it according to Roman Ingarden's argumentation, to understand the musical script as an intentional entity that *needs* the performative act to materialize itself.¹²⁹ In this respect, the *Quatuor de Flonzaley* favored a performative approach in which, to refer to Clifford Geertz, they act much more as authors than as reporters¹³⁰ – notion that is closely related to Hayden White's cognition that, in a general sense, all representations are formed by specific narratives following particular intentions.¹³¹ Naturally, the same premises apply to musicological writings and the analysis of performances.

127 Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of music*, transl. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1947, 122.

128 Dorothea Baumann, *op. cit.*

129 Roman Ingarden, *Untersuchungen zur Ontologie der Kunst. Musikwerk – Bild – Architektur – Film*, Tübingen, Niemeyer, 1962.

130 Clifford Geertz, *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author*, Stanford (CA), Stanford University Press, 1988.

131 Hayden White, *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Baltimore (MD), The John Hopkins University Press, 1973.

Антонио Балдасаре

„СВИРАЈУ ВИШЕ КАО АНЂЕЛИ НЕГО КАО ЉУДИ“
QUATUOR DE FLONZALEY И САГЛЕДАВАЊЕ ЊИХОВОГ
ИЗВОЂАЧКОГ СТИЛА

САЖЕТАК

Quatuor de Flonzaley, основан 1903. године, сматра се једним од првих професионалних гудачких квартета у модерном смислу речи. Јавни наступи и звучни снимци овог ансамбла били су изузетно успешни и цењени од стране критичара, а његов специфичан извођачки стил постао је пример другим гудачким квартетима с почетка 20. века. У овом раду аутор се бави историјом ансамбла *Quatuor de Flonzaley*, друштвено културним контекстом у коме је квартет деловао, као и анализом његовог специфичног и иновативног извођачког стила.

Кључне речи: *Quatuor de Flonzaley*, студије извођаштва, извођачки стил гудачког квартета, гудачки квартет (ансамбл).