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Nielsen, Hindemith and Schoenberg:
Foundations of the Twentieth-Century Wind Quintet

A DISSERTATION

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By
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Nielsen, Hindemith and Schoenberg: Foundations Of the Twentieth-Century Wind Quintet

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This study focuses on a repertoire that established the twentieth-century wind quintet. This new genre is anchored on three canonic wind quintets written between 1922 and 1924: the Kvintet op. 43 of Carl Nielsen, Paul Hindemith’s Kleine Kammermusik op. 24, no 2, and the Bläserquintett op. 26 by Arnold Schoenberg.

Nielsen’s score for the men in the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, confirmed in reminiscence by Svend Felumb, shows idiosyncratic instrumental and novel performer characterizations, as it expands instrumental range and timbre. His narrative and temporal program, with its anthropomorphic characterizations, opened a new world of rich color and expressive articulation. The Kleine Kammermusik demonstrates Hindemith’s quest for a social and musical democracy with its melodic and textural teamwork. The quintet reveals new instrumental timbres, an expanded emotional range, novel textural combinations, and instrumental virtuosity based on strong motoric movement. Schoenberg’s op. 26 stands as a laboratory for his twelve-tone technique, and as the presentation piece for his new theoretical system. With its formidable technical demands and arduous instrumental interactions, Schoenberg magnified the conventional limits of early twentieth-century technique and facility, anticipating and telegraphing a new instrumental virtuosity for the future.

Correspondence in the Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, between Schoenberg and Alban Berg, Anton Webern, Hindemith, Paul Hagemann, Paul von Klenau,
Alexander von Zemlinsky, Felix Greissle, Rudolf Kolisch, and Hermann Scherchen, reveals little-known connections between the Kvintet, the Kleine Kammermusik, and Op. 26. Letters by Berg to his wife reveal the unexplored connection between Schoenberg’s Op. 26 and Berg’s Chamber Concerto, originally intended as a work for the Copenhagen Wind Quintet. Premieres, performances, and reviews from Danish, German, French, and American newspapers provide historical context and contemporary perceptions. Analysis reveals remarkable and unrecognized commonalities between Nielsen’s and Hindemith’s quintets, with that of Schoenberg’s Op.26. Nielsen, Hindemith, and Schoenberg contributed to defining what is now recognized as one of the most important developments in the history of twentieth-century wind music—the renaissance of the wind quintet—as they raised and ennobled the genre, ensuring its continuation into the twenty-first century.
This dissertation by Karen R. Moses fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Musicology approved by Andrew H. Weaver, Ph.D., as Director, and by Grayson Wagstaff, Ph.D., and Andrew Earle Simpson, D.M. as Readers.

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Ernst Křenek first set me on the path of musicology when he gave a graduate course in 20th century music analysis at the Peabody Conservatory of Music, many years ago. The work he chose to illustrate serial music was Arnold Schoenberg’s op. 26. I was an oboist, and he introduced me to the quintet and to ‘Das Bubi.’ His enthusiasm for Schoenberg’s quintet, not only expanded my repertoire, but most importantly, sparked my interest in musicology. My debt to him for opening these doors is ongoing.
Encouragement should be given to woodwind ensembles,

opined George Bernard Shaw,

especially for the opportunity of “turning mere bandsmen into artists.”
INTRODUCTION

The last decades of the eighteenth century were significant for chamber music. Of the many small chamber music ensembles for winds created during this period only the wind quintet would endure and flourish into the twenty-first century. The earliest known work for five different wind instruments is Anton Rosetti’s *Quintetto in Eb for flûte, hautbois, clarinette, dalie (cor anglais), et basson*, which appeared before 1788. Giovanni Cambini’s *Trois Quintetti Concertans for flûte, hautbois, clarinette, cor et basson* were published in Paris, ca.1802. The twenty-four wind quintets composed by Anton Reicha, beginning in 1810, and the nine written after 1820 by Franz Danzi solidified the nineteenth-century wind genre.

From 1820, the date of Anton Reicha’s final quintet, until 1922, perhaps less than half a dozen quintets were written; the most significant include those by George Onslow, Paul Taffanel, August Klughardt, and Josef Foerster. The quintet sonus, with its combination of wind and brass timbres, could not provide a blended sound similar to the contemporary ideal of a homogeneous sonority and large massed ensembles popular during the latter part of the century. After 1850 the medium retreated into hibernation.

But the sound of the wind quintet found a home in the twentieth century, where the renewed interest in chamber music contributed to making this era the period of its greatest importance. Additional factors that predisposed the development of the wind quintet include the conscious use of smaller ensembles for experimentation with concomitant changes in color, texture, and timbre, resulting in the change to a more heterogeneous musical sonus. While Igor Stravinsky is usually given credit for his early use of wind-heavy compositions beginning with *L’Histoire du soldat* in 1918, the Symphonies of Wind Instruments in 1921, and the Octet for
Winds in 1923, one must also recall Schoenberg’s *Pierrot Lunaire* of 1912.\(^1\) The early twentieth century saw a significant number of small, non-standardized ensembles, scored chiefly or entirely for wind instruments, occasionally with voice. The reaction against large orchestras, the change of size of instrumental forces and performance mediums downward to smaller groups, was a practical measure taken after WWI, a move often forced by availability of instruments and by the capacity for performance and dissemination. The principle of tone selection, previously assigned by composers exploiting a large orchestral medium, now changed to a period of sound specialization, with distinctive, vivid colorful palettes and novel textures. The preoccupation with timbre and color, innovative orchestration styles, and the changes in technical capabilities and mechanical improvements in each of the five instruments contributed further to the reestablishment of the small ensemble. Composers began to look at the wind quintet as a means of expression and recognized the opportunity for experimentation offered by the medium. As the use of color as a determinant in composition became an essential element in music, composers found the timbral diversity of the woodwind quintet to be an ideal medium for the display of new sounds and textures, characteristics unique to the ensemble as an instrumental aggregate. Carl Nielsen, Paul Hindemith, and Arnold Schoenberg understood the versatility of the medium and with the three quintets, written between 1922 and 1924, established the foundation of the twentieth-century wind quintet.

By the year 2000, more quintets had been composed in the United States alone than in Europe in the previous 150 years. Despite this flourishing repertory, there is a noticeable lack of

\(^1\) To go even further to the late nineteenth century one can find precedents in the Serenade for 13 Winds in E-Flat (1881) by Richard Strauss and the Serenade for Winds, op. 44, written by Antonín Dvořák in 1878, and Charles Gounod’s *Petite Symphonie* in B-flat for nine winds, written in 1885.
reference material and limited musicological research on this genre: research on history, aesthetics, style, and reception is at best minimal. There are no wider studies of the twentieth-century wind quintet, the conditions that influenced its growth, or the repertoire. Despite its enduring popularity in many performance circles, the wind quintet has received little attention in the scholarly community. The twentieth-century wind quintet remains to be explored by scholars.

History and analysis of the quintet genre from its beginnings in ca.1780 until 1850 is covered by the wind scholar Udo Sirker, in his publication Die Entwicklung des Bläserquintetts in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse, 1968). A monograph variant of the same information is provided by Miroslav Hošek in Das Bläserquintett (Grünwald: B. Brüchle, 1979). Albrecht Gürshing, writing in Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1994) offers two columns of information on the Bläserquintett located under “Bläserkammermusik.” This information is centered on the quintet before 1850, with some attention devoted to works written in the twentieth century. The fifth edition of The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (London: MacMillan, 1980) has no wind quintet article; Wolfgang Suppan’s article on the wind quintet in Grove Music Online (London: Oxford University Press, 1999- ) devotes one paragraph to the genre. Many lexica mention the quintet only as a possible type of ensemble; Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music (London: Oxford University Press, 1929-30) devotes only a few lines to the wind quintet, whereas the reprinted Reclams Kammermusikführer (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1980) has almost nothing for one interested in wind quintets. A short article in the Revue musicale de Suisse romande (1971) devotes two pages to the American wind quintet.² Various dissertations both European and

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American scholars add little important information on the wind quintet and for the most part simply restate what others have said.

This study focuses on an early twentieth-century repertory anchored on three canonic wind quintets: the *Kvintet* of Carl Nielsen, Paul Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik*, and the op. 26 of Arnold Schoenberg. The historical analysis begins with an examination of the compositional background of the three compositions. The reminiscence of Svend Christian Felumb, oboist in the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, affirms the genesis of Nielsen’s *Kvintet* with a unique first–person narrative. Felumb’s description of Nielsen’s response to a quintet reading of music believed to be a Mozart *sinfonia concertante* provides an explanation for the idiosyncratic and novel characterizations used in the quintet. The manner in which Nielsen chose to portray the performers and their instruments resulted in expansion of instrumental range and timbre. Original correspondence held in the Arnold Schoenberg Collection at the Library of Congress was consulted, including letters to and from Alban Berg, Anton Webern, Paul Hindemith, Paul Hagemann, Paul Klenau, Marya Freund, Emil Hertzka, Alexander Zemlinsky, Felix Greissle, Rudolf Kolisch, and Hermann Scherchen. A study of these letters demonstrates little-known connections between the *Kvintet*, the *Kleine Kammermusik*, and the op. 26, written a year later. Further, these letters and archival materials reveal the previously unrecognized circumstances germane to the composition of Schoenberg’s op. 26 and provide evidence of the influences that

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4In my research I determined that the group was rehearsing for a performance of the W. A. Mozart *Sinfonia concertante*, K 279b. They were reading a piano reduction with four solo winds, an arrangement made by Ludwig Stark for Breitkopf & Härtel, 1890. The work is no longer considered to be a work of Mozart. See Ahnang C 14.01, p 866. *Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnissämtlicher Tonwerke Wolfgang Amadé Mozarts*. Ludwig Ritter von Köchel (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1983). A discussion of this is found in Appendix II.
shaped his thinking throughout the period of composition. Letters between Paul Hindemith and Emma Lübbecke-Job, full of descriptions of his musical activities, reveals social, political, and personal aspects of Hindemith’s life. Later, letters between Hindemith, Lübbecke-Job, and Elizabeth Coolidge, held in the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Collection of the Library of Congress, reveals circumstances of his tenure in the United States, with aspects of quintet performances given there. Autobiographical and biographical sources were consulted which document the interpersonal relationships among Nielsen, Hindemith, and Schoenberg, and show the alliances and respect that Schoenberg and Hindemith had for each other. Hindemith strongly promoted Schoenberg’s music at festivals of contemporary music. Letters between Alban Berg and his wife show the unexplored connection between Schoenberg’s op. 26 and Berg’s Chamber Concerto, originally intended as a wind quintet for the Copenhagen Wind Quintet. Reviews of premieres and performances from Danish, German, French, and American newspapers were investigated for historical context and for insights into contemporary perceptions and reactions. These accounts reflect the reaction to the modern quintets with their respective energetic and often passionate reviews of the premieres.

Published articles, commentary, and performance notes on the composition and reception of each work were considered for their importance to the contemporary perspective. Although analyses have been published (Parks, Scheideler, Butz, Caron, and Wise), original manuscript sketches and scores of each quintet were examined for instrumental, textural, and stylistic features, information neglected in the literature. A comparison of the three scores reveals remarkable commonalities between the Nielsen and Hindemith quintet with that of Schoenberg’s op.26, musical connections that have previously been unrecognized.
A prolegomena begins this study with a discussion of the contemporary music festivals so important to the dissemination of modern music in the early twentieth century. The varied jurisdictions of the International Society for Contemporary Music provided not only stimulation for new compositions, but also venues for the performance and premiere of contemporary chamber music throughout Europe and the United States. Chapter One examines Nielsen’s Kvintet, op. 43 (1922), as he experimented using the medium as an anthropomorphic and instrumental narrative. Felumb’s account provides insight and highlights the extra-musical meanings behind Nielsen’s innovative scoring, expansion of the coloristic range, and his use of new instrumental timbres and techniques. Chapter Two considers Hindemith’s Kleine Kammermusik, op. 24, no. 2 (1922) as an early example of his attempt to bridge the schism between composer, performer, and public. Here we find the social, political, and cultural context underneath his exploration for an expanded and democratic use of instrumental textures. With its mechanical energy Hindemith’s Kleine Kammermusik explores virtuosic instrumental techniques, exhibiting innovative tonal possibilities. Chapter Three is a discussion of Schoenberg’s Bläserquintett, op. 26 of 1923-1924, and his use of the wind quintet texture to strengthen his polyphonic capacity and to delineate the tone rows in his first large-scale 12-tone composition. A virtuosic work with formidable rhythmic complexity, it magnified the conventional limits of early twentieth-century technique and set the standards for subsequent twentieth-century wind techniques. Through consideration of the similarities of and differences between the three works, this study traces how the early twentieth-century wind quintet was used as a medium for the creation of new sonorities, textures, and timbres and how it stood as a vehicle for progressive ideas. A final chapter summarizes the importance of the early twentieth-century wind quintet. The influences and contributions of the new wind quintet genre to the chamber music community
are essential and considerable. With a broad, highly valued and diverse repertoire, led by the examples of Nielsen, Hindemith and Schoenberg, the wind quintet found new animation and acceptance as a necessary and vibrant component of the twenty-century chamber music community. The woodwind sonority, with its rich spectrum of color, became one of the great chamber music sounds of the modern era.
After World War I, many European countries developed an international music establishment with independent associations and concert institutions. Copenhagen was a leading center of such international modernism in the early twentieth century, behind the more prominent musical cities of Vienna, Salzburg, and Berlin. Copenhagen had numerous associations, all founded between 1918 and 1922, that presented contemporary music from Denmark and central Europe. Among the most important of these were the Solistforeningen, Foreningen Ny Musik (FNM), and Dansk Filharmonisk Selskab.\(^1\)

The foremost Danish advocates for the promotion and advancement of international music were Paul (August) von Klenau (1883–1946) and the oboist Svend Christian Felumb (1898–1972).\(^2\) Klenau founded the Dansk Filharmonisk Selskab, an organization that presented

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2 In 1904 Klenau left Denmark for Berlin, where he studied violin with Max Bruch at the Berlin Hochschule für Musik (1902-4) and composition with Ludwig Thuille (1861–1907). Klenau began his conducting career at the Freiburg Opera during the season of 1907-8. From 1920 until 1926 he conducted the Vienna *Konzerthaussgesellschaft* concurrently with the Dansk Filharmonisk Selskab. Klenau was a close friend of Alban Berg, and a member of Schoenberg’s inner circle of friends and acquaintances. According to Joseph Auner, Klenau studied with Schoenberg for a short time in Vienna after the war ended. See Joseph Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 382, fn 35.

Felumb studied composition with Paul Antonin Vidal (1863–1931) and oboe with Louis Bleuzet (1874–1941) at the Paris Conservatory. Vidal was a French conductor, teacher, and composer who instilled a love of contemporary music in Felumb. Most important, however, was Felumb’s study with Bleuzet, who succeeded the renowned
contemporary vocal and orchestral music in Denmark. A strong advocate of the music of Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951), Klenau frequently programmed Schoenberg’s music in Copenhagen. Felumb was an excellent oboist, and later in life a respected conductor; in 1919, while still a student at the Paris Conservatory, he accepted a position with the Danish Royal Chapel Orchestra. He was an integral player in the advancement and promotion of new music in Copenhagen. In 1921 he founded the Foreningen Ny Musik, which became the Danish section of the International Society of New Music and the venue for most contemporary chamber music activities in the city. Being an integral part of the ISCM was important to the identity of the Foreningen Ny Musik and gave it a status beyond what it would have had as a purely local concert society; the Foreningen Ny Musik regularly received scores from Universal Edition in Vienna. As secretary of the Danish section of the ISCM in Copenhagen, Felumb travelled frequently, visiting various European cities to promote and arrange the performance of new music. Felumb was invited to become a member of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, and his reminiscence of an evening rehearsal attended by Carl Nielsen describes the genesis of Nielsen’s *Kvintet*, op. 43.³

Most new music presented by one of these two organizations—Klenau’s Dansk Filharmonisk Selskab and Felumb’s Foreningen Ny Musik—aimed specifically to place Copenhagen at the

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center of the international exchange of contemporary music. Felumb describes attitudes in Copenhagen: “The expectations of the public and the press were specific that in this society they would hear ‘new music’—whatever that might be—and new music only.” That created an atmosphere of curiosity and openness, since the public was aware that this was a new society aimed at creating “a home for all the new currents, foreign as well as our own.”

Copenhagen was only one of a number of European cities in which organizations for contemporary music were established the early 1920s. One of the earliest to devote itself exclusively to contemporary music was the chamber music festival founded in 1921 in the Black Forest town of Donaueschingen. Paul Hindemith (1895–1963) was involved in the festival as a performer and composer, and later as its director of repertoire. In this capacity, he programmed the music of Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern. His String Quartet op. 16 (1921) was premièred there in a 1922 performance that initiated his worldwide reputation. The prestigious festival laid the foundation for music festival cultures in general—special festivals presented by and for professionals, and in some cases, specifically for chamber music. New music introduced at this festival had an important impact on the development of contemporary music in Europe.

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\[4\] Svend Felumb, excerpt from speech at the inaugural meeting of the Society “Ny Musik,” 4 May 1921, Archives of Foreningen Ny Musik, Musikhistorisk Museum, Copenhagen. Quoted in Michael Fjeldsøe, “Different Images: A Case Study on Bartók Reception in Denmark,” *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 47, nos. 3–4 (September 2006): 456. Felumb became enmeshed in the controversy over whether the organization would become international. There had been dissatisfaction following the summer 1921 Salzburg performances of the ISCM. His concern, and that of others, involved whether the society should strive to be judiciously international and represent all new music. Music from Germany, Austria, France, and Italy was performed in Salzburg—no Eastern European or American music was given. Felumb wrote about this concern in “To Clear Up The Salzburg Problem,” in the first edition of *The League of Composers’ Review* 1, no. 1 (February 1924): 24–25.

\[5\] The Donaueschingen Festival and Hindemith’s reception there are more fully discussed in Chapter 2.

\[6\] The actual name of this festival was Donaueschingen Internationale Kammermusikaufführungen zur Förderung Zeitgenössischer Tonkunst (Chamber Music Performances for the Advancement of Contemporary Music). This festival was later known as the Donaueschingen Festival of Contemporary Music or simply the Donaueschingen Musik-Tage.
festival included the Piano Sonata op. 1 by Alban Berg (1921) the String Quartet op. 4 by Lois Hába (1921), the Serenade for Clarinet, Violin, Viola, and Cello by Ernst Krenek (1921), Die junge Magd by Hindemith (1922), and Arnold Schoenberg’s Serenade op. 24(1924).7

In Vienna, the Verein für Musikalische Privataufführungen (Society for Private Music Performances) was formed in 1918 under the aegis of Alexander von Zemlinsky (1871–1942). Having a membership largely formed of professional musicians and composers, and with Arnold Schoenberg as its honorary president, the society operated with the specific intention of making “carefully rehearsed and comprehensible performances of modern music,”8 without the prejudicial influence of publicity or post-performance caviling. New works, including those by Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) and Richard Strauss (1864–1949), were commonly heard. Many works were performed twice in one concert, and venues frequently displayed a sign on the door, Kritikernist der Eintritt verboten. After an intense series of rehearsals—usually two to twenty rehearsals for each concert were prepared by a Vortragsmeister—Schoenberg usually took over, listening, making comments, and sometimes conducting. The performers were members of Schoenberg’s own circle, including some of the most gifted musicians. The society presented chamber music arrangements, usually one or two pianos or winds, made by Schoenberg and his students of the following new music: Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), Petrushka and Berceuses du chat (1920); Claude Debussy, Nocturnes for Orchestra (1919) in an arrangement by Maurice Ravel; Anton Webern, Passacaglia für Orchestra, op. 1(1919); Gustav Mahler (1919),

Symphony no. 6 in an arrangement for piano four hands by Alexander Zemlinsky; Richard Strauss, *Don Quixote*, op. 35 (1919); and Alban Berg, *Vier Klarinettenstücke*, op. 5 (1919). Later, Schoenberg eventually permitted performance of his own works, including *Pierrot lunaire* op. 21 (1921), and the *Kammersymphonie*, op. 9 (1921). Applause and expressions of displeasure were forbidden, the didactic aim of the presentation being that the audience had to consider the music being performed without the prejudice of public evaluation. In many cases, music was performed without the audience knowing the identity of the composer, assuring equal attendance at each concert.⁹

In Los Angeles, Henry Cowell (1897–1965) formed the New Music Society in 1925, and in New York, Edgar Varèse (1883–1965) and Carlos Salzédo (1885–1961), both French composers, established the International Composers Guild in 1921. Initially unpopular because of being restricted to performances of yet unknown music, the latter association was recognized for its premieres of Varèse’s *Offrandes* in 1922, *Hyperprism* in 1923, and *Octandre* in 1924. In 1923, the League of Composers was established by discontented members of the International Composers Guild, in part to promote the composition of new music. More important, this new organization permitted performances of any existing new music, in contradistinction to the International Composers Guild. In the winter of 1923, Felumb travelled to New York to champion the cause of “internationalism” and to stress the necessity for American and western European music to be included in performances promoted by the ISCM.¹⁰

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¹⁰ The United States did not join the ISCM until 1954. In that year the League of Composers became the US chapter of the International Society of Contemporary Music and has since been known as the League of Composers/ISCM.
The musical association with the most significance and far-reaching impact was a series of concerts of modern chamber music held as part of the Salzburg Music Festival. Held 7–11 August 1922, it was acknowledged as the most prestigious festival of new music. Here presented were performances of Schoenberg’s String Quartet no. 2 in F-sharp minor, op. 10,11 Carl Nielsen’s Sonata for Violin and Piano (probably Sonata no. 2, op. 35, 1912, FS 64); Anton Webern’s Four Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5; Ernest Bloch’s Schelomo, arranged for cello and piano; Paul Hindemith’s String Quartet no. 3, op. 22; and Stravinsky’s Piano-Rag-Music.12 In the course of the same year, the astounding assortment of performances at the Salzburg Festival led to the founding of the International Society for Contemporary Music. Initially restricted to performances of chamber music, the ISCM later held separate festivals for chamber and orchestral music.

These modern music festivals provided a forum for the creation and dissemination of chamber music, and generally aimed to promote and support young, promising artists and composers, and to air modernist styles and new methods and forms of expression. They stimulated the creation of small performing ensembles, encouraged and expanded chamber music groups’ instrumentation, and provided a model for later collective organizations founded for the purpose of fostering new music. Smaller groups devoted to contemporary music were engaged to perform for the ISCM. Included were George Barrère’s varied performance ensembles as well as

11 Played by Hindemith and the Amar Quartet, with the final movement sung by Felicie Hüni-Mihacsek, a Viennese soprano.

12 The premiere of L’Histoire du soldat, en trio had been scheduled for the opening Festival of the ISCM in Salzburg, but the work was withdrawn for lack of rehearsal time and money, leaving Stravinsky basically unrepresented, although one Jean Wiéner played the brief Piano Rag Music “with enormous success.” See Stephen Walsh, A Creative Spring (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 362. See Chapter 2, fn56 for more information on this performance.
the Rebner Quartet, the Amar-Hindemith Quartet, the Havemann Quartet, the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, and the Société moderne d’ instruments à vent, directed by the flutist Louis Fleury.\footnote{Louis Fleury (1878–1926) was a French flutist who studied at the Paris Conservatory with Paul Taffanel. In 1902 he joined the Société moderne des instruments à vent, succeeding Georges Barrère as director in 1905. Fleury was an acquaintance of Arnold Schoenberg and requested a copy of Schoenberg’s new quintet for his own group shortly after the premiere. Fleury was among the most important interpreters at the festival in Salzburg, 7–11 August 1922, appearing as a soloist, and as director of the Société moderne d’instruments à vent. See Anton Haefeli, Die Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik (IGNM) (Zürich: Atlantis Musikbuch-Verlag, 1982), 480.}
The latter two groups were among the rare wind ensembles invited to perform. Music written and performed for winds in this milieu was in part responsible for the revival of wind chamber music and for the wind quintet in particular.

The ISCM outlined its purpose as being a means of “breaking down national barriers and personal interests, and publicizing and promoting contemporary music ‘regardless of aesthetic trends or the nationality, race, religion or political views of the composer.’”\footnote{Anton Haefeli and Reinhard Oehlschlägel, “International Society for Contemporary Music,” Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online (Oxford University Press) http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxycu.wrlc.org/subscriber/article/grove/music/13859 (accessed 22 June 2011).} These aims were to be pursued through annual music festivals in different countries. Nearly every European country had an autonomous national section within the ISCM. A festival was held once each year in a different country of Europe, and an international jury selected the programs of new music. There was no consensus among the varied festivals whether the music was “modern,” “contemporary,” or “new,” an issue reflected in the titles given to the organizations: Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik (IGNM) for the German section, the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) for the English and American sections, and the French Société international pour la musique contemporaine (SIMC). Many of the various festivals of contemporary music became institutionalized under the aegis of the ISCM, which quickly became the leading forum for
presenting contemporary music throughout western Europe and in the United States. By 1923, the channels of contemporary music included an international network of music societies, festivals, concerts, publishers, and journals, such as the *Musikblätter des Anbruch* in Vienna, (1919), *Music & Letters* in London (1920), *Melos* in Berlin (1920), the *New Music Quarterly* in Los Angeles, and the *League of Composers Review* in New York. For both American and European composers, the varied music collectives served as an intellectually charged field for compositional experimentation, and for many musicians it became a challenging and rewarding means of music making. For the wind quintets of Carl Nielsen, Paul Hindemith, and Arnold Schoenberg, the contemporary music festivals served as a means for premieres, display, and dissemination that opened up a new world for the wind quintet. The *Foreningen Ny Musik*, the Danish section of the International Society of New Music in Copenhagen under which Nielsen’s *Kvintet*, op. 43 was premièred, and the New Music Week in Berlin, for the German premiere of Carl Nielsen’s *Kvintet op. 43*, on the same program as the Berlin premiere of Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik* were of particular import. Schoenberg’s wind quintet was premiered at the *Musik- und Theaterfest der Stadt Wien* during the composer’s 50th birthday celebration, and soon after given a first performance in the United States in 1926 by the League of Composers in New York, and reprised a year later by Henry Cowell’s New Music Society in Los Angeles. Cowell later presented a concert that included Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik*. The “Evenings on the Roof” chamber music series offered performances of Schoenberg’s quintet and Hindemith’s *Kleine*

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15 *Melos* was founded by Hermann Scherchen, who served as the first editor. Henry Cowell used *Melos* as a model for the *New Music Quarterly*. Any activity by the ISCM was usually reviewed in *Melos*. For more information on Scherchen, see Chapter II, fn14.
Kammermusik, bolstered by early recordings made by the Los Angeles Wind Quintet. Within the musical community of contemporary chamber music festivals, the wind quintet became a vibrant and robust medium: a model for the twentieth century with a design for the twenty-first.
CHAPTER 1

Carl Nielsen and the Copenhagen Wind Quintet

Carl Nielsen (1865–1931), the first Danish composer to gain international recognition, was a resident of Copenhagen most of his life. A dominant figure in Danish music as composer and conductor, Nielsen was surrounded by the internationalism of a city regularly filled with concerts of new music. His compositions were popular in Denmark, and he frequently conducted his own music and that of other composers in his tours throughout Europe. Nielsen’s considerable and stylistically complex œuvre ranged in style from romanticism to neoclassicism; his later years were marked by the use of extensive tonal progressivism. His keen interest in exploring the subtle timbre of a given instrument and his concern for specific instrumental sound qualities can be seen in the scoring of some of his major orchestral works, wherein solo instruments take on conflicting and occasionally anthropomorphic roles. Well-known examples include the disquieting tympani solos in the Symphony no. 4, subtitled “Detuudslukkelige” (“The Inextinguishable”), op. 29 (1914–16), and the bass trombone and solo flute in the Concerto for Flute (1926). The Symphony no. 5, op. 50 (1922–23), with its obtrusive drum and clarinet solos, is now considered his masterpiece. While Nielsen composed in almost every form, his six symphonies are credited with the early twentieth-century renewal of that genre. These symphonies, with his chamber music and the concertos for violin, flute, and clarinet, are part of the international repertoire. During his final years, and at the height of his

\[1 \text{ Nielsen’s alternate title for the symphony, “The Inextinguishable,” is closely allied with his personal motto: “Music is Life, and, like it, Inextinguishable.”}\]

\[2 \text{ The dramatic instrumental oppositions and interruptions can be directly seen in Variation V, the clarinet and bassoon variation, below.}\]
powers, Nielsen focused his desire for experimentation on new forms, tonal relationships, and the sonic expressions produced by varied instrumental timbres. A product of this period, the *Kvintet*, op. 43, is one of the most widely performed examples of its medium and a work that helped sustain Nielsen’s reputation throughout the much of the twentieth century.

In addition to the favored music of Carl Nielsen, works by Paul Hindemith, Arnold Schoenberg, and Béla Bartók (1881–1945) were heard in Denmark. These composers had established contacts in Copenhagen through their association with the ISCM. Hindemith and Schoenberg became honored visitors to the city. Béla Bartók did not visit Copenhagen until 1927, but he had frequent performances of his music in Copenhagen.³

On 9 November 1921, Paul Klenau produced a “Schoenberg Evening” under the auspices of the Dansk Filharmonisk Selskab, at which both *Verklärte Nacht* and *Pierrot lunaire* were presented. *Verklärte Nacht* was performed by an augmented version of the Breuning-Bache Quartet, then the foremost Danish string quartet.⁴ Performing *Pierrot lunaire* were members of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet: Christian Christiansen, piano; Paul Hagemann, flute and piccolo; and Aage Oxenvad (1884–1944), clarinet and bass clarinet. Always a Schoenberg advocate, Klenau gave a short lecture before the performance of *Pierrot*, comparing the new atonal work with the older *Verklärte Nacht* in D minor. He wanted to convince the Danish public that Schoenberg was a significant and innovative composer, and in this he succeeded. *Pierrot*, a

³ Carl Nielsen’s daughter Anne Marie married the Hungarian violinist Emil Telmányi in 1918. A year later Telmányi conducted Bartók’s First Suite for Orchestra, only the second time his music had been performed in Copenhagen. Until the later 1920s, other than occasional performances in Budapest and Vienna, Bartók’s music was performed more frequently in Copenhagen than elsewhere in Western Europe.

⁴ *Verklärte Nacht* was a favorite of the Danes; it was frequently performed by the Danish Breuning-Bache String Quartet in Copenhagen. The group had Nielsen’s quartets in their repertoire, and they frequently performed both *Verklärte Nacht* and Nielsen’s four string quartets throughout Scandinavia and Europe.
Copenhagen premiere, was “a sensation.” In the Danish newspaper *Politiken* of 11 November 1921, the noted Danish critic Hugo Seligmann, known for his dislike of Schoenberg’s music, wrote that “in this instance Schoenberg created poetry.” This general approval of Schoenberg’s music in Copenhagen led to a visit by the composer to conduct a concert of his own music, and more importantly, to a profitable connection with the Danish publisher Wilhelm Hansen.

**The Old Wind Players—Carl Nielsen, and Mozart**

Seeking musical diversion one evening in the spring of 1921, Nielsen telephoned his friend, the pianist Christian Christiansen. Christiansen was rehearsing with members of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, and hearing wind music in the background, Nielsen inquired about the composer. “Det var Mozart,” Christiansen replied. Nielsen, who knew the members of the quintet and loved Mozart’s music, asked to attend the rehearsal. In addition to the young oboist Svend Felumb, a recent addition to the quintet, the members were Aage Oxenvad (1884–1944), clarinet; Knud Lassen (1854–1938), bassoon; Hans Sørensen (1893–1944), French horn; and

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7 Felumb 1958, 36. For many years it was believed that the work that the Copenhagen Quintet and Christiansen rehearsed that night was the Mozart Quintet for Piano and Winds, K. 452. However, it now appears that they were playing a piano and wind edition of the Mozart Sinfonia Concertante, K. 279b. While a discussion of the work being rehearsed that night lies outside the field of this enquiry, a discussion of the Sinfonia Concertante is included in Appendix II.

8 Nielsen intended to write a concerto for each member of the Copenhagen quintet, but he only finished two, the Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, op. 57 (1928), written for Oxenvad. The Concerto for Flute was written 1926, not for Hagemann but for Holger Gilbert Jesperson, who replaced Hagemann in the quintet. Oxenvad was the clarinetist and Stravinsky the pianist when the composer brought his new trio version of *L’histoire du soldat* to Copenhagen for its Scandinavian premiere, noted *supra.*
Paul Hagemann (1882–1967), flute. Hagemann was a Danish nobleman and merchant from Copenhagen who owned the Fr. & Ed. Gotschalk Banking Company. He was an accomplished flute player, even “one of the more distinguished flute dilettantes of Europe,” but more damning perhaps, a “World War I profiteer.” His insistent personal requests and letters to Arnold Schoenberg to compose a work for flute or a work for the Copenhagen Wind Quintet would engender the composition of the composer’s Wind Quintet, op. 26. With the exception of Hagemann, the musicians were all members of the Danish Royal Chapel Orchestra. Svend Felumb’s iconic reminiscence “De gamlebläsere—og Carl Nielsen” [The Old Winds—And Nielsen”] recounts how that evening’s rehearsal became the catalyst for the composition of Nielsen’s wind quintet:


10 This letter from Hagemann to Schoenberg is in Chapter Three. Hagemann’s requests for a composition from Schoenberg, Hindemith, and other composers were not unusual, as he frequently cajoled composers to write a work for him. He was affluent, privileged, and possessed of a well-grounded sense of entitlement. At Hagemann’s behest, Hindemith wrote two works for him, the Kanonische Sonatina for 2 Flutes, op. 31, no. 1, and the Stücke für Flöte allein 1927 (published in 1958 as Acht Stücke für Flöte allein). Henri Marteau (1879–1934) wrote the Divertimento für Flöte und Violine, op. 43, no. 1 (1930) and the Partita für Flöte et Alto, op. 42, no. 2 (1930). Other compositions written for or dedicated to Hagemann include: Eric Schmidt, Trio, for flute, violin and piano; Paul Von Klenau, Sonatine für Violine und Viola, 1941, and the Suite für Flöte, Violine und Klarinette of 1944. Joseph Lauber wrote ten works for Hagemann, including the Four Dances Médiévales, op. 45 (1928), Trois morceaux caractéristiques, op. 47; Prelude and Fugue à deux voix, op. 49, Partita, op. 51, and six additional works. The composer Johann Nepomuk David (1895–1977) wrote the Sonata für Flöte und Viola, op. 32, no. 1 (1943?) and the Trio für Flöte, Violine und Cello, op. 73 (1974?). Kurt Streigler (1886–1958) wrote a sonata for flute for Hagemann in 1923, mentioned in Hagemann’s letter of 1 March 1923 to Schoenberg. Emmanuel Rhené-Baton wrote compositions for Hagemann including a Passacaille, op. 35, for flûte and piano (1925) and the Aubade, op. 53, flûte, hautbois, deux clarinettes, deux bassons, et cor (1940). Finally, according to Lorenzo, there is “a work by Stravinsky,” for Hagemann (Lorenzo, Addenda no. 2: B3, 1). I have not been able to determine the identity of that work.

11 Because Felumb’s remarks are extensive, only relevant sections are presented here. His account of an evening rehearsal with Carl Nielsen attending probably conflates several events which Nielsen attended and chatted with the members of the quintet, all of whom he considered friends. But Felumb’s account, given some thirty years after the fact, provides an unparalleled and in-depth view into the background of the composition. His description of the personalities allows an understanding of the idiosyncrasies, the novel characterizations, and new instrumental applications Nielsen chose to portray through the performers and their instruments. The full account is presented in Appendix I.
Coming home on a break from my studies in Paris in the early spring of 1921, I felt as if I should put to use all my knowledge here at home as my teacher was the world famous Louis Bleuzet. . . . It does not happen so often that a yesterday’s dream comes true the next day and you find yourself among the people you have had the strongest desire to be with. But it happened to me. Only a few days after my return to Denmark the phone rang and that was Aage Oxenvad, who asked if I would like to come and play with him and his friends in “Den gamle Kammermusikforening” (The Old Chamber Music Association). It was the beginning of one of the happiest periods of my life as a musician. . . . [Nielsen] knew us all individually and also as a group, especially in connection with Mozart. That is no secret that he loved Mozart and you do not have to leaf through his scores for long to discover his intimate knowledge of each wind instrument’s specific character and mode of expression. We played Mozart’s Koncertantes Quartet (sic), where the final movement is an incomparable series of variations. He became immensely happy. We drank some tea (or was it beer?). He talked and talked about Mozart, wind players etc. But then he suddenly became quiet. So he gave us all a kind look and promised to compose a wind quintet if we promised to perform it. He confided to us, that he was very captivated by the way we played our instruments. He referred to the combination of our different personalities and the characteristics of our instruments. He said that the quintet would contain variations, where he would do his best to reflect every personality. The result of his efforts showed that he meant what he said. . . . And, then a few words about the variations. Carl Nielsen had an idea for each variation, based as much on us musicians as on the instruments we played.12

Composing a Kvintet for my Friends:
“I have been very preoccupied with a large, new, difficult composition”
Carl Nielsen

The rehearsal ended with Nielsen’s assurance for a quintet and a concerto for each instrument, but the work that would become his most important chamber music would have to wait. He would not begin the quintet until the following winter after completing his Fifth Symphony and conducting the eleventh-hour premiere on 24 January 1922.13 By the beginning of February, however, stimulated by his promise to the Copenhagen Quintet,

12 Felumb 1958, 35–38.
13 Nielsen had completed the score of the symphony only five days before the premiere. The reviews were not good, and people had walked out of the performance. Two years later, in 1924, the notorious work was still creating havoc: “The performance made an overwhelming impression, though there was some criticism when it was played.
Nielsen found time to compose. According to a letter to his wife, the artist and sculptor Ann Marie Carl-Nielsen (1868–1945), Nielsen began working on the quintet on 3 February 1922, the day after he arrived in Sweden on a contract as guest conductor for Wilhelm Stenhammar’s Gothenburg Orchestral Society. He lived with his friends Herman and Lisa Mannheimer, at whose home in Gothenburg, Sweden the quintet was completed. Just over two weeks later, on...
20 February, Nielsen wrote to his friend Vera Michaelsen: “I have been very preoccupied with a large, new, difficult composition and indeed in a few days it will be all finished. The externals are very modest, only five winds, but the technicalities are for that very reason all the more difficult and this spurred me on in a remarkable way.”

In late March, Nielsen travelled to Bremen to conduct some of his own works, leaving soon to return to Copenhagen where he conducted Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* for the Musikforening at the Odd-Fellow Palæ on 28 March. During this period, with Felumb performing the *cor anglais* solo in Berlioz’s *Scène aux champs*, Nielsen then conceived the idea of adding that instrument to the quintet. In a letter of 22 March, Nielsen again wrote to his wife, “I’ve been working very hard at my new quintet and indeed in a few days it will be all finished, since it amuses me greatly. It’s strange that people praise you for what you can’t help doing, and what is a pleasure for you in the bargain. The members of the quintet were anxious about “their” quintet, and progress was diligently followed each time Nielsen returned to Copenhagen. Felumb relates: “We watched at a close distance how he wrote the music and

\[\text{References}\]


16 The consequences of this concert are discussed in Chapter II.

before it dried on the paper, we were already practicing to play it, with Nielsen making changes for us.”

Nielsen’s ability to work directly with his performers enabled him to discover and produce a new vocabulary for the wind quintet. In this capacity he thought in terms of workable combinations directly conceived for the ensemble and the musicians. The musical experience of writing for a given medium and immediately hearing the music is valuable to every composer, and Nielsen was thus able to make immediate revisions. By maintaining an ongoing relationship with the members of the quintet, the expression of his music became second nature to him, allowing him to quickly work out ensemble and balance problems. He had time to reflect not only on the varied mechanical matters of execution, but to draw upon the facility and potentials of his performers. But for Nielsen the process of composing the quintet was propitious, for it changed the way he heard instruments and his style of composing. For the Copenhagen wind quintet, the interaction between them and Nielsen was gratifying and reciprocal. Working with Nielsen as the music progressed was a unique experience, seeing themselves reflected in the music while watching how the musical thought progressed through the composition from beginning to end.

Nielsen returned to Gothenburg to conclude his conducting responsibilities, and there he completed the quintet on 24 April 1922, according to a letter to his wife written that day. The work was given a private première at the home of the Mannheimers on April 30. “First

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18 Felumb 1958, 37.
19 For more on how the quintet affected Nielsen’s style of composition see page 70.
20 CNU, xxxvi, fn136.
performed on Sunday 30 April 1922, my birthday,” notes Lisa Mannheimer, to whom Nielsen later presented the rough draft.¹

It would be six months before a public hearing of the quintet took place in Copenhagen. Nielsen spent several months recuperating from an attack of angina and regaining his strength. Many Danes knew Nielsen had completed the work, and the members of the quintet were not the only people interested in his newest composition. Rudolph Simonsen, a friend of Nielsen’s, wrote inquiring about Nielsen’s health, and asked to review the score before its premiere:²¹

After coming home I went up to see you the other day to find out how you were: fortunately, I got good news, everything is going so much better. At the same time I could not resist investigating to see whether the leather case with the quintet mentioned before the holiday was still there: and yes, it was. I must immediately thank you for the pleasure this wonderful work has given me, and cordially congratulate you on this new victory! It is from first to last Carl Nielsen, yet adds something one does not expect. That side of your personality is more rarely shown . . . The mastery with which you juggle the best-loved themes is incredible: the old serenade mood from the Haydn-Mozart time rings out again with new originality. It is true music! How fine the first movement is! And how delightfully the minuet and trio contrast! . . . The variations are perhaps the acme of it all. How fond I am of them! Also of the monophonic ones. The one for bassoon alone is superb “monophonic counterpoint” And the amusing one for clarinet and bassoon. And the canon, where French horn and bassoon lie still on “A.” [resolution of the duet on the tonic an octave apart; Variation 1]. But why go into detail? The effect of the theme at the end in common time is of great breadth and power. Without having any understanding of winds, I am sure that it must also sound excellent; a poor literature has suddenly been enriched; all five instruments have been coddled. That *Ny Musik* gets it for the first performance is a feast for the society, and the five winds will be able to play the piece so it is unlikely that others will be able to follow them.”²²

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¹ Rudolph Simonsen (1889–1947) a Danish composer and piano teacher, was a close friend and colleague of Nielsen’s at the Royal Academy of Music. He read the score during the spring or early summer, throughout the course of Nielsen’s illness and recuperation.

²² CNU, xxxviii. *Ny Musik*, the Danish section of the International Society for New Music had just been established in Copenhagen by Felumb.
Simonsen’s query about the composer’s health is relevant: The composer replied: “My case is one of ‘overexertion,’” but that is something which you never understand [about] yourself. And yet, I also wrote this wind quintet following the symphony, and that was perhaps too much.”\(^{23}\) Nielsen’s self-described pleasure working on the quintet was true; it allowed him to compose what satisfied him, “a quintet for friends.” But he was also exhausted, still feeling the effects of an arduous winter during which he completed the Fifth Symphony at the last minute before conducting the premiere. Early in 1922, February through April, coincident with working on the quintet, Nielsen travelled continuously to fulfill a conducting contract with the Gothenburg Orchestral Society concert series and for appearances as guest conductor elsewhere in Europe. After completing the quintet and returning to Copenhagen in May 1922, he was diagnosed with angina pectoris. Nielsen’s physician ordered complete rest, and during his several weeks in bed, all he could manage to do was knit.

**The Premiere and a ‘poor literature has suddenly been enriched’**

Fritz Crome

The official premiere of Nielsen’s quintet in Copenhagen was highly anticipated by a large and enthusiastic audience of supporters, critics, and musicians, and nearly all of the Royal Danish Orchestra. The concert took place on 9 October 1922 in the small hall of the Odd Fellow Palæ under the auspices of Felumb’s Foreningen Ny Musik.\(^{24}\) The concert had been well publicized by word of mouth and in the many Copenhagen papers. The premiere was extraordinarily


\(^{24}\) The publication and printing for the score and parts for the quintet was delayed, much to Nielsen’s consternation, and the men played from Nielsen’s manuscript parts.
successful, the audience applauded at length, and the Danish press reacted with unanimous high
approval, hailing the quintet, with its ‘rhythmical graciousness, and exuberant humour,’ as
written at the height of his power.

Figure 2. Premiere of Nielsen’s Kvintet at Ny Musik.
Unlike the reviews for his Fifth Symphony, the reception was decidedly positive, and contributed to reestablishing the composer’s reputation.25

Carl Nielsen’s new quintet for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon, awaited with much anticipation, became the absolute centre of gravity [of the concert], musically speaking, healthy and fresh as it is, written with all possible consideration of the potential of the instruments, combined with a logical development of its original musical material, especially the minuet which had very many beautiful details. The quintet, brilliantly performed by the Wind Quintet, was well received by a big audience, addressing its loud applause to the composer who was present.26

And in the København appeared the following review:

Among all that contemporary music from abroad, our own Carl Nielsen made his mark with flying colours. His contribution last night was a quintet for flute, cor anglais, clarinet, horn and bassoon. At the outset, the composer seemed unsure of these new woodwind surroundings, but it did not last long before Nielsen's whole physiognomy appeared, now as the gracious charmer, then as the funny humorist we know from his Masquerade.27

The music critic for conservative Danish newspaper Berlingske Tidende provided a more detailed review with his acknowledgment upon Nielsen’s use of modernism with traditional elements:

Carl Nielsen’s Wind Quintet caught our interest immediately by its clarity of form. It was not inspired by any striving for being modern just for the sake of being modern, nor from any wish to copy the classics. Italian music has had its great significance for Nielsen—but with his combination of modern and classical elements he remains his own. To him it is not important to compose in a classical or modern way—just to do it well. This quintet was typical Nielsen from start to finish—full of manly seriousness, rhythmical graciousness, and exuberant humour. The Minuet seemed somewhat slight of content, but its form was winnily fine. The concluding theme and variations have more weight to them. The theme was actually Nielsen’s lovely hymn tune “Min Jesus, lad mit Hjerte

25 The critics barely mentioned the other works on the ISCM program: the Sonata for Two Clarinets (1918) by Francis Poulenc, Maurice Ravel’s Introduction and Allegro for Harp, Flute, Clarinet and String Quartet (1905), and Gian Francesco Malipiero’s one-movement string quartet Rispetti e Strambotti (1920).

26 “Svend P” of the Kristeligt Dagblad, 10 October 1922.

27 “S. A.,” København, 10 October 1922.
faa,” from his *Halvthundrede Salmer*—just one short melodic line, and yet all the longings and devotion of the human soul seem summarized in these few bars. All five woodwind instruments were used in a highly characteristic way. Although the listener is quickly led away from the solemnity of the hymn, every single variation seemed a pearl. This glittering chain was closed by a beautiful repeat of the tune itself. The members of the “Wind Quintet” gave this new composition their best and were thanked with the warmest applause, at the very end addressed to the attending composer himself.28

Gustav Hetsch, writing for a different conservative Danish newspaper, *Nationaltidende*, commented on the lack of a fugue in the quintet:

Carl Nielsen’s wind quintet, here heard for the first time ever, seemed totally classical in these surroundings. The composer makes high-spirited music for flute, oboe (cor anglais), clarinet, horn and bassoon here, with plenty of humour, rich invention and much contrapuntal finesse. He exploits the performing capacities of each instrument daringly and without mercy. He moves on the ground of tradition: both regarding the character of his themes and the thorough and logical development of those themes finds him on traditional soil, while at the same time moving according to his own whims. Now bucolic, then like a troll, getting seduced into any kind of melodic and harmonic extravagance. A strongly pathetic prelude precedes the imaginative variations on a very down-to-earth chorale- or folk song-like theme, and the minuet is a gracious piece of rococo, seen through the temperament of Carl Nielsen. It was disappointing, though, that this composition, so full of clever and constructive thematic work, did not culminate in a fugue; that would have enforced the impression of its importance.29

An unsigned critic reported on the quintet in the *Social-Demokraten*:

The Danish main attraction was the new wind quintet by Carl Nielsen. This proves a genuine “Carl Nielsen” of the *Expansiva*-species, strutting with force and humour, thoughtful and spirited, with the stamp of the composer’s personality and almost genial in its technical and harmonic details. The most amazing variations were those for solo bassoon and solo horn; to our knowledge this has never been done before. This quintet deserves a long lasting place in the programming of our orchestras.30

Hugo Seligmann, critic for the *Danish Politiken*, also commented the same day:

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28 Kai Flor was music critic for conservative Danish newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*, 10 October 1922.


30 Unsigned, *Social-Demokraten*, 10 October 1922. Nielsen’s unusual scoring of a bassoon and horn duo in the first variation would also be noticed by Schoenberg who would use a bassoon and horn duet in the third movement of his own quintet. See Chapter III.
The event of this evening was Carl Nielsen’s new wind quintet, a very important work from beginning to end with the unmistakable stamp of classicism: a complete clarity of form and weight of spirit. And from first to last with the personal mark of Carl Nielsen: his immediate and sincere way of feeling and very individual fantasy. Among the places where genius strikes we could mention the second theme of the first movement with that enchanting, transparent figuration on top of its lovely, singable melody and the introduction of the last movement, with the mighty and fantastical upsurge of each instrument to grandiose anger and virility, finally the chain of variations, each of them a piece of art in itself. Carl Nielsen, not any more all that young, amazes us with every new work of his—he is seeking for pureness, and he achieves what he wants to do: surely the best proof of his constantly increasing power of creation. The quintet was a huge success, and Carl Nielsen was awarded with the intense jubilation of the audience.\textsuperscript{31}

Finally, in a long review that summed up the evenings of solo and chamber music held during Copenhagen’s autumn season, Fritz Crome of the weekly \textit{Illustreret Tidende} wrote the following several months later:

This composition shows Carl Nielsen at the heights of his power, expressing at the same time a deep and healthy joy of life, a harmonic balance and his rich, warm humanity. Contrapuntal writing was always an inner necessity for him, but his counterpoint has never moved along more beautiful, more adventurous paths than here, never has he through this path found expressions so strong and original for his ideas. Bursting with swarming life, these three short movements are overwhelming in their fullness, summing up—with all their differences—to a hymn to joy. Not that joy expressed by the dionysical rage of youth, but the mature joy of manhood resting in his own strength, by feeling that you like all living creatures originate from the great, hidden power sources of the universe and yet free by being only bound by the laws of its own personality. But even the happiest cannot escape sorrow: the introduction of the last movement speaks the serious language of pain. The forces of light take over, eventually, and the ending, a series of enchanting variations, where each instrument is allowed its own, inner voice, dies away in the quiet unearthly peace of the chorale. The quintet was played to perfection by the gentlemen Hagemann, Oxenvad, Felumb, Sørensen and Lassen to whom it is dedicated. Happy musicians, whose repertory has been enriched with such a work!\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{31} Hugo Seligmann, \textit{Danish Politiken}, 22 October 1922.

\textsuperscript{32} Fritz Crome of the weekly \textit{Illustreret Tidende}, 22 December 1922.
Six months later, when the Copenhagen Wind Quintet performed both Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik* and Nielsen’s *Kvintet* in Berlin, the German critic Paul Schwers wrote a critique which surely pleased Nielsen:

> The most noteworthy work of the night was, in my opinion, the recently (1922) composed wind quintet by Carl Nielsen: a music of masterful composition technique and fine sentiment, skillfully written for the instruments and rich in musical ideas: of a veiled, elegiac nature-atmosphere in the first movement, delightful in the unconventionally colored minuet, and multi-dimensional in the multifaceted variation set of the last movement.33

There was even reference to Foreningen Ny Musik and this first performance in the *New York Times* of 8 April 1923.34

> “. . . [I]t doesn’t sound like a wind quintet”
> Mina Miller

While the critics had no indication of the manner in which Nielsen would compose the quintet, it was obvious that a transformation had taken place. Aware of Nielsen’s penchant for writing disruptive instrumental solos—confirmed in earlier symphonies, the audience applauded

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33 Paul Schwers, “Aus den Berliner Konzertsälen,” *Allegemeine Musik Zeitung* (13 April 1923): 240–241. Of the various reviews which appeared in the Berlin papers, this is one of the few which mentioned the Nielsen quintet, and then only to identify it as the second wind work on the program that day. The Berlin première of Webern’s Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5, performed between the Nielsen *Kvintet* and Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik* in the concert garnered the most commentary, both positive and negative. Schwers’ review continues: “….Next [after a performance of the Webern Five Pieces, op. 5] was the earth-borne Hindemith with his fresh and boldly drafted *Kleine Kammermusik* for five wind instruments (op. 24, no. 2). That sounds more like it: a cheerful, well sounding divertimento, not of Mozartian refinement and elegance, but gaily and confidently executed, and, with an occasional flirtation with atonal arbitrations, thanks to a healthy artistic mind, saved from a-musical derailments. The committed efforts of the Havemann Quintet and the carefully nuanced, elegant and virtuoso performance of the guests from Copenhagen deserve the highest recognition.”

34 Anonymous, “Events of Music Overseas,” *New York Times*, 8 April 1923. “Danes are a little worried because so little is known outside of Denmark about her leading composer, Carl Nielsen. A sonata for violin and piano by him was played here last season. The correspondent of The Chesterian reports the performance of his new Fifth Symphony in Copenhagen. In this he diverges from the established methods that he used in his first four symphonies. It is in two movements, and these are said to show great inventiveness. Another new work of Nielsen, a quintet, had recently been produced by the association called “New Music.”
the opening bassoon statement in the first movement. Nielsen had elevated the instrument from its former place as accompanist, the “true fundamentalist” to a position of soloist. Solo bassoon, a melodic and prominent solo horn, and the mysterious and moody sound of the English horn were new colors for the quintet. The singular clarinet and horn variation revealed a new instrumental pairing and a novel clarinet virtuosity, and with that Nielsen’s new wind sounds were established. The critics mentioned the contrapuntal ingenuity found throughout but specifically in the *Menuet Med Trio*; but this was undone in their estimation by his exceptional and surprising instrumentation—even if he ‘omitted a final fugal section.’ But understood and hailed by all was the unexpected and delightful presentation of one of the composer’s own hymn tunes, sung by all in Danish schools, which was emotionally balanced by echoes of “Nielsen the humorist.” Heard last, applauded and acknowledged by all, was the remarkable chain of variations on his own hymn tune, written to display Nielsen’s “intimate knowledge of each wind instrument’s specific character”35 and its performer. The novel use of instrumental techniques, the solo variations, the anthropomorphic characteristics of the performers and their instruments created a vivid and lasting impression on the public. The not impartial audience who prized Carl Nielsen as one of their own acclaimed the work, his personal ode to the men of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet. With its expanded instrumental registers, full melodic use of bassoon and horn, practice of placing distinctly blended colors in opposition to a strong and differently registered solo sounds, Nielsen had changed the sound of the wind quintet.

35 Felumb (1958), 36.
Preparing for Berlin

Pleased with the reception of Nielsen’s work and the performance of the quintet, Felumb had succeeded in programming his first concert of international music, his vision for the Danish section of the ISCM. His importance increased with his establishment of Ny Musik, and the Danes anticipated more chamber music concerts for the remainder of the 1922 season. The Nielsen Kvintet had opened the season for Ny Musik, on 9 October, and ten days later, 19 October 1921, the Danish premiere of Bartók’s String Quartet no. 1 in A minor (1909) was presented, also under their auspices. Later in the schedule for the fall would be the famed Amar Quintet, with Hindemith playing viola. Felumb had previously arranged for the quartet to travel to Copenhagen for two concerts at the end of November and beginning of December. After the performance for Ny Musik on November 29, Hindemith presented Felumb with the first edition pocket score of his new wind quintet, the Kleine Kammermusik, inscribed “In memory, to Mr. Felumb in most sincere gratitude for his concern for our quartet and its cordial reception. / Paul Hindemith / Copenhagen 29 Nov. ’22.”

36 See fn 42.

37 The Danish critics intensely disliked the music of Bartók. One reviewer could not even get his name or nationality right: “The opening concert [of Foreningen Ny Musik] was initiated with a string quartet of Dela Bortok, a Czech, I think. He belongs to the ultra-modern who never gives up before he lets himself bleed with all the existing keys and harmonizations, especially disharmonic ones, the academically allowed as well as the fantastically invented.” See Peder Gram, København 20/10/1922, as translated in Michael Fjeldsøe, “Different Images: A Case Study on Bartók Reception in Denmark,” Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 47, nos. 3–4 (September 2006): 457.

38 The program included a work by Hindemith’s composition teacher Bernhard Sekles, the Divertimento, op. 20, Percy Grainger’s “Molly on the Shore,” and Beethoven’s String Quartet in E minor, op. 59, no. 2. Two days later, on 1 December 1922, at the Hornungog Møllers Koncertsal in Copenhagen, the Amar Quintet performed Arthur Honegger’s String Quartet in C minor, Anton Webern’s Five Pieces, op. 5, and Hindemith’s String Quartet, op. 16 (1921).

Ravnkilde writes that one of Felumb’s students, the oboist E. Jacobsen, sent the letter in October 1972 to Prof. Kurt von Fischer, who made it available to the Hindemith Institute.
Earlier in the season Felumb made a request to the program committee of the Berlin International New Music Week festival for the Copenhagen Wind Quintet to perform the Nielsen Quintet at the end of March 1923. He was asked to provide three pieces for a full wind program. Now with the addition of *Kleine Kammermusik* to their repertoire, the Copenhagen Quintet had their two works but needed a third to complete the program.

Pleased with the concerts of new music in Copenhagen and the performance of Nielsen’s quintet, and encouraged by reviews, Felumb continued to press for the exchange of additional international music, in particular from the United States. As the chief Danish delegate, he travelled to London for the first international conference of the ISCM in January 1923. He then journeyed to New York for the League of Composers conference, where he remained for several weeks in March, supporting the establishment of the League of Composers and writing articles for the *League of Composers’ Review*. After Felumb returned to Copenhagen from New York, the Copenhagen Quintet began rehearsing Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik* for the Berlin premiere at the end of March. He had earlier written to Hindemith about the tempi for the various movements, but Hindemith was travelling, and had replied at the last moment, a week before the

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40 Hagemann’s letter to Schoenberg of 4 January 1923 notes that Felumb was still in New York but would return in March in time for the performance in Berlin. Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 16, Folder 15. Of Felumb’s trip to London, we see the following from the *Christian Science Monitor*, 26 March 1923, by Winthrop P. Tryon, M.M.S.: “International Society for Contemporary Music: London, March. Delegates met in London being free from musical cliques and factions. Dr. Rudolf Reti (Austria) Prof. Adolph Weismann (Germany), and Svend Felumb (Denmark) . . . etc. being sent to central office and circulated.”

Finally prepared and with performance directions from Hindemith, the Copenhagen Quintet travelled by train to Berlin. Because they did not have a complete program, Anton Webern’s String Quartet, op. 5, played by the Havemann quartet, was programmed between the Nielsen Kvintet and the Kleine Kammermusik. Carl Nielsen, Arnold Schoenberg, and Paul Hindemith were all present for the concert in Berlin. The German writer Adolf Weissmann attended the concert and later noted:

It was an evening in which the well-structured and melodious-sounding wind quintet of Carl Nielsen, and the extremely exquisite “Kleine Kammermusik” by Paul Hindemith were performed by the guests from Copenhagen, under the musical direction of the oboist Svend Felumb, whose playing enhanced the overall sound. In this way, the Danish New Music Society [of the ISCM] demonstrated its brotherhood with the German section.

Felumb was ecstatic, as he relates in his reminiscence:

I was the youngest member of the group and as such the most, or maybe the only ambitious one. I wanted so badly to go abroad with the quintet and achieve international fame. But not one of my friends shared my dream, least of all old Knud. Small domestic trips, performing matinees were o.k. He was, however persuaded to participate in a trip to Berlin in the spring of 1923, where we played Carl Nielsen’s quintet and also had the

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42 The hand-copied instrumental parts for Kleine Kammermusik made in Copenhagen were passed along for years; the parts were available on loan until 1956. In contrast to the relatively quick publication of the Hindemith works, the publication and printing for the score and parts for the Nielsen quintet was delayed, much to Nielsen’s consternation. “Nowadays, conditions are such in the world that there is almost no need for art. I have by now a whole pile of works which I cannot get published much less be paid for: 1) a symphony, 2) a string quartet, 3) a wind quintet, 4) the music for “Aladdin,” 5) choral pieces, 6) “Pan and Syrinx,” and so on. Don’t you find this depressing? Germany, which before the war was every musician’s or composer’s hope, has been knocked off its feet for a generation.” Carl Nielsen Society, trans. Knud Ketting, http://carlnielsen.dk/pages/biography/a-pile-of-works.php (Accessed 10/24/2010). Over a year after Nielsen wrote the comment, the score and parts were published in December 1923, by Wilhelm Hansens Musikforlag of Copenhagen, but the actual printing was done in Germany.

43 Adolf Weissmann, “Konzert—Berlin,” Die Musik 15 no. 8 (May 1923): 625. Weissmann (1873–1929), one of the founding members of the ISCM, was the most widely read and influential critic in German-speaking Europe. According to the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, he was highly ambivalent about contemporary music despite his ties with the ISCM. Weissmann was on the advisory board of League of Composers in New York. Weissmann did not mention the Webern String Quartet in his critique. “Es war ein Abend, der den Bläsern der Kopenhagener Königlichen Kapelle gehört: das wohl gestaltete, wohl klingende Bläserquintett Carl Nielsens und die höchstvonzügliche ‘Kleine Kammermusik’ Paul Hindemith’s wurden von den Kopenhagener Gästen, unter geistiger Führung Svend Felumbs, des Hoboisten, mit seltener Abtönung des Gesamtklanges gegeben. Damit hatte die dänische Vereinigung “Ny Music” [sic] ihre Bundesgenossenschaft mit der deutschen Sektion bezeugt.” Translation by the author.
honor to perform the premiere of Paul Hindemith’s “Kleine Kammermusik.” It went very well and we could have started an international career. . . . 44

As is still the custom, wind players annotate their parts after a performance. Felumb made a notation not on his oboe part, as is usual, but on the miniature score Hindemith had given him the previous November. In the middle, written by Felumb himself in red pencil: “Spillet af Blaeserkvintetten 29.3.23.” 45

“To render the characters of the instruments.”
Emil Holm

Composing a wind quintet might present an unwelcome challenge for some composers, but for Carl Nielsen it was an opportunity to experiment and thoroughly explore the richness and variety of timbres produced by five solo wind instruments. Written with his knowledge of the technical skills and personae of the Copenhagen Quintet, Nielsen’s work exhibits unique instrumental narratives with an astonishing variety of sonorities and textures. With his exceptional contrapuntal gifts, he made use of the wind instruments’ natural ability to project inner parts clearly and effectively. In doing so he was able to transform the assumed five-part liability of the winds—the inability to blend—into a distinctive and vigorous aggregation of sounds. The strength of the wind quintet lies in its contrasts rather than its euphony, with the instruments representing different poles on the timbral spectrum. His Kvintet projects the

44 Felumb 1958, 39.

45 Ravnkilde, 426.
intimacy of a true chamber music work, exhibiting equality among partners interacting polyphonically.

With its assortment of colors and timbres, the wind quintet has never been considered the wind analog of a string quartet; quite the opposite is true. The concept of a homogeneous sound primarily based on the string group medium was prevalent until the early twentieth century, when individual tone colors began to take on importance. The growing compositional preoccupation with the quality of certain sonorities, coupled with effective chord spacing, became one of the prominent techniques of the music of this period. Over time the custom of writing a wind quintet progressed from the need to blend, to the actual encouragement and use of the timbral differences, and finally, to the desire for and creation of a totally heterogeneous sound. Nielsen took the primarily dormant nineteenth-century wind quintet, a genre based largely on the practice of voicing woodwind sonorities according to the spacing found in the natural harmonic series, and transformed it. Walter Piston would later describe this as the ideal chamber music where the practice now is to treat each instrument linearly as an equal contributor to the general texture.46

Although there never has been an enforced delineation of registers for specific winds, any previous notions of an SATB-format restriction were broadened by Nielsen’s instrumentation, freeing individual instruments to expand tessitura in both directions. As Rauscher notes, “It is not possible to classify any of the principal woodwinds as consistently soprano, alto, tenor or bass instruments. Their roles in the ensemble are wholly dependent upon the limitation of effective

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Because the tessitura of the flute, oboe, and clarinet largely overlap, the parts are fundamentally interchangeable. Nielsen’s bassoon, French horn, and clarinet no longer solely support the instrumental texture but are given sufficient weight to also function melodically, as much as his oboe and flute now function as accompaniment.

Working from the premise that the five winds need not produce a homogeneous sound, Nielsen showed great imagination in producing nearly limitless diversity of colors, contrasts, and sonic textures. Although diverse in range, acoustical properties, and tonal coloration—which change from one register to another—the winds lend themselves nicely to explicitly designed effects in sonority, with constant and rapid changes of coloration and texture. Much of Nielsen’s Kvintet emphasizes single instruments so that each functions as an individual voice and hue, yet blending when required, to achieve a unified and variegated whole. Unbowed by the intricate and complex aspects of wind scoring, Nielsen meets the challenge with imagination and mastery.

In an undated letter to Emil Holm (1867–1950), a Danish singer and the first director of National Broadcasting (now Danish Radio) in Copenhagen, Nielsen, writing in the third person, provided a basic description of the work:

The quintet for winds is one of the composer’s latest works, in which he has attempted to render the characters of the various instruments. At one moment they are all talking at once, at another they are quite alone. The work consists of three movements: a) Allegro, b) Minuet and c) Prelude—Theme with Variations. The theme for these variations is the melody for one of C.N.’s spiritual songs, which has here been made the basis of a set of

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48 The letter appears in *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid* [Carl Nielsen to his contemporaries], ed. John Fellow (Copenhagen: Glydendal, 1999), vol.1, 634. Note that Nielsen uses the Danish cognate “Karakter”: “… hvori han har forsøgt at give de forskellige Instrumenters Karakter.” (… each instrument develops its conversation with its [own] “personal” voice. A literal translation reads: “… in which he has attempted to give the varied instruments’ character.”). Nielsen’s handwritten program note for the quintet appeared several months after the Copenhagen premiere, in a performance which included his *Fantasy Pieces for Oboe and Piano*, op. 2. Translation by the author.
variations, now merry and quirky, now elegiac and serious, ending with the theme in all its simplicity and very quietly expressed.49

Continuing this thought, Nielsen told Andreas Vinding (1881–1959), a Danish author and journalist for the newspaper Politiken, that he “sought to reveal the singular features of the instruments,” adding, “I think through the instruments themselves, almost as if I had crept inside them.”50

To “render the characters of the various instruments,” Nielsen drew upon a number of insights that would contribute to the design of the quintet, including a chance to play out his lifelong fascination with musical characterization, wherein instruments take on conflicting and anthropomorphic roles. His striving to portray musical personalities, the psychological natures of friends, or instrumental impressions through music was not new, but the quintet stands as the quintessential example of his ability to anthropomorphize. Like Edward Elgar’s Enigma Variations, Nielsen’s quintet was begun “in a spirit of humour and continued in deep seriousness.”51 But unlike the Enigma Variations, dedicated in affection to “my friends pictured within,” Elgar’s musical subjects were for a time identified only by initials. The subjects of Nielsen’s musically effective variations were well known, but his characterizations were not all positive; Nielsen’s friends are more existential.52

49 Fellow 1999, 634.

50 Nielsen, interview by Andreas Vinding, Politiken, December 1925. Quoted in Robert Wilfred Levick Simpson, Carl Nielsen: Symphonist (New York: Taplinger, 1979), 112. Setting up a detailed character sketch one was a method Nielsen used as a precompositional activity for his symphonies, as well as for the individual members of the wind quintet.

51 Elgar made this comment in a program note for a concert he conducted in Turin in October 1911. Quoted in Michael Kennedy, The Life of Elgar (London: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 68.

52 The subjects of Elgar’s variations are now well known: see Ivor Atkins, “Elgar’s ‘Enigma’ Variations,” Musical Times 75, no. 1095 (April and May 1934): 328–80 and 411–144, and Julian Rushton, Elgar: ‘Enigma’ Variations
Nielsen’s characterization extends beyond any particular timbre or facility associated with an individual instrument to the abilities and personalities of the members of the quintet. His scoring reinforces the idea of a drama: there is a clear conflict both between and within instrumental groups, which act as individual opponents. Ford and Davidson suggest that

From a musicological perspective, it appears that the contrasting colors and timbres available in a wind quintet are appealing to many composers. From a psychological perspective, the contrasting timbres, types of instrument and playing techniques make the wind quintet a potentially fascinating source of investigation into how individuals behave in order to function as a group. Indeed, perhaps these contrasts will make the interpersonal dynamics of the ensemble very close to those of a string quartet where the timbres and techniques of the instruments are much closer. Additionally, working with five as opposed to four people in the wind ensemble, the dyadic and triadic allegiances make the potential for conflict in the quintet different from those facing the string quartet members.  

The assertion that “contrasting colors and timbres . . . are appealing,” is certainly correct, but the essential truth is that many composers choose not to write for the wind quintet unless commissioned or requested by a well-known group requiring a specific composition. Further, musicians generally preclude their personalities from undermining performing allegiances. One cannot equate the difference between a string group and a wind group in terms of “interpersonal dynamics.” There is no less a sense of professionalism with wind players than with strings, and any dyadic or triadic allegiances in scoring or in performing are transient. With Nielsen, or any other composer working on a quintet, each instrument becomes a soloist, creating important nuances and subtle shadings. The instruments develop their own conversations, and in Nielsen’s

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Both sets of variations were written as affectionate portrayals of close acquaintances, one a large-scale orchestral work, the other chamber music.  
53 Luan Ford and Jan W. Davidson, “An Investigation of Members’ Roles in Wind Quintets,” Psychology of Music 31 (2003): 55. It is probable that the assertions made by these psychologists would be different if each were a musician.
musical characterizations, each has an unmistakable “personal” voice. The quintet becomes a ritualistic musical play with five characters whose individualized parts are theatrically conceived. Functioning on a dual level, the quintet is foremost a vehicle for the expression of each performer’s persona, and in a secondary way a revelation of the idiomatic characterization of each instrument. Played out through the instrumental functions and relations to each other, the quintet develops into a novel sonic exploration, introducing a fresh aggregation of sounds and textures, and with this a new wind sound for the twentieth century.

In many European compositions written during the early 1920s, including Nielsen’s Wind Quintet, composers generally sought to integrate eclectic elements from various musical periods. Composers experimented with individual sounds and unusual instrumental combinations, frequently with reduced forces in concise chamber-like textures. Examples include Janáček’s Sextet *Mládí*, a suite for flute/piccolo, oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon, and bass clarinet (1925); Stravinsky’s *L’Histoire du soldat*, for three actors, female dancer, clarinet, bassoon, cornet, trombone, percussion, violin, and double bass; Schoenberg’s *Pierrot lunaire* for flute/piccolo, clarinet, bass clarinet, violin/viola, cello and piano; Varèse’s *Octandre* for flute/piccolo, oboe, clarinet/E-flat clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, and bass; and Milhaud’s *Symphonies de Chambre*. Nielsen’s contribution is the maximal use of English horn as soloist in the Praeludium and the Tema med Variationer.

The trend in orchestration for much of the music of the period was to emphasize the diversity of color, thus fueling the emergence of color as a determinant in composition. Favored techniques during the period included exploitation of individual wind tone colors—coupled with the use of the characteristic dry wind sound—and an abundant use of staccato. Certain inherent compositional possibilities reside within every musical medium, and the prevailing
characteristics of the wind quintet are resistance to blending, a variety of attacks, kinetic energy, and vivid sonorities.

Nielsen’s quintet is a synthesis of traditional and idiosyncratic elements, a product of romanticism, neo-classicism, and his own brand of adventurous modernism. The traditional elements include his contrapuntal writing and his dependence on classically oriented formal structures. Motivic transformation and derivation of self-borrowed material links and unifies the three movements. His lyrical themes and a conventional use of rhythm provide additional cohesiveness, as does the distinctive clarity of his colorful writing. Nielsen’s transparent yet complex textures, as well as variations in dynamics, play an important role in the delineation of his formal structures. His affection for vocal music and chorales can be perceived in the quality and contour of his melodic lines, as well as in his use of a hymn tune for the set of variations.

Features of a more contemporary idiom in Nielsen’s Kvintet include his ability to compose in a surprising variety of styles. Novel treatment of instrumentation here is typical for Nielsen: rather than the more common B-flat clarinet, Nielsen, in choosing his timbre through instrumentation, assigns the A clarinet throughout, scores for the auxiliary English horn, and lowers tessitura in the flute, taking it down to a low B\(_4\). While Nielsen does not abandon traditional triadic harmony, he effectively uses progressive or emergent tonality.\(^{54}\) The opening E-major Allegro ben moderato movement has strong leanings to the tonality of A major, the key in which the remaining two movements fall; this choice of key clarifies Nielsen’s scoring for clarinet in A rather than B-flat.\(^{55}\) Any use of chromaticism is often a result of an attempt to

\(^{54}\) Nielsen’s use of progressive tonality, also referred to as “emergent tonality,” is discussed in Robert Simpson, *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist* (New York: Taplinger, 1979), 21.

\(^{55}\) Normally the choice of the clarinet depends upon the key of the work.
characterize a personality, situation, or mood, rather than harmonic movement. The extensive use of chromaticism in this movement foreshadows its use in the following set of variations.

Nielsen utilized various timbres to display the instruments at their best, designing lyric melodic ideas to express the character and instrumental proficiency of each musician. This idea is readily observed by comparing the technically straightforward flute solos, written to accommodate Hagemann’s less advanced proficiency with its repeated note figures, arpeggios, and scales, versus the complex lines for the virtuoso clarinetist Oxenvad, with a rapid and intense passage driving from the harsh and strident top of the clarinet register to the mellow bottom register.

Analysis:
“a highly idiosyncratic and distinctive compositional voice”
Richard S. Parks

Nielsen followed a traditional path for the three movements, beginning with an Allegro ben Moderato in a fully developed sonata allegro form. The quiet opening theme, a descending E-major triad announced by the bassoon, is an apt musical description of Knud Lassen: “It was simply Knud Lassen personified as we knew him. Calm and collected—a distinguished phrase” (see Figure 4). The opening solo passage for bassoon is more than a character representation: it directly illustrates Nielsen’s innovative technique of writing for wind instruments. With his novel use of cross-voicing rarely seen in earlier quintet writing,

56 Felumb 1958, 38.
his practice of scoring for clarinet in chalumeau register, and in this example, his use of solo bassoon in high or very low registers, Nielsen ushers in nontraditional sounds, textures, and
instrumental combinations. In the outer movements, but most apparent in this movement, Nielsen approximates a symphonic sound with a large dramatic range where horn and bassoon emerge as true melodic voices. It is his realization, through attempts to portray both person and instrument, that the characteristic idiom of the winds is best exploited, exhibiting the separate instruments and new concepts of sonority. One example of this novel sonority is seen in Nielsen’s use of dovetailing ostinato accompanimental figures, initially played by flute and oboe, as the accompaniment to the horn and bassoon duet (see Figure 5.)

Figure 5. Nielsen, *Kvintet*, op. 43, I, Allegro ben moderato, mm. 99-104 (Copenhagen: Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS, 1923). Flute and oboe dove-tailing accompaniment above bassoon and horn melody.
Nielsen experimented with the musicians to determine whether horn or bassoon would take the upper part in a duet variation as Felumb recalls: “Carl Nielsen took the opportunity of this occasion and made some corrections. For instance, in the [Variation I] where you have two parts for the horn and bassoon. We tried it again and again until he decided who is going to have the upper part.”

While the use of idiosyncratic thematic and accompanying motifs in this movement seems to foreshadow Stravinsky in neo-classical mood, there is even more evidence of these techniques in the second movement, where ostinato patterns blend unobtrusively into accompanimental patterns. This opening movement demonstrates a developmental trend found in Nielsen’s compositions. He begins a composition with simple, lyrical material, which becomes progressively more texturally complex throughout the work.

Nielsen’s ability as a contrapuntalist is confirmed in the central movement, where a classically contoured Menuet and Trio in A major provides a contrast with a legato clarinet and staccato bassoon duet (see Figure 6). This is followed by paired flute and oboe duet in a reverse of textures. The series of canonic entrances, with close spacing, similar-sounding registers, and soft dynamics creates a fresh and notable texture. The Menuet and Trio are perfectly balanced as to instrumental texture and key; the sparsely scored outer sections of the Menuet complement the instrumental density of the contrapuntally contrasting Trio, forming a heightened and dramatic distinction. On a larger level the movement functions as a subtle and quiet counter-balance to the two outer movements. Unusual combinations of textures, for

57 Ibid. Felumb, 38. Schoenberg emulates this scoring in the third movement, *Etwas langsai*. 
example the clarinet and horn duet, followed by the oboe and flute duet in a reversal of timbres and textures, exhibit Nielsen’s particular ability to combine and contrast colors and unusual ranges that are exceptional in the quintet literature. Here Nielsen has clearly made a virtue of the winds’ inability to blend completely, by voicing new sonorities through overlapping, crossing, or interlocking and enclosure of the various instruments. This movement stands as one of the more successful instances of wind scoring emanating from Nielsen’s pen.

Figure 6. Nielsen, *Kvintet*, op. 43, II: Menuet, mm. 1-14 (Copenhagen: Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS., 1923). Clarinet and bassoon duet.
“all nature’s mystic voice”
Svend Felumb

The short 25-measure Praeludium preceding the third movement is the most evocative-sounding component of the quintet. Felumb called it “one of the most characteristic parts of the quintet. It was once referred to as ‘All nature’s mystic voice,’ if words can explain the combination of composition and instrumentation.”

Holm wrote to Nielsen after reading the score before the first public performance: “How few resources and how great an effect! Quite magnificent, like a faraway thundercloud on a beautiful spring day, is the effect of the prelude with the cor anglais. . . .” In this complex movement Nielsen’s aural imagination prevails. Having begun his quest for new colors, Nielsen now expands the tessitura of the flute to a low B and changes from oboe to English horn for an exploration of textural compatibilities. The Praeludium stands out not only for its implied physiological implications but also its occasional “flirtation with atonal arbitrations,” and certainly for the colorful scoring and dissonance. Similar in character to the variations that follow, the Praeludium is a dramatic instrumental narrative, with quasi-improvisatory passages for English horn, flute, French horn, and clarinet, balanced by more sustained passages, providing an effective contrast to the two A-major movements on either side. The movement begins with the introduction of augmented sixth and diminished third intervals among English horn, bassoon, and clarinet. The Praeludium expresses a duality of concepts, timbrel

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58 Felumb 1958, 38.
59 Petersen 2003, CNU, xxxviii.
60 Schwers, AMZ, 240.
61 Richard S. Parks discusses this movement in “Pitch Structure in Carl Nielsen’s Wind Quintet,” in The Nielsen Companion, ed. Mina Miller (Portland: Amadeus, 1994), 541-596. Parks argues that the unusual sonic and atonal
importance on one level and on the other, contrasting motion with highly active cadenza-like melodic figurations balanced by more sustained passages (see Figures 7a and b).

Figure 7a. Nielsen, Kvintet, op. 43, III: Praeludium, Adagio. (Copenhagen: Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS, 1923).

properties found in the Praeludium are more likely a result of Nielsen’s compositional imagination than any attempt to compose atonally.
In a work focused on the anthropomorphic characteristics of the instruments and the varied temperaments of the musicians, the Praeludium may also reveal something about the composer’s mental and psychological state. Nielsen had earlier described the pleasure he derived from working on the quintet, but the process of composing, conducting, and travelling left him tired, suffering from angina, and morose. Now estranged from his wife, Nielsen lived with various friends during much of the time he was composing this work. In March he had returned home to Copenhagen from Bremen for rehearsals and a performance of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* for the *Musikforening*. During the rehearsals or perhaps the concert in Copenhagen
on 28 March he conceived using English horn for a movement of the quintet. Felumb relates a late evening call from the composer, “Hi Felumb, I still have that sound of the English horn in my ear. Could you switch over to English horn? It is exactly the sound I was looking for in the prelude.” Felumb had that night performed the English horn solo which frames the *Scène aux champs*, where Berlioz’s English horn solo—and the oboe performing the echo—is a stylized imitation of a *ranz des vaches* melody. Berlioz himself describes the sounds he scored for this movement:

> In the Adagio of one of my own symphonies, the corno inglese, after having repeated in the bass octave the phrases of a hautboy—as the voice of a youth might reply to that of a young girl in a pastoral dialogue—reiterates fragments of them (at the close of the movement) with a dull accompaniment of four kettle-drums, during the silence of all the rest of the orchestra. The feelings of absence, of forgetfulness, of sorrowful loneliness, which arise in the bosoms of the audience on hearing this forsaken melody would lack half their power if played by any other instrument than the corno inglese.

Characterized by arpeggiated melodic rings and triplet figures, the *ranz des vaches* melody is well known as a poignant symbol of memory, nostalgia, and loss. A comparison of Berlioz’s

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62 Felumb 1958, 38. Felumb had earlier related that Nielsen “envisioned a prelude before the variations,” but he had not finalized it.

63 Ibid.

64 Hector Berlioz, *A Treatise on Modern Instrumentation and Orchestration Dedicated to William IV, King of Prussia, to which is Appended the Chef d’Orchestra*, trans. Mary Cowden Clarke, new ed. by Joseph Bennett (London: Novello, 1882), 98.

65 Geoffrey Burgess and Bruce Haynes, *The Oboe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 220. For a full discussion of the early Romantic references to the sound of the English horn, see Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen Zu Einer Ästhetik Der Tonkunst*, ed. Ludwig Schubart (Vienna: J.V. Degen, 1806), 321. Among the many thoughts Schubart expressed on the sound of the English horn is found the following: “For the expression of depression and melancholia, the English horn is perfectly suited; one hears that it is an English invention. And further with such a horn, accompanied by a harmonica, one can comfortably shoot oneself.” (“Zum Ausdruck der Schwermuth und tiefen Melancholie, schicktsich das englishe Horn trefflich; man hörtes ihm gleichsam an, dassse seine brittische Erfindungist. Bey einem solchen Horn, von der Harmonika begleitet, laesst sich bequemer schiessen – sagt Burney.”) My translation. Schubart attributes this to Charles Burney, but I have not been able to find confirmation of the original quote in Burney’s literature. It is possible it was delivered orally. The English horn was
ranz des vaches with Nielsen’s cor anglais-as-alphorn solo in the Praeludium reveals numerous melodic and rhythmic correspondences. (see Figures 8 a and b) In addition to the unique timbre of the instrument, Nielsen’s accompaniment is scored for horn, bassoon, and clarinet, emulating the sound and rhythm of the triplet-based tremolo of Berlioz’ double basses and four kettle-drums. Both examples share the improvisatory character of the ranz des vaches melody, with its irregular melodic and rhythmic form. Nielsen scores a flute cadenza as accompaniment to the English horn, followed by a clarinet cadenza. This underpins a melodic line built on a minor third enlarging to the major for the ending, not unlike the ending of the Scène aux champs. An illustration of the melodic ideas from the oboe and English horn solos at the beginning of Berlioz’s Scène aux champs shows a similarly shaped turns, melodic allusions to clarinet, flute, and violin solos during the movement. These similarities give force to the idea that Nielsen’s Praeludium might be a musical reflection of his own inner musings during a brief return to his home town, possibly a poignant symbol of Nelsen’s own memory, his absence from home while travelling, his nostalgia, and loss. A haunting and vivid character piece dominated by the dark timbre of the English horn, the movement provides a brief austere and ominous soundscape in a work otherwise full of optimism and bright colors.

frequently used by Scandinavian composers, for example, in Sibelius’ Swan of Tuonela, and Hugo Alfven’s Swedish Rhapsodies.
Tema med Variationer:

“all the longings and devotion of the human soul seem summarized in these few bars”
Kai Flor

The somber expressions of the Praeludium are quickly deflected by a secular presentation of the hymn “Min Jesus, lad mit Hjerte faa,” used as the theme for the eleven variations.

Figure 9. Choral Tune ‘Min Jesus, lad mit Hjerte faa,’ from Carl Nielsen’s *Salmer Og Angelige Sange*. Courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago, Ill.

Nielsen begins by setting the four-part chorale-style hymn tune as a five-part harmonization, in a sudden and unexpected change of texture and mood. He adds two additional phrases to his original and adjusts the meter from 3/2 to 3/4. (see Figure 10)

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66 The hymn tune Nielsen used for the theme and variations is taken from *Carl Nielsen Salmerog Åndeligesange: Halvhundred Nye Melodier For Hjem, Kirke Og Skole* [Carl Nielsen’s hymns and spiritual songs: 50 new melodies for home, church and school] (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen Musik-Forlag 1919). Two collections of songs (1915 and 1917) written alternately by Thomas Laub (1852–1927) and Nielsen were accepted into the 1922 *Folkehøjskolens Melodibog* [The songbook of the people’s high school], which included the hymn tune “Min Jesus, lad mit Hjerte faa.” The book went through many revised editions and became the standard songbook of the Danish public schools, where it was used on a daily basis as part of the obligatory curriculum. According to Knud Ketting of the Carl Nielsen Society, it is difficult to provide a decent translation of “Min Jesus, lad min Hjerte faa en saadan Smag paa dig.” He writes, “Smag means, literally, ‘taste.’ There is no way translating this line accurately in convincing English, thus the typical translation becomes ‘My Jesus, Let My Heart Receive, or Have a Taste, for Thee.’” Knud Ketting, in a personal email, 30 December 2008.
While the text of the hymn may appear to indicate Nielsen’s spiritual mood, there was no known religious significance in his choice of this hymn tune. The melody was well liked, admirably suited for variations, and obviously memorable, as evidenced by the fact that most of the audience, and the critics, recognized the hymn tune during the Copenhagen premiere. The hymn tune’s simple harmony is enriched, most notably by adding a German sixth chord in root position at the end of the third phrase. Nielsen retained the English horn to provide a sonic connection between the Praeludium and the set of variations. The spontaneity of the theme’s transformations in the variations and Nielsen’s natural thinking in terms of chamber music give the hymn tune refinement and character.

The ensuing variations present an intensive instrumental study displaying woodwind writing at its most creative. Nielsen’s musical concept is focused more keenly now on sonorities and musical characterizations than on tonalities, and on textures rather than structures. The vivid instrumental writing shows new virtuosic possibilities based on a simple overall design, which is concentrated on short, separate pieces, each drawing variety from the inherently distinct wind timbres. In this movement the link between the germinal idea and the specific form of external expression is most thoroughly realized. Each player in Nielsen’s musical cast of characters is given a prominent passage in the chain of variations that typifies himself as well as his instrument. The variations are clearly articulated and retain the structural and melodic outline of the theme, changing texture and character in a counterpoint of distinct wind timbres against

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67 The text of the tune is: Min Jesus, lad mit Hjaert faa en saadan Smag paa dig, at Dag og Nat du vaere maa min Sjal umistelig.”My Jesus, let my heart have such a taste for you, that day and night, that you will be inseparable from my soul. Carl Nielsen Salmerog Andeligesange: Halvhundred Nye Melodier For Hjem, Kirke Og Skole [Carl Nielsen’s hymns and spiritual songs: 50 new melodies for home, church and school] (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen Musik-Forlag, 1919).
miniature character sketches. Nielsen’s choice of timbre through instrumentation is exemplified as all instruments are featured during the variations, in soliloquies, duets, or larger conversations. The variations are apportioned between monophonic, homophonic, or contrapuntal textures, now scoring a solo, next a variation with a lighter texture of three parts followed by a thicker five-part texture. He contrasts slurred melodic variations with an animated secco section. The variations are motivic and do not retrace the theme’s harmonic ground plan, but melodic traces of the hymn tune function as a stabilizing agent, providing an aural connection throughout the dissimilar variations.

“He exploits the performing capacities of each instrument daringly and without mercy.”

Gustav Hetsch

The opening variation sets the tone with a quiet duet for the horn and the bassoon in counterpoint; this instrumentation was emulated by Schoenberg in the first seven measures of the third movement of his own quintet. (See Figure 11) The second variation, Un poco di più, mentioned above is the pastoral flute variation for Hagemann; it is followed by a long polytonal minor oboe melody, a vehicle for Felumb’s virtuoso technique --as are Variations III and VIII. Variation IV, Più vivo, a brief staccato episode, comes as a breath of fresh air, where Nielsen displays how important dynamic motor action and kinesthetic values are to wind writing. The naturally exciting agility of winds is heard at its imaginative best in this exuberant, driven, and vivid variation, a new sound in wind quintets. (See Figure 12) Variation 4 forms an effective bridge between the quiet expressive flute and oboe variations and the tempo giusto of the subsequent movement.
The iconic Variation V: *Tempo giusto*, is crafted as a dialogue between an irascible and grumpy clarinet player and an infuriatingly imperturbable bassoonist.\(^6^8\) It has long been considered the most notable, if not infamous, variation (see Figure 13). Felumb writes about the temperamental Oxenvad who “played clarinet with great artistic taste, but with temperament and nerves.”\(^6^9\) Nielsen chose to present the bassoon and clarinet as a quarreling married couple, with the bassoon finally placating the disquieted clarinet.\(^7^0\) In the variation the clarinet performs rapid and agitated lines, moving as quickly as possible to the shrill extreme high register to the lowest, a bravura and comical solo, personifying the quick-tempered Aage Oxenvad. This demanding variation inaugurates new sounds and virtuoso playing, techniques new to clarinet performance. In contrast is the controlled objectivity of the bassoon player Knud Lassen, interjecting short conciliatory sounds, and striving for calm. The highly emotional expressions and greatly contrasted dynamic nuances were inspired by Oxenvad’s personality and playing style. Conceived as an emotional event, the variation is a unique instrumental expression, which became one of the sketches for Nielsen’s 1926 Concerto for Clarinet.

To soothe any remaining anxiety from the preceding raucous variation, Nielsen draws on lyrical material from the peaceful hymn for the sixth variation, an *Andantino con moto*, which begins with flute, clarinet, and bassoon. The movement progresses from simple, lyrical

\(^{6^8}\) As Felumb notes in the appendix “Carl Nielsen knew that Oxenvad could sometimes cause a little problem. He therefore advised that they should play as a married couple in the middle of an argument and where the husband (the bassoon) finally calms down. Felumb 1958, 36.

\(^{6^9}\) Ibid.

\(^{7^0}\) Ibid., 38.
material to a full scoring with a diverse amalgam of styles, sounds, and moods, demonstrating a common developmental trend in Nielsen’s compositions. Variation VII, *Un poco di più*, is one of the two monophonic variations, this one for the bassoon. The pensive bassoon soliloquy demonstrates the full register of the instrument, in what stands as a fitting mime of the solid Knud Lassen, “one with his bassoon, unshakable and calm.”71 (See Figure 14)

Similarly, the ninth variation is a solo variation given to Sørensen, a majestic unaccompanied horn call, which he initially performed with “dazzling virtuosity.”72 (See Figure 15). But this is not what Nielsen intended, as he thought it was lacking in the tranquility he had heard earlier in Lassen’s bassoon solo. He advised Sørensen:

Dear Sørensen, just think about a wonderful Danish summer day. You are standing on a hill, blowing your horn over the beautiful scenery. It is not 1.2.3.4.—No, give yourself some time and do not start the next phrase until all echoes become silent.73

The tenth variation begins with an arpeggiated flute solo accompanied by a contrapuntal statement of the theme in the bassoon part. The movement is divided into sections not unlike a Bach chorale, ending with the full group in triplets. In the final variation, a flippant, quirky clarinet solo—similar to that of Variation V—is joined to rhythmic and melodic ideas drawn

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71 Felumb (1958), 36.
72 Ibid. 38.
73 Felumb 1958, 38. A slightly different version is given by Torben Meyer, who quotes Nielsen’s comment to Sørensen about the horn variation: “I imagined you standing on a hill, blowing it so everyone can hear it in every nook and cranny and be delighted by it.” Torben Meyer and Frede Schandorf Petersen, *Kunstneren og Mennesket* (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag, 1947–1948. II, 219). In the first draft of that variation below the horn part Nielsen has added “Without great native abandonment to the mood of nature it will not work.” Peterson, CNU, xxxvii, fn 140.
from the first and second movements, providing continuity and reminiscence of past melodies.

Here too, Nielsen has used the distinguishing dryness of the winds to great advantage, producing a brittle effective sound, unique in the literature. A driving gallop to the end of the variation provides a sense of closure to the movement before the final introduction of the chorale.
To conclude the movement, Nielsen returns with an energetic and multilayered instrumental portrait of the chorale, labeled *Andantino festivo*, now set in common time. Nielsen underpins the final cadence with an added sense of resolution, requiring the bassoonist to produce a low A, one tone lower than the normal playing range. This sudden and unexpected change of register is an excellent illustration of Nielsen’s ability to take advantage of the natural potential of the bassoon by assigning a rich and full terminal low note, in a bit of extended technique, a masterful stroke of orchestration. The final movement of the quintet is an abundant piece of music with an elegant if not numinous ending.

“I think through the instruments themselves, almost as if I had crept inside them.”
Carl Nielsen

Nielsen would not have imagined that the quintet for his friends would come to be one of the finest chamber works of the early twentieth century, and that it would hold a distinguished position in the wind quintet repertoire. It is his most frequently performed chamber work. It is musically gratifying and particularly satisfying not only for its expressive accessibility, but for its conversational quality and perpetually fresh sonus. As Parks writes in his analysis of the work, “it is a highly idiosyncratic and distinctive compositional voice.” One of the most beloved and performed pieces in the repertoire, the *Kvintet* remains aesthetically pleasing to its audiences and

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74 This is usually accomplished by adding an extension to the bassoon by means of a rolled-up piece of paper, a pre-made tube (*Pavillon de rechange*) which is then inserted into the open end of the bassoon immediately before the final cadence. Bassoon makers now supply pre-made extensions for the added low notes.


technically challenging to the performers. It is a work in which a rare sense of happiness and joy permeates the uninhibited music-making of the five instruments. Mina Miller writes that the “value of Nielsen is that it doesn’t sound like a quintet.”77 Initially, the comment appears to trivialize the work, but it conveys an essential truth: Nielsen changed the fundamental sound and character of the wind quintet; with his unique wind scoring, expanded instrumental ranges, and uncommon vibrant textures, he created a wind quintet that would take its place among other great works of chamber music. The anthropomorphic element was a catalyst for Nielsen’s planning and balancing of instrumental registers in his textural scoring. Anthropomorphism figured in the outlines for new timbral schemes and in his use of varied and expanded instrumental registers. It was the incentive for his singular use of dynamics and articulation. This approach was similar to that of Elliott Carter, who in speaking of his wind quintet of 1948, remarked: “In the end it is hard not to say that this all became anthropomorphic, and that I was also thinking of the players as performers. In a sense I was individualizing not merely the instruments but also the player of the instrument, who became, to a certain extent, a character in the work.”78


Figure 16. Nielsen, *Kvintet*, op. 43, Variation V: *Andantino*. Autograph: Courtesy of The Royal Library, Copenhagen.
As an introduction to the new wind sound and instrumental techniques of the twentieth century, the quintet advances the use of color and timbral vividness in higher registers, most especially for the clarinet. It demonstrates new textural compatibilities resulting from Nielsen’s use of diverse yet complementary timbres. The solidity and ingenuity of Nielsen’s wind scoring and his knowledge of the nuances of each instrument bring a freshness and originality to wind instrumentation. His melodic ideas are always gracefully and expressively shaped, with enhancing countermelodies, confirming his affection and respect for vocal material. His use of solo instruments against atypical timbres combined with the use of high registers intensifies the color of the wind quintet.

Nielsen established the notion of virtuoso instrumental techniques with melodic equality among the instruments where horn and bassoon become fully melodic instruments and, in contrast, where flute and oboe become accompanists. Nielsen’s scoring illustrates the motoric capabilities of the winds, with their inherent kinetic energy, a technique not heard before in the literature. During the act of creation Nielsen learned the art of forming a piece so that each ingredient—here each of the five instruments—comes fully into its own and enriches the totality with its distinctiveness. The instrumental consensus that is generated by his artistry with sound has given a special position to his work. It is this particular instrumental equilibrium that contributes to the foundation of the twentieth-century quintet.

In addition to its role in enhancing the literature, the quintet is considered a critical composition in Nielsen’s artistic output. The effect of writing the quintet and the pleasure he derived was far reaching. But for the composer himself, it was an undertaking in self-discovery. What Nielsen had already achieved in chamber music when he wrote the wind quintet—the unfolding of the peculiar character of each single instrument or group of instruments—he
continued in the composition of the Sixth Symphony (1924), to the extent that the work may in fact be classified as a chamber symphony. Nielsen himself named the work *Sinfonia semplice*. On a different level, the quintet can be seen as a harbinger of the techniques employed in later works.\(^79\) The brief atonal features found in the Praeludium of the quintet were more extensively utilized in the *Sinfonia semplice*, the Clarinet Concerto op. 57 (1928), and the Three Pieces for Piano, op. 59 (1928). This idea was suggested in 1953 by Jan Maegaard, who regards the quintet as a pivotal work in Nielsen’s impulse towards what the author considers a “revolutionary” later style found more fully applied in the Clarinet Concerto.\(^80\) Further, Maegaard regards the quintet as the composition in which Nielsen’s artistic transformation took form. He goes further to conjecture that after the composition of the quintet, Nielsen “heard and conceived music in an essentially different way than before.”\(^81\)

### CONCLUSION

“*This is a record to brighten your chamber music shelf.*”

Paul Hume

Although he made no recordings of his own music, Carl Nielsen belongs to the first generation of composers whose popularity was affected by the gramophone. In 1936, four years after the composer’s death, the members of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet made a recording of the quintet. Pressed in 1936 on His Masters Voice (HMV DB5200),\(^82\) the recording maintained

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\(^79\) Parks, 541.


\(^81\) Maegaard 1953, 76.

\(^82\) Paul Hagemann was replaced by Holger Gilbert-Jespersen (1890-1975), for whom Nielsen wrote the flute concerto.
his persona for over fifty years. For many years the Copenhagen Quintet’s performance on shellac remained Nielsen’s visiting card in the record catalogues. The quintet recording was more readily available than recordings of his other chamber works, and its value lies in conveying the individual personalities, performance techniques, and unique sound quality of the original performers. The classic 1936 recording by the Copenhagen Quintet was the first of Nielsen’s works to be heard outside Denmark. Nielsen’s American biographer Robert Simpson relates his initial response to the early recording of Nielsen’s music: “I had myself discovered [his music] soon after the war by way of the Wind Quintet; it fascinated me with its delightful and individual blend of warmth, naturalness, and a subtlety that suggested hidden depths.”

Nielsen’s first major orchestral work to find its way onto LP was the Second Symphony, recorded in 1944. In 1952, after a number of performances of the quintet, the New Art Wind Quintet made the first U.S. recording of the quintet (Classic Edition 2001). The public success of this recording maintained the composer’s reputation in the United States. It preceded by a few years the recordings made by Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic in a revival of Nielsen’s orchestral music. By the end of the 1950s, the New Art Wind Quintet’s recording was virtually the only Nielsen composition available, because nearly all the Nielsen recordings had been withdrawn from the U.S. catalogs. The New Art Quintet’s recording, and that by the

83 It has since been reissued as Carl Nielsen: The First Recordings on the Clarinet Classics label (CC0002), 1992.
87 Layton, 117.
Philadelphia Quintet in 1960 on the Columbia label, “kept the composer’s name in Schwann [catalog] for some time.” 88 In 1953, Paul Hume of The Washington Post wrote: “Carl Nielsen, now becoming better known through his symphonies, writes a piece in which the winds take on fine sounds and also give fresh use to classic forms. This is a record to brighten your chamber music shelf.” 89 Performances of Nielsen symphonies were uncommon, but the quintet was played frequently throughout the East Coast and in 1955 in Los Angeles. 90

Nielsen took the primarily dormant nineteenth-century wind quintet, a genre based largely on the practice of voicing woodwind sonorities according to the spacing found in the natural harmonic series, and transformed it into a twentieth-century model of color, virtuosity, and stylistic prominence. The idiosyncrasies, the novel characterizations, the advances in instrumental artistry that came into existence through Nielsen’s portrayal of the facility and potentials of his performers and their instruments created and established sounds and techniques for new genre. The technical capabilities and textural compatibilities introduced in the Kvintet were a harbinger of the techniques found in many later quintets. In fulfilling a promise to the members of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, Nielsen indulged his fascination with the human character actualized through music, creating an instrumental narrative technique which expanded

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90 Albert Goldberg, “Quintets Play Works of Nielsen, Pfitzner,” Los Angeles Times, 8 February 1955. “Last night’s Monday Evening Concert in Los Angeles County Auditorium was remarkable for two directly opposed reasons: the discovery of the world’s most comprehensively boring piece of music in Hans Pfitzner’s Quintet for piano and strings, Opus 23 . . . and probably the first public performance here of any music by the Danish composer Carl Nielsen.” In 1920, Pfitzner wrote Die neue Ästhetik der musikalischen Impotenz, supposedly a musical treatise. A critic of modern music, Pfitzner believed it was destroying the very foundation of German music.
both range and technique into a distinctive and vigorous aggregation of sounds. In articulating his ideas through choice of instruments, Nielsen provided unexpected and imaginative contrasts of timbre with new concepts of sonority gained from his quest to anthropomorphize. His serious reflection and concern for the main attributes of instrumental timbres is affirmed by the high quality of scoring. Nielsen’s’ particular ability to combine and contrast colors, reversing textures and timbres, and his sonic imagery contributed to reanimating an exceptional genre.

The strength of the wind quintet lies in its contrasts rather than its euphony, with the instruments representing different poles on the timbral spectrum. His Kvintet projects the intimacy of a true chamber music work, exhibiting equality among partners interacting polyphonically. Nielsen took the primarily dormant nineteenth-century wind quintet, a genre based largely on the practice of voicing woodwind sonorities according to the spacing found in the natural harmonic series, and transformed it. Walter Piston would later describe this as the ideal chamber music where the practice now is to treat each instrument linearly as an equal contributor to the general texture. Nielsen’s bassoon, French horn, and clarinet no longer solely support the instrumental texture but are given sufficient weight to also function melodically, as much as oboe and flute now function as accompaniment expand tessitura in both directions; new concepts of sonority gained from anthropomorphism displays how important dynamic motor action and kinesthetic values are to wind writing. The naturally exciting agility of winds is heard at its imaginative best in this exuberant, driven, and vivid variation, a new sound in wind quintets. While the use of idiosyncratic thematic and accompanying motifs seems to foreshadow Stravinsky in neo-classical mood, there is even more evidence of these techniques in the second movement, where ostinato patterns blend unobtrusively into accompanimental patterns. A reversal of timbres and textures exhibit Nielsen’s particular ability to combine and contrast
colors and unusual ranges that are exceptional in the quintet literature. Nielsen has clearly made a virtue of the winds’ inability to blend completely, by voicing new sonorities through overlapping, crossing, or interlocking and enclosure of the various instruments. Overall, the quintet stands as one of the more successful instances of modern wind scoring. Nielsen changed the fundamental sound and character of the wind quintet with his unique wind scoring, expanded instrumental ranges, and uncommon vibrant textures,

Carl Nielsen’s Kvintet, op. 43 is a work of exceptional beauty, originality, and sensitivity, whether it seems to be concerned with human expression, or nature, or pure woodwind sound. The quintet is not entertainment music; it has considerable emotional depths, and its treatment of winds is original, vigorous, and definitive. It is clear that Nielsen learned from the composition of the quintet the importance of using the chamber music medium to express the deepest and most essential of human expressions. The quintet is a small work of genuine nobility, but a tour de force in wind chamber music literature. The Copenhagen Quintet played the “soul of the quintet,” at Nielsen’s funeral in 1931, as the casket was being lowered into the grave. As Felumb recalls, “We were all five of us paying our respect to our dear master when we played the chorale from his quintet at his funeral.”\(^{91}\)

Nielsen’s Kvintet, op. 43 serves as a link between the nineteenth- and twentieth-century wind quintet genres. Composed shortly after Symphony no. 5, and followed by the Sinfonia semplice, the work demonstrates Nielsen’s ability to handle small ensembles with maximum

\(^{91}\) Felumb 1958, 38.
effectiveness. For the composer it was a vehicle for the concentrated expression of his innermost thoughts. A juxtaposition of the conservative and the progressive, the *Kvintet* reanimated his compositional process. For the quintet genre it was a renaissance. Nielsen opened Pandora’s wind box, mining the instrumental and technical potential in the wind quintet and revealing the sound and compositional techniques of a new era. The innovative horizons Nielsen’s quintet created for the medium were quickly followed by Paul Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik* just one month later.
CHAPTER TWO

PAUL HINDEMITH:
PERFORMER AND COMPOSER IN A TIME OF CHALLENGE

Paul Hindemith’s “brilliant and masterful Kleine Kammermusik,” with a rigorous and extended performance history, is one of the most widely played of all contemporary works for wind instruments.¹ After Hindemith’s works were banned in Germany, the work was performed in the United States, where it took on a new life, in turn stimulating the composition and performance of additional contemporary wind music. Beyond its individuality, expressiveness, and satire, the quintet is a significant composition of highly intricate texture, and the work through which many are introduced to the music of Hindemith. It is “striking for its fusion of characteristics from the chromatic Expressionistic period with that of the more objective, impersonal neoclassical period of the 1930s.”² The work previews important facets of Hindemith’s future compositions, embodying the new objective ideals of the time and translating them into a model of instrumental democracy and clarity, an “infallible musical text.”³ As the second model of the new quintet genre—completed just two weeks after Nielsen’s Quintet—it exhibits both social and political significance, as it stands as an exemplar for new wind sounds, uncommon contrasting timbres, vibrant textures, with virtuosic instrumental displays. With the composition of Kleine Kammermusik, Hindemith revealed a unique symbiosis of vigorous

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rhythms and instrumental color, and like the Nielsen quintet, his work became a model for the twentieth century.

Paul Hindemith was one of the most influential German composers and theorists of the twentieth century. He was deeply influenced by his hometown of Frankfurt-am-Main, a city rich in culture and music, known for its democratic tendencies during a momentous period of change. This intellectual and social city was kept well informed by the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, one of the few democratic newspapers of the time, and by broadcasts of the new *Frankfurter Rundfunk*. The end of World War I in 1919 coincided with the establishment of a new constitution with a parliamentary representative democracy. As Germany transitioned from the old imperial form of government to the Republic of Weimar, the country suffered a period of stagnant economy and disastrous currency inflation especially during 1922-1923, a period coupled with public disillusionment and despair.\(^4\) But the Weimar Republic, “an experiment in importing Western democracy to a country that had no real democratic tradition” did not last.\(^5\) Most of the middle class sympathized with socialism and communism, while only a minority firmly believed in the reality of democracy.\(^6\) The Society for Theater and Music Culture was founded, and the *Novembergruppe*, so named after the month in which the Republic was formed, supported the socialist revolution through artistic means. Hindemith, Kurt Weill, Gustav Havemann, and

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\(^4\) The Weimar Republic, named for the location where the assembly met to form the new mode of government, was formed in November 1919.

\(^5\) David Drew, “Musical Theatre in the Weimar Republic,” Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association, 89. I am referring here to the period from 1919 through 1933, and the “experiment” in democracy not only did not last, but ended in disaster.

Hanns Eisler were among the many musicians, artists, and writers in these two societies that aimed to build the cultural life of Frankfurt and the musical life of the community. Municipal authorities not only actively supported democracy but also nurtured cultural activities through public relations, patronage, and sponsorship of the Frankfurt Opera, the Museumskonzerte Orchestra, and the popular Schauspielhaus.

As a teenager, Hindemith entered the Hochschule für Musik in Frankfurt-am-Main, studying violin and viola with Adolf Rebner, and conducting and composition with Arnold Mendelssohn and Bernhard Seckles, as he learned the tenets of a fledgling democratic society. In this milieu, he became one of the central actors in the 1920s Modernist German musical circle during a short period when Modernism and democracy were blossoming, albeit a time of social, cultural, and political upheaval.

Acknowledged as an avid chamber music performer and a famously versatile string player, the young Hindemith performed concertos by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and classic and modern quartets throughout Middle Europe and Scandinavia. In 1916 he joined the Frankfurt Opera Orchestra and soon became the concertmaster, a position he held until 1923. From 1918 through 1921 Hindemith was first violinist and later violist with the Rebner Quartet, and from 1921 through 1929, he was violist with the Amar Quartet, a group he established with his brother Rudolf.\textsuperscript{7}

Two events made 1919 an especially important year for Hindemith. On June 2 in Frankfurt he organized a successful presentation consisting entirely of his own works. B. Schott’s Söhne of Mainz was so impressed that they offered to publish Hindemith’s music, and

\textsuperscript{7} Because Hindemith was a member of the quartet, it was frequently called the Amar-Hindemith Quartet.
became Hindemith’s sole publisher. In the summer of that year, Hindemith switched from violin to viola, thereafter playing violin in public only infrequently. As a performer Hindemith premiered his own string compositions, as well as Schoenberg’s string quartets, Stravinsky’s _L’Histoire du soldat_, Bartók’s string quartets, and Webern’s _Sechs Bagatellen_, the _Satz_, and the String Trio, op. 20.8

In addition to being esteemed as a consummate string player, Hindemith was well known as a conductor and, later in life, as a theorist. His work in music theory influenced a long line of composers including the Americans Samuel Adler, Norman Dello Joio, Alvin Etler, Bernhard Heiden, Mel Powell, Harold Shapero, Lukas Foss, and Daniel Pinkham.9 For many years Hindemith was considered a leader of the musical avant-garde in Germany, becoming one of the most prolific and frequently performed composers of his generation. In his search for a universally accepted musical language, he worked through a number of compositional styles beginning with a brief period in the late Romantic idiom of Max Reger, Johannes Brahms, and Richard Strauss. Subsequently he wrote in an expressionistic style, followed by a period called the _Neue Sachlichkeit_, and then he finally moved to Neoclassicism. With _Unterweisung im_

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8 Over a period of nearly ten years, Hindemith played Schoenberg’s String Quartet op.7 thirty-two times and the String Quartet, op.10 no. 2, nine times. Both quartets were in the set repertoire for both the Rebner and later the Amar quartets; thus, Hindemith performed both violin and viola parts at various times during his early career. A discussion of the music Hindemith played can be found in David Neumeyer and Giselher Schubert, “Arnold Schoenberg and Paul Hindemith,” _Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute_ 13, no. 1 (June 1990): 3–46. Everyone admired Hindemith’s skill on violin and viola. Philipp Jarnach wrote of one particular Hindemith performance that “Schoenberg was pleased” with the performance. (Jarnach, “Das Biespiel Busoni,” in _Das musikalische Selbstportrait von Komponisten, Dirigenten, Instrumentalisten, Sängerinnen und Sängern unserer Zeit_, ed. Josef Müller-Marein [Hamburg: Nannen-Verlag, 1963], 262).

9 Howard Pollack, _Harvard Composers: Walter Piston and His Students, from Elliott Carter to Frederic Rzewski_ (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1992), 194. While he was at Andover, Daniel Pinkham learned to love the music of Hindemith, with whom he later studied. Pinkham noted that he listened to a recording of the _Kleine Kammermusik_ “until the other side came through.”
Hindemith concluded a long theoretical career, finally reconciling linear counterpoint with tonal harmony. Viewed as the last of the traditional German contrapuntalists whose line began with J.S. Bach, Hindemith is now regarded as a leading representative of Neoclassicism.

Hindemith’s youthful activities and recognition as a performer did not diminish his endeavors as a composer—quite the opposite; they regularly informed his compositional practice. His lifelong love of instrumental and chamber music provided not only opportunities for him as a performer but also an “intellectually charged arena” for his compositional experimentation. He wrote more chamber and instrumental music than any other major composer, and many of his works have become repertory items—for instance, his Violin Concerto (1939), the symphony Mathis der Maler, the Theme and Variations subtitled “Four Temperaments” for piano and string orchestra, Symphonic Metamorphosis after Themes by Carl Maria von Weber, and his quintet for winds, the Kleine Kammermusik, op. 24, no. 2.

From 1919 through 1922 Hindemith made a name for himself as the enfant terrible of modern German music. Like many artists and musicians of his generation, Hindemith experienced a post-war reaction to Romanticism as he turned toward the composition of extreme chromatic and expressionistic works. Written within the sociopolitical context of the era, his compositions of the early 1920s are eclectic and wide ranging in style and purpose, including his

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12 Kleine Kammermusik is op. 24b in Hindemith’s work list.
short and extensively criticized expressionist operas *Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen, Das Nusch-Nuschi*, and *Sancta Susanna*, the latter frequently acknowledged as Hindemith’s first masterpiece. Much of his music from this period reflected the cultural and social tensions, capturing the angst and immorality of the time. In 1922, not having totally conceded his expressionist bent, Hindemith wrote a four-movement piece for small orchestra especially for the festival at Donaueschingen, the *Kammermusik*, op. 24, no. 1.\(^{13}\) Premiered under the direction of avant-garde conductor Hermann Scherchen, the witty, sarcastic work featured a chamber group of twelve solo instruments hidden from view of the audience, an act Hindemith deliberately used to provoke the bourgeois public.\(^{14}\) The jazz- and modern dance-oriented work included a rhythmic fox-trot, then seen as a vulgar Americanism. The work was dissonant, with xylophone runs, accordions, and fire sirens, all producing sounds anathema to the post-war German audience. Hindemith succeeded in creating a short-lived albeit satisfying scandal.

In contrast, the smaller works written later in this period, the String Quartet, op. 22, and the *Kleine Kammermusik*, op. 24, no. 2, were crafted in a more relaxed, less aggressive style. Showing the composer’s predilection at this time for smaller ensembles, each work was ideally suited to display his interest in an essentially linear and nonfigurative style; both compositions illustrate his concern for the ever-increasing schism among composer, public, and performer. This concern would be reflected more as Hindemith turned to the optimistic and objective aspects of

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\(^{13}\) His new song cycle *Die junge Magd*, was also performed at Donaueschingen.

\(^{14}\) Hermann Scherchen (1891-1966) was a German conductor and violinist who founded the Neue Musikgesellschaft, the ‘militant’ musical journal *Melos*, and the New Music Society in Berlin. Scherchen was also actively involved with the ISCM from its foundation in 1923, and was frequently the principal conductor at its festivals. Reviews of all concerts given by the ISCM appeared in *Melos*. For many years the majority of articles which appeared in the periodical were concerned with the musical activities of Paul Hindemith.
the forward-looking *Neue Sachlichkeit*. Here the style was impersonal but with positive social, cultural, and political features. During this period, the music festival at Donaueschingen would figure heavily in the expansion of Hindemith’s career, initially as a performance arena for his own compositions, and later as the venue for his leadership in programming new music, where he consistently sought to program the music of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern.

**DONAUESCHINGEN**

The centuries-old West German city of Donaueschingen is situated at the confluence of two rivers that form the cradle of the Danube river. Under the patronage of the House of Fürstenberg since 1488, the city had a musical tradition extending back to the 1700s, when the nobles maintained court chapels and commissioned operas during their residences in the city. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the court was well known for high musical standards. In the modern period, and still under the auspices of the House of Fürstenberg, the *Donaueschinger Society of Friends of Music* was founded by Ferruccio Busoni, Hans Pfitzner, Arthur Nikisch, and Richard Strauss in 1913 with the idea of establishing a small festival presenting young and promising artists. Due to the exigencies of the war, it was not until 1921 that the Society met again to discuss the concrete establishment of a festival now devoted exclusively to the contemporary music of German and Austrian composers. Heinrich Burkard, the festival’s music director, invited Joseph Hass and the young Hindemith to

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15 When established, the festival was known as the Donaueschinger Kammermusik aufführungen zur Förderung zeitgenössischer Tonkunst. Hans Pfitzner (1869–1949) was a composer and leader of the Stadt theater orchestra in Frankfurt. Arthur Nikisch (1855–1922) was an Austro-Hungarian who conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1889 to 1983.
participate in the music committee as principal music planners. The newly established festival remained under the financial sponsorship of then Prince Max Egon von Fürstenburg. Aimed to promote unknown or disputed talent and to experiment with new methods and forms of expression, the performances at Donaueschingen attracted almost as much attention as those held in Salzburg under the auspices of the newly established *Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik*. Now known as the Doneueschingen Musik-Tage, it is recognized as the oldest festival in the world that presents new chamber music. It is also noted for being the first festival devoted exclusively to contemporary music, and it provided the venue that led to the international recognition of early twentieth-century composers Ernst Křenek, Alois Hába, Alban Berg, Schoenberg, and most importantly for this study, Hindemith.

Although he was a member of the music committee that planned and recruited composers and performers for the much-anticipated inaugural festival in 1921, Hindemith was reluctant to submit his own compositions. He was coaxed to participate by the other organizers who knew his music and admired his early publications, but it was left to his friend Emmy Ronnefeldt to submit a copy of his Second String Quartet to the other committee members. The quartet was

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16 Heinrich Burkard (1888–1950) was musical director to Max Egon Furst zu Fürstenberg. Joseph Hass (1879–1960) was a German composer and follower of Max Reger (1873–1916).

17 This is the German section of the ISCM.

18 Emmy Ronnefeldt (1888–1982) was the daughter of a well-to-do Frankfurt family who shared music making and lessons with the children of the Hindemith family. She was a pianist who, under her professional name Emma Lübbecke-Job, performed many of Hindemith’s early works. As his first important piano interpreter, she accompanied him in his early composition evenings in Frankfurt, and for the premieres of his Viola, and Viola D’Amore sonatas. As a token of his friendship, Hindemith gave the score of his new quartet to the Lübbecke-Jobs as a wedding present. Emma had recently married Dr. Fried Lübbecke, an art historian known as the “Father of the Old City,” because of his researches on the historic old buildings of Frankfurt. Known to Hindemith as “Emmy,” she acted as his sounding board throughout their lives, as seen through his many letters to her in which he revealed social, political, musical, and personal aspects of his life. Hindemith’s letters to Emmy were always full of enthusiastic descriptions of his musical activities.
accepted for premiere at the festival, but it had been submitted late, and Gustav Havemann balked at having to perform Hindemith’s new quartet. His ensemble was already preparing for premieres by Alois Hába and Philipp Jarnach, as well as Ernst Křenek’s Serenade for Clarinet and String Quartet. Thus was born the Amar-Hindemith Quartet. Hindemith conscripted his younger brother Rudolf—to whom the work was dedicated—to play cello, and he enlisted the violinist Licco Amar, concertmaster with the Mannheim Nationaltheater, as first violinist. Amar in turn recruited a colleague, Walter Caspar, as second violinist.

Near the end of July 1921, Hindemith arrived for the opening at Donaueschingen, prepared to perform the premiere of his Second String Quartet with the newly formed Amar Quintet. Although his reputation as a performer was already validated, he anticipated further success as a composer, knowing that he was then very much the man of the hour. The work was

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19 Members of the Havemann quartet were Gustav Havemann, first violin, Georg Kuhnau, second violin, Hans Mahlke, viola, and Adolf Steiner, cello. The Havemann, as it was known, had a reputation as a prestigious group that toured throughout Germany and Czechoslovakia, and were very much in demand for the performance of new music. They performed both classical and modern music, some of it considered avant-garde at that time, including pieces by Alban Berg and Alois Hába, who was then considered the most distinctive figure in twentieth-century modern Czech music. After hearing Havemann’s superb performance of Alban Berg’s String Quartet, op. 3, at the International Society for Contemporary Music Chamber Music Festival on 2 August 1923, Berg wrote to his wife, “. . . I revelled in the sound and the solemn sweetness of my own music. You cannot imagine it from what you have heard of the piece. The so-called wildest and riskiest passages were pure euphony in the classic sense.” The Havemann Family History Center, http://www.havemann.com/havemann_gustav.html (accessed 10 February 2012).

In June 1921 Gustav Havemann wrote to Heinrich Burkard, “Das Quartett von Hindemith ist für mich nicht möglich zu spielen. Wir wären für das Werk sicher nicht die geeigneten Interpreten, da ich nur das wieder gaben kann, womit ich überzeugt bin.” Part of the letter is reprinted in Donaueschinger Musikstage, ed. Helmut Bender and Hanspeter Bennwitz (Francke: Freiburg, 1963), 8. “That quartet of Hindemith’s is not possible for me to play. We would be interested in the work certainly [but are not] the appropriate performers; I can only reproduce that of which I am convinced” (Translation by the author).

20 Because the last-minute premiere of Hindemith’s quartet at Donaueschingen went so well, the four musicians decided to make their ensemble a permanent entity, and in May 1922 they began to give regular concerts. Although Central Europe provided a thriving network of chamber music societies (especially in Germany), a quartet had to work hard to survive, and the Amar-Hindemith ensemble made things harder by specializing in modern music. But they were successful, and for some years the quartet performed 120 to 130 concerts each season.
a success with both critics and the public.\textsuperscript{21} The performance during the festival’s eventful opening year of 1921 laid the foundations of his reputation in Western Europe.\textsuperscript{22} By the summer of 1922, with the premiere of the \textit{Kleine Kammermusik}, Hindemith became established as a serious composer and confirmed as the leader of the musical \textit{avant-garde} in Germany.

\textsuperscript{21} Heinrich Strobel, \textit{Paul Hindemith} (Mainz: B. Schott’s Söhne, 1948), 21. Strobel (1890–1970) was a music critic, musicologist, and editor of \textit{Melos} who wrote of Hindemith’s new work: “Das Quartett op. 16 war Hindemiths grosser Erfolg. Durch dieses hin reissende Stück wurder von Donaueschingen aus in Deutschland bekannt” (\textit{DonaueschingerMusiktage}, 8). Like Hindemith, Strobel would be defamed as a “Musikbolschewist.”

\textsuperscript{22} In addition to the premiere of Hindemith’s String Quartet, op. 16, the other notable premiere at this two-day festival was Alban Berg’s \textit{Klaviersonate}, op. 1. For a list of concerts and premieres at Donaueschingen, see Josef Häusler, \textit{Spiegel der neuen Musik, Donaueschingen: Chronik, Tendenzen, Werkbesprechungen} (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1996), 424.
DEMOCRACY OF INSTRUMENTS AND SOCIETIES IN FRANKFURT

_Neue Sachlichkeit_ refers to various cultural trends of modernization during the early years of the Weimar Republic.\(^23\) Gustav Friedrich Hartlaub (1884–1963) originally coined the term as the title for the post-Expressionist painting exhibition he curated for the Mannheim _Kunsthalle_. Gradually the phrase came to characterize the atmosphere of the time along with its art, literature, and music, as well as the architecture of the Bauhaus school that reflected it.\(^24\) _Neue Sachlichkeit_, with its allied “back to Bach” association, was seen as a rejection of expressionistic music and a means of appealing to a broader public. Most importantly, this new aesthetic approach pointed to a cultural shift emblematic of a sociological transformation in the composition and use of music between the wars in Germany and France. In music, _Neue Sachlichkeit_ advocated that the style of a particular work should be shaped according to its character and function. Further, as a reference to the simultaneous emergence of socio-political and artistic trends, this new mode of thought emphasized the democratization of all areas of life, resonating with similar ideals in

\(^23\) _Neue Sachlichkeit_ is variously translated as the New Objectivity, the New Realism, or occasionally the New Matter-of-Factness. In his Preface to _Music and Performance during the Weimar Republic_, Brian Gilliam defines _Neue Sachlichkeit_ as “an aesthetic view that sought to strip music of its romantic or ideal pretensions; to emphasize an objective clarity; and to question the role of subjective artistic prerogative versus an objective, infallible musical text. Music, in short, should do little more than express itself.” (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, xi).

\(^24\) The entire movement of German architectural Modernism was known as _Neues Bauen_. The architectural design innovations were commonly associated with Walter Gropius and the Bauhaus school. Founded in 1919, the same year as the Weimar Constitution, the school was a merger of the Weimar School of Arts and Crafts and the Weimar Academy of Fine Arts. In his 1919 manifesto, Gropius proclaimed his desire to “create a new guild of craftsmen, without the class distinctions which raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist!” Walter Gropius, “Programme of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar,” in _Programs and Manifestos on Twentieth-Century Architecture_, ed. Ulrich Conrads, trans. Michael Bullock (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1975), 49. The main objectives were to unify art, craft, and technology with radically simplified forms, rationality, and functionality. Both quintets of Hindemith and Schoenberg were referred to as being built on the Bauhaus principles, in Daniel Albright, ed., _Modernism and Music: An Anthology of Sources_ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 278, and in Theodor W. Adorno, _Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft I Prismen – Ohne Liefbild_, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1977), 176.
England and France. In the United States, the idea was further illustrated by Dennis Crockett:

Rather than some goal of philosophical objectivity, it was meant to imply a turn towards practical engagement with the world—an all-business attitude, understood by Germans as intrinsically American: “The Neue Sachlichkeit is Americanism, cult of the objective, the hard fact, the predilection for functional work, professional conscientiousness, and usefulness.”

During the early 1920s, Hindemith was immersed in the exploration of fundamental principles of musical development and social interaction—more so than his participation in aesthetic debates—as he moved from emotional expressionism to the utilitarian, no-frills ideals of the Neue Sachlichkeit. Soon he was drawn into the aesthetic climate of Neue Sachlichkeit and its relevance to contemporary culture. Doing so fulfilled his desire to serve the social and political needs of the moment. This evolutionary process can be seen in his adoption of a utilitarian and practical view of music that prefigured features of his later so-called Gebrauchsmusik period. This new interest in the “functional, the professional conscientiousness, and usefulness” was translated into the music he wrote for friends and colleagues, the Kleine Kammermusik and the String Quartets, and for himself, the Viola Sonata. Daniel Albright wrote that

The musical equivalent [of the New Objectivity] can be found in Paul Hindemith’s wind quintet Kleine Kammermusik, op. 24, no. 2 (1922), in which the inner workings of the

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26 For Hindemith, music for use, his so-called Gebrauchsmusik, was in part a return to earlier interdependent associations that had existed among composers, patrons, musicians, and audiences. Over the years the term was misunderstood, certainly misused, and frequently misapplied; Hindemith later disavowed the use of the word altogether. In the foreword to his A Composer’s World: Horizons and Limitations (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952, viii), Hindemith writes: “Up to this day it has been impossible to kill the silly term and the unscrupulous classification that goes with it.”

27 Crockett 1999, 1. Sonata in F, op. 11, no. 4, for viola was written in 1919.
music are completely and cheerfully exposed, like the ductwork of a building without interior walls. Hindemith designed it as Gebrauchsmusik—music for everyday use, not a special experience to be approached reverentially or nervously, for music should be part of the normal rhythm of human life; you brush your teeth, you go to work, you get together with friends for some fun with your bassoon. A wind quintet can be crafted with Bauhaus simplicity, elegance and delight in firmness of line, as opposed to the haunted, broody gothicism of an earlier style.28

Albright’s characterization of the Kleine Kammermusik as Gebrauchsmusik is not altogether correct. The quintet was written much in advance of Hindemith’s application of the term Gebrauchsmusik to his compositions. Written for professional musicians, the quintet is generally considered too difficult to be “everyday music.”

“Hier ist endlich einmal die Musik um der Musikwillen da!”
Paul Hindemith

By temperament and profession, Hindemith was an ensemble player; thus, it was natural for his output to be written as much for the performers as for the audience. His genuine concern was not particularly for “the wide public, whether in the concert halls or outside, but with the people who played music, or who were able to listen to it with true understanding, preferably at informal or intimate gatherings.”29 This aesthetic is markedly revealed in a letter to Emmy Ronnefeldt from the autumn of 1922, after the successful performances of the Third String Quartet, op. 22, and Kleine Kammermusik:

But the most important thing I have done is to establish a “music community” here [in Frankfurt]. We play modern music at Zinglers on Emperor Street (once every 2 or 3 weeks) before an invited audience of about 80: a purely musical gathering without any

28 Albright 2004, 278.

29 Geoffrey Skelton, Paul Hindemith: The Man Behind the Music (New York: Crescendo, 1975), 64.
worrying about finances. The audience pays nothing; the players get nothing, and the very small cost is shared among us. Finally, we have music here for music’s sake.\textsuperscript{30}

The year 1922, when Hindemith was twenty-seven years old, was the most productive year of his entire career, a year in which he composed in a variety of styles and genres. This productivity, along with his approach to life, is also revealed in the letter he sent to Ronnefeldt: “I have a chronic mania for work,” Hindemith continues, as he catalogues his numerous accomplishments of the year:

. . . a song cycle \textit{Die junge Magd} with six instruments, a piano suite, a symphony for small orchestra, a wind quintet, a solo viola sonata, a sonata for viola d’amore and piano, the \textit{Marienlieder}, another set of songs with two violas and two cellos, a sonata for viola and piano, a ballet. . . . a solo cello sonata, and a Christmas fairy play. \textsuperscript{31}

The list is but a short example of Hindemith’s compositional versatility; the wind quintet that he so casually mentions is the \textit{Kleine Kammermusik}, op. 24, no. 2, his most popular early work and most frequently performed composition. According to the dates on the autograph, Hindemith composed it while in Frankfurt in a whirlwind over five consecutive days, one movement per day beginning May 1, in time to have it premiered in an upcoming chamber music festival.\textsuperscript{32} A tribute to Hindemith’s methodical and artisan-like work ethic, neither sketches nor autograph manuscript bear signs of having been set down hurriedly (see Figures 1 and 2).

\textsuperscript{30} Hindemith to Emmy Ronnefeldt, September 1922, in \textit{Paul Hindemith Briefe}, ed. Dieter Rexroth (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag: 1982), 107. “Aber das Schönste, was mir geglückt ist, ist die Gründung der "Gemeinschaft für Musik, hier. Wir spielen von ungefähr 80 geladenen Mit gliedern bei Zingler auf der Kaiserstrasse moderne Musik (alle 2 oder 3 Wochen); eine rein musikalische Angelegenheit ohne Geldgeschichten. Die Zuhörerzahl nichts, die Spieler bekommen nicht, die ganz geringen Unkosten wardens gemeinsam getragen. Hier ist endlich einmal der Musik um der Musikwillen da!” Admission was open only to the 80 or so members of the music society; the general public was not admitted to these concerts.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 107.

\textsuperscript{32} The date of completion for each movement in the autograph is thus: I: \textit{Lustig. Mäßig schnelle Viertel} (1 May 1922); II: \textit{Waltzer. Durchweg sehr lieze} (2 May 1922); III: \textit{Ruhig und einfach. Achtel} (3 May 1922); IV: \textit{Schnell Viertel} (4 May 1922); V: \textit{Sehr lebhaft} (5 May 1922). Note that the \textit{Grove Music Online} 1923 date of composition for the \textit{Kleine Kammermusik}, op. 24, no. 2 is incorrect.
The wind quintet, Hindemith’s first chamber piece for pure wind ensemble bursts with the energy of a revolution. With its consistency and originality, it represents a consolidation of his developing style. Writing for winds alone was still new terrain for him, as it was for many composers at this time. It demonstrates not only his early contrapuntal mastery but also his courage to take risks in the area of wind chamber music. Just two weeks after completing the quintet, Hindemith advised Schott in a letter of 21 May 1922 of the approaching June premiere of “a new piece of chamber music for five wind instruments,” as well as a performance of other compositions in Cologne during the second Rheinische- Kamermusikfeste. He continues: “one evening, I’m going to play a viola sonata and Amar is going to play last year’s quartet. . . . Salzburg is also playing something from me. But I have not yet determined what.”

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33 Hindemith, “An den Schott-Verlag: aus Frankfurt,” in Paul Hindemith Briefe, 105. In addition to the premiere of the Kleine Kamermusik, there were premieres by a range of contemporary European composers, the most famous of which included Schoenberg’s String Quartet no. 2, op. 10, and Anton Webern’s Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5.
Figure 1. Hindemith, *Kleine Kammermusik*, II: Walzer. Durchweg sehr leise, mm. 42-49. Sketch courtesy of the Hindemith Foundation, Blonay, Switzerland.

Figure 2. Hindemith, *Kleine Kammermusik*. V: Sehr lebhaft, mm. 14-30. Sketch courtesy of the Hindemith Foundation, Blonay, Switzerland.
Conditions in the early Weimar Republic, with its stagnant post-war economic instability, political insecurity, and disastrous currency inflation, were extraordinarily hard on the population at large, but even harder on musicians. Hindemith wrote the quintet as a token of thanks for the winds of the Frankfurter Bläser-Kammermusikvereinigung, to whom it is dedicated for having agreed earlier to premiere the Kammermusik, no. 1 in Donaueschingen.\(^\text{34}\) The work brought his colleagues into the public eye while providing them with work. Paul Naumann, flute; Paul Hoensch, oboe; Eduard Liebhold, clarinet; Johannes Ruge, horn; and Heinrich Türk, bassoon, were principal winds in the Frankfurt Opera House orchestra where Hindemith was concertmaster. The Frankfurt Opera House and the Museumskonzerte Orchestra had recently merged, a move considered to combine funds and resources; many musicians had lost their positions.\(^\text{35}\) The resulting ensemble was an amalgam of the solo winds from both organizations.

**A MUSICAL DEMOCRACY**

The Kleine Kammermusik also represents a new phase in Hindemith’s emergent socio-political awareness. The work is a direct musical reflection of the growing democratic ideals and political atmosphere of the Neue Sachlichkeit flourishing in Frankfurt at the time. “For Hindemith, politics is not just getting into music, music is constitutive of and is constituting politics for him.”\(^\text{36}\) This is expressly true of the Kleine Kammermusik, wherein Hindemith

\(^{34}\) Luther Noss, notes on Kleine Kammermusik, Fuer Fuenf Blaesern, op. 24, no. 2. MSS 47, Box 1, Folder 37. The Paul Hindemith Collection, Yale University.

\(^{35}\) Scherchen succeeded Wilhelm Furtwängler as director of the Frankfurt Museumskonzerte in 1922.

applies musical constructs to demonstrate equality, the canon of democracy. The work begins with the instruments in traditional dominant-subservient roles of soloist-accompaniment, with the clarinet, and later oboe, as soloist. The final movement concludes with all instruments transformed into full and equal participants of the musical fabric. A closer look reveals Hindemith’s strategy. The first movement, *Lustig Maßig schnelle Viertel*, is orchestrated as a conventional first movement in a previously written wind quintet; that is, a soloist accompanied by four instruments, an opening certainly reminiscent of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century wind chamber writing. In the second movement, *Waltzer Durchweg sehr liese*, Hindemith increases the scope of melodic importance to the use of four voices at any one time. The third movement, *Ruhig und einfach. Achtel*, begins with an invention for flute and clarinet, which is integrated into a middle section based on an extraordinary mixture of three voices. The instrumental disposition of this movement creates an overall texture of two plus three (or two versus three). In the iconic fourth movement marked *Schnell Viertel*, Hindemith uses ritornello form to construct a “farewell to solo instrumental colors.” Each fast, staccato, and fortissimo ritornello, in which four instruments are united in a homophonic tutti, is followed by a short parting cadenza for the omitted fifth instrument. The short solo sections display the characteristic attributes of that specific solo instrument. This penultimate movement segues into *Sehr lebhaft*, the center of which is a five-part homophonic development. While the overall musical material is intermittently broken up by short solos, it always returns to an egalitarian group of five instruments: each instrument becomes a soloist possessing equal melodic value. The whole

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composition reflects five distinct musical personalities and varied instrumental colors that become more and more compelling, finally uniting into a cohesive whole in the last movement. Hindemith has dethroned the dominating concert soloist, which has now become a contributing member of a unified group. Solo passages are gradually transformed into collective teamwork throughout. Each instrumental soloist is now one of five, *prima inter pares*, better perhaps *gleich unter gleich*, revealing Hindemith’s instrumental democracy. “Whoever is looking for political relevance in music: here, in Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik*, it can be found.”38 This concept of political relevance in *Kleine Kammermusik* was first suggested by Albrecht Gürshing:

Paul Hindemith demonstrated something unambiguous in his *Kleine Kammermusik*. It is a unique document that deserves a closer examination: the “roaring twenties” are an exciting time, not only in the arts—politics, at least in Germany, is also a relevant component of everyday life. After the First World War, the German Reich had undeniably collapsed. For the survival from this political ruin, it had to learn something of what Great Britain, France, and the USA already knew: democracy. As early as 1933, this learning process already ended. However, some understood this learning process instantly. And one set it to music [in 1922]: Paul Hindemith.39

But the *Kleine Kammermusik* is far more than a musical illustration of democracy. In choosing the wind quintet to demonstrate equality, Hindemith selected the most sonically pluralistic of all small performing groups. Among chamber ensembles, the wind quintet is the quintessential musical “melting pot,” a democratic ensemble certainly, in which one combines the timbres and distinctive nature of four diverse woodwinds with one brass instrument. As with


39 Ibid., 355.
the so-called American “melting pot,” which does not condense all citizens into one undifferentiated whole, a woodwind quintet is rarely a homogeneous blend of five sounds. Hindemith expanded his palette of timbres throughout the course of the work, and in doing so he created a blended fabric of winds. The total effect is a composite of new sonorities rather than of five distinct voices working independently with or in opposition to each other.

**PREMIERES AND PERFORMANCES**

“Stravinskys grotesker Witz Schule gemacht hat”
Walter Jacobs

The *Frankfurter Bläser-Kammermusik vereinigung* began rehearsing the quintet on February 28.\(^{40}\) It was then premiered in a series of concerts throughout the Weimar Republic, the first taking place during the second *Rheinische-Kammermusikfestes* in Cologne, held 12–16 June 1922. Hindemith had arranged for the *Kleine Kammermusik* to be premiered in Cologne, by the *Kölner Bläservereinigung*, only five weeks after he completed it. The festival was devoted to the presentation and premieres of wind chamber music, a serendipitous and welcome program for that time.\(^{41}\)

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\(^{40}\) According to Hagemann’s letter to Schoenberg 1 March 1923, the quintet had begun rehearsing the day before the letter was penned, which would be February 28, 1923. The manuscript horn part used by Johannes Ruge shows many of the dates of performance. These parts were passed around through various quintets until publication in 1961.

\(^{41}\) Gerhard Tischer, ed., “2. Rheinisches Kammermusikfest,” *Rheinische Musik- und Theater zeitung Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Musik* 23: 17/18 (6 May 1922): 149. Hindemith’s op. 16 was included because it was a Cologne premiere. Although June 12 is usually quoted in the literature as the premiere of the wind quintet—and the date corresponds with Hindemith’s entry in his catalog, this could be based on a mistake by the composer. In the program for the festival reprinted in *Rheinische Musik- und Theater-Zeitung*, only the second day, 13 June, was dedicated to premiering new music.
Both the Frankfurter Bläservereinigung and the Kölner Bläservereinigung were invited to perform in the six-day festival of chamber music. The appearance of the two celebrated wind quintets provided a full complement of woodwinds plus horns. Five renowned string quartets had also been invited to participate in the festival, making possible the performance of Mozart’s Serenade in B major for thirteen winds (K.V. 361) with chamber performances of his Symphony in D major, “Haffner” (K. 385) and Joseph Haydn’s Harmoniemesse in B-flat. The festival was recognized for its remarkable programming of wind music, with the premieres of Hindemith’s new quintet, a clarinet quartet by Kurt Schubert, and one by Ewald Straesser (1867–1922). The performance of significantly more than the usual amount of wind music is evidence of a growing interest and validates the comments by Fleury and by Hagemann in their letters to Schoenberg several months earlier.

Of the premieres presented at the festival, Hindemith’s Kleine Kammermusik was singled out as the quintessential anti-Romantic work, with a number of positive reviews emphasizing form, unique use of instruments, and maturity in the composer’s style. One anonymous reviewer

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42 The five quartets were the Budapest String Quartet; Gewandhaus quartett, Leipzig; Havemann quartett, Berlin; Mairecker-Buxbaum quartett, Vienna; and the Mannheimer Streichquartet.

43 Hagemann’s letter of 1 March 1923 to Arnold Schoenberg: “I hope that quite soon you will write either a wind quintet or something for the flute, e.g., a sonatina. Such a work would be of greatest interest not only here where we understand and admire your art, but also in Paris, London and Berlin where the interest in wind instruments is now awakening.” Library of Congress, Arnold Schoenberg Archives, Box 17, Folder 47. Wind chamber music was slowly becoming popular, assisted by the performances and positive reviews of the Nielsen and Hindemith quintets. The flutist and conductor Louis Fleury heard both quartets and wrote: “The idea of grouping wind instruments, in larger or smaller numbers, without the adjunction of the piano, but exclusive of the strings, and of thus giving concerts where flutes, oboe, clarinets, bassoons and horns only are heard, still appears to our contemporaries as a new idea which is more or less interesting, according to each one’s taste, but, in any case, as a performance ‘in the margin’ of genuine chamber music.” “Chamber Music for Wind Instruments,” The Chesterian, New Series, No. 33 (September 1923): 111. Fleury would later appeal for a copy of Schoenberg’s quintet for a performance by his group, the Société moderne d’instruments à vent
believed it signaled the beginning of new standard of wind chamber music. Like Erpf, some critics stressed atonal aspects of the work, usually seen as a humorous element. Others were concerned with the “jazz element” or the parodistic elements (Stravinskyisms), they perceived in the work. Hindemith’s sense of humor and parody, principal traits that set him apart from other German composers of the period, were collectively viewed in a negative light. A short review appeared in the evening edition of the Frankfurter Zeitung (Hindemith’s hometown paper) on June 26, noting perhaps ironically that “a wind quintet by Paul Hindemith of Frankfurt was successfully premiered during the festival. It appears to be a witty parody of an unlucky serenade, and it received unequivocal applause even from the conservative Cologne audience.”

In a review of the Cologne premiere in Die Musik, Walter Jacobs, the well-known music critic for the Kölnerischen Zeitung, wrote, “Of the newer composers was otherwise heard, in this season, and for the first time, Bartók, Hába, Hindemith, by the last-named, a little Kammermusik für Bläser in which Stravinsky’s grotesque wit was imitated.” In his article “Musikfest in Köln,” the German musicologist and author Willi Kahl characterized both the Kleine Kammermusik and Hindemith’s Quartet, op. 16, as “works of an optimistic, already well defined and unique personality. The quintet did not provide any profound revelations, but was freshly set

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44 Unsigned review of the score, Die Musik XV/6 (March 1923): 454. “Quelle geschöpft hat, und man freut sich an dem unmittelbaren Ausdruck die ser wirklich echten Kammermusik.”

45 Frankfurter Zeitung, 26 June 1922, 469 (Abendblatt). The critic was later identified as Hermann Unger (1886–1958), a composition student of Max Reger.

down with instinctive confidence.” After reviewing the recently published score, Karl Westermeyer, a champion of the new German music, wrote the following:

Chamber music demands thematic precision, compels tonal asceticism and is the inexorable criterion of the power of invention. More than desire, the inner drive must lead to this form of expression, otherwise it remains anemic and lifeless. . . . It is precisely [these] bold hopes that Paul Hindemith awakens; namely, he has the qualities of the true creator, something which is completely apart from everything that can be learned, from everything that is workmanlike. The impact of a composition lies in the revelation of a creative personality whose intellectual superiority intensifies the weight of the impression. . . . If one compares Hindemith’s Quartet op. 16 with the Kammermusik für fünf Bläser op. 24 No. 2, one can detect a welcome progress in formal perfection. The expanse of the individual movements is reduced, the structure of their content is more concentrated and effective. In both works is revealed a power of artistic inspiration which leaves the usual daily mediocrity far behind.

The review by Gerhard Tischer, editor of Rheinisches Musik- und Theaterzeitung, emphasized the sense of humor he found in Hindemith’s new composition. Tischer, however, contributed an ominous but politically significant sentiment to his comments:

A piece by Hába [Alois] was heard as well as two works by the Frankfurt Bolshevik [Frankfurter Musikbolschewisten] Paul Hindemith. We heard the first performance here of a spirited string quartet and the very witty little wind pieces, short, rich and distinctive in their impact.

Tischer’s characterization of Hindemith as the “Frankfurter Musikbolschewisten” was a prophecy for the future radical political developments that would occur in Germany. In 1922 the


term “Bolshevist” was already an emotionally charged and anti-modernist term, referred to extreme radicals or revolutionaries. In musical terms, the words “atonal,” “Jewish-Bolshevist,” “modernist,” and even “international” were nearly synonymous. Along with many others, Hindemith would be declared a member of the degenerate Bolshevistic Weimar Republic by the conservative musical press. During the Nazi campaign to rid Germany of what was deemed degenerate art and music, *Entarte Kunst*, the music of Jews, “modernists” and “atonalists,” was forbidden. The music of Hindemith, and that of Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Křenek, Hanns Eisler, Kurt Weill, and Igor Stravinsky, and many others was withdrawn from the public sphere, and eventually performances would be forbidden in Germany.50

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50 However, --and probably because of its genre, --the *Kleine Kammermusik* was one of Hindemith’s first compositions to be performed in Berlin in 1936, after many performances of his music had been withdrawn, and his music was banned in Nazi Germany. Erik Levi, *Music in the Third Reich* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 15. For the 1938 *Entartete Musik* Exhibition in Düsseldorf, the music of Hindemith (*Sancta Susanna*), Schoenberg (*Kammersymphonie*, op. 9), Stravinsky (*L’Histoire du Soldat*), and many others was displayed as works that were forbidden. Also included as *entartete* were Hindemith’s *Unterweisung im Tonsatz*, Schoenberg’s *Harmonielehre*, and Hermann Erpf’s *Studien zur Harmonie und Klangtechnik der neuern Musik*, along with the periodicals *Melos* and *Anbruch*. Heinrich Strobel, writes of this period: “One day, Hindemith, whose music like that of many other great composers, had been forbidden, must leave the Hochschule –precisely at the moment when his name had become a symbol for living German music throughout the world.” “Introduction.” Paul Hindemith. B. Schott’s Söhne, Mainz, 1961. 13.
The Kleine Kammermusik and Nielsen’s Kvintet in Berlin

After the premiere in Cologne, the Kleine Kammermusik was not performed for nearly a year. In the meantime, B. Schott’s Söhne published the miniature score, a copy of which Hindemith carried to Copenhagen during a series of concerts he performed there with the Amar Quintet.51 After a performance on November 29, Hindemith presented Felumb with the score of Kleine Kammermusik.52 Two performances of the quintet in 1923 were particularly important, but for different reasons. The first performance took place in Berlin during International Music Week in March 1923, with the Copenhagen Wind Quintet performing both Nielsen’s Kvintet and the Kleine Kammermusik. Three months later, the Kleine Kammermusik was performed in Frankfurt by the Frankfurter Bläser-Kammermusik vereinigung, the performers for whom it was written.

Berlin’s prestigious International Music Week festival took place at the end of March 1923. Under auspices of Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik, the festival was attended by a great many composers, including Nielsen and Schoenberg.53 Of course there was no quintet by

51 Unlike Carl Nielsen who complained he could not get “a whole pile of works” published—a group which included his own quintet—Kleine Kammermusik was published by Schott in October, just five months after it was composed.

52 Felumb would later annotate the score Hindemith gave him: “Performed for the first time, Berlin, 29/3/23.” Photocopy of this in Svend Ravnikilde “Nielsen Hier, Hindemith Da: Aufpassen, Arnold, Du must Dir ein Eigenes Bläserquintett Einfallen Lassen!” Österreichische Musikzeitschrift 51, no. 6–7 (1996): 428. The program included Bernhard Sekles’s Divertimento, op. 20, Percy Grainger’s “Molly on the Shore,” and Beethoven’s String Quartet in E minor, op. 59, no. 2. Two days later, on December 1, 1922, at the Hornungog Møllers Koncertsal in Copenhagen, the Amar Quintet performed Arthur Honegger’s String Quartet in C minor, Anton Webern’s Five Pieces, op. 5, and Hindemith’s String Quartet, op. 16 (1921).

53 While similar to the August 1922 performances in Salzburg of the ISCM, the festival in Berlin in March of 1923 was the most important with nearly all German and Austrian composers submitting compositions for performance. Berlin was a large and cosmopolitan city, “the libertine city of the Weimar Republic ” functioning as the venue for both national and international performances of new music.
Schoenberg to round out the wind program. Instead, the program committee had added a work for strings, the Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5, of Anton Webern, played by the Havemann Quintet, which was performed between the works by Nielsen and Hindemith. The appearance of a ‘foreign’ group of musicians from Denmark was an uncommon event—but the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, duly acknowledged for their fine performances of the Nielsen and the Hindemith quintets, was appropriately recognized for its contribution to nurturing collegial relations between international sections of the ISCM.

“Truly genuine chamber music”
Karl Holl

The concert in Berlin was a personal triumph for Felumb, who had worked hard to achieve a collegial musical relationship and exchange of music and musicians between Denmark and Germany and later, England and the United States. Critics acknowledged the new musical relationship between Denmark and Germany. The writer and critic Adolf Weissmann, first president of the German section of the IGNM, attended the concert and later wrote:

It was an evening in which the well-structured and melodious-sounding wind quintet of Carl Nielsen, and the extremely exquisite “Kleine Kammermusik” by Paul Hindemith were performed by the guests from Copenhagen, under the musical direction of the oboist Svend Felumb, whose playing enhanced the overall sound. In this way, the Danish New Music Society [of the ISCM] demonstrated its brotherhood with the German section.54

The review from the German critic Paul Schwers was also positive:

Next [after a performance of the Webern Five Pieces, op. 5] was the earth-born Hindemith with his fresh and boldly drafted *Kleine Kammermusik* for five wind instruments (op. 24, no. 2). That sounds more like it: a cheerful, well sounding divertimento, not of Mozartian refinement and elegance, but gaily and confidently executed, and, with an occasional flirtation with atonal arbitrations, thanks to a healthy artistic mind, saved from a-musical derailments. The committed efforts of the Havemann Quintet and the carefully nuanced, elegant and virtuoso performance of the guests from Copenhagen deserve the highest recognition.55

Later Paul Schwers wrote a more comprehensive review of the concert performed under the aegis of the German ISCM/IGNM, taking aim at both the composition and Schott, Hindemith’s publisher:

The activity displayed during the past season by the German section of the International Society for Contemporary Music culminated impressively with a series of concerts of both chamber and orchestral music. First of all, the Danish section sent a select ensemble of wind instrument virtuosi—members of the Royal Copenhagen Orchestra—who gave a performance of a Quintet by Carl Nielsen, and the *Kleine Kammermusik* by Paul Hindemith. The contrast between these two composers, each belonging to a different


In his review Schwers also mentions the Havemann quartet, which had performed Webern’s Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5, between the Nielsen and the Hindemith quintets. His comments about Webern’s Quartet are an engaging reflection of the tenor of the time, and thus bear repeating: “The string quartet in five movements (op. 5) of the hypersensitive Austrian von Webern takes about 12 minutes; therefore it was presented to the audience twice. This is—so to speak—micro-phonetic music. One has to sit very closely to the performers, and it would be best to bring also a sound-enhancing hearing aid, to comprehend and to understand these intimate soul-whisperings, these neurasthenic sighs and quiet sobs. The first time I sat too far in the back and heard only the indecisive chirping and whimpering. The next time I sat quite in the front—I still could not recognize clearly which exquisite secret the four players elicited out of their instruments, but I decided to believe that the spiritual essence is administered to the audience in multiple dilutions in a sound-homeopathic way, and that over time, after about 24 prescriptions—or better performances—a certain impression-precipitation would be noticeable. So, let’s try at first with a dozen more performance dosages.” Translation by Dorothee Schubel.
musical generation, was striking. Neither of them is problematic, but Hindemith’s gaiety is that of a young man who does not seem to court glory, and who never fears to compromise himself by publishing mere trifles. It is not always his own self, however, which prompts him to compose so prolifically, but rather the publisher who wishes him to make the most of the reputation he now enjoys. In spite of a voluminous output, he never loses his freshness and never fails to startle his hearers with some new feature they would hear nowhere else. Take, for example, the slow movement of this Kleine Kammermusik—in places a carelessly written work—a melancholy passage above an ostinato which unveils the very soul of the composer. It was played by the Danish guests, under the musical guidance of Svend Christian Felumb, an oboist of extraordinary skill and artistic feeling.  

**Kleine Kammermusik and L’ Histoire du soldat in Frankfurt-am-Main**

The premiere of the quintet in Hindemith’s hometown took place in the Frankfurter Schauspielhaus under the auspices of Chamber Music Festival of New Music (17–24 June 1923). The city, home to the critical theorists Theodore Adorno (1903–1969) and Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) was known for its incipient democracy. Located near the French occupation zone, Frankfurt had expanded to become a trade fair city, provided numerous consumer goods and varied musical sponsorships, an opera house and national theater. Citizens benefited from the rich concert offerings of Frankfurt—in which one could hear performances of works by Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartók, Busoni, Kurt Weill, and of course, Hindemith. One festival of modern music at Frankfurt-am-Main, organized by Hermann Scherchen, became famous, but not

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56 Paul Schwers, “Aus den Berliner Konzertsälen,” *Allgemeine Musik Zeitung* (13 April 1923): 240–241. The Berlin Festival of New Music was more important than the Second Rhine Chamber Music Festival in Cologne or the festival in Frankfurt. The trio version of Stravinsky’s *L’Histoire du Soldat* was supposed to be premiered at the opening concert of the Festival of the ISCM in Salzburg the previous August. It had been withdrawn for lack of rehearsal time and lack of money. Stravinsky was left basically unrepresented in what was supposed to be the most prestigious festival of new music for the year, although one Jean Wiéner played his brief Piano Rag Music “with enormous success.” See Stephen Walsh, *A Creative Spring* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 362.
for presenting the first performance of the *Kleine Kammermusik* in Hindemith’s hometown. It is renowned for being the festival where the German premiere of Stravinsky’s *L’ Histoire du soldat* took place. The performance of the concert suite on 20 June 1923, conducted by Scherchen, along with the premiere of the *Kleine Kammermusik*, has now become an accepted landmark in the evolution of modern chamber music. Hindemith, who had earlier stopped playing the violin in public in favor of the viola, returned to the violin to perform the premiere at Stravinsky’s request. The Frankfurt critics favored the work of the hometown composer over Stravinsky’s *L’histoire du soldat*, seeing it as “a passable way into the future,” “cheerful and unpathetic,” and “truly genuine chamber music.”

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57 The 28 September 1918 premiere of *L’ Histoire du Soldat* was conducted by the Ernest Ansermet in Lausanne. Due to the outbreak of Spanish influenza, it was five years before another staged performance took place, the first being in the Frankfurter Schauspielhaus. Stravinsky later made an arrangement for violin, clarinet, and piano. During the two-day festival Kurt Weill’s String Quartet op. 8 was premiered by Hindemith and the Amar quartet. Schoenberg’s *Lieder aus dem Buch der hängenden Gärten* was performed, as was Hindemith’s *Marienleben*, and Ferruccio Busoni’s *Fantasia contrappuntistica*. Kurt Weill was in Frankfurt for the festival and heard Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik*.

58 *L’ Histoire du Soldat* was performed in German translation; all parts were performed except numbers 3, 8, and 9.


61 Theodor Adorno, “Neue Musik. Sieben Kammerkonzerte in Frankfurt am Main,” *Zeitschrift für Musik* 90 (1923): 315. Italics are Adorno’s; he would later become one of Hindemith’s and Schoenberg’s sharpest critics. Adorno (1903–1969) was a German philosopher and writer on music. He studied composition with Alban Berg and piano with Edward Steuermann; he also became acquainted with Schoenberg and Webern and corresponded with Krenek, Hindemith, and Bartók. Adorno became editor of the journal *Musikblätter des Anbruch* (after 1929, *Anbruch*), 1928–32, and was a regular contributor of articles and reviews to the contemporary music journals *Pult und Taktstock*, *Die Musik*, *Zeitschrift für Musik*, and *Neue Musikzeitung* in the 1920s and early 1930s.

In his article “Neue Musik in Frankfurt,” Karl Holl noted the following (writing first about Stravinsky’s *L’histoire du soldat*):

Everything is given the tightest expression; the music so much so that there is but one more step to the nihilism of rhythmic sound. Witty points, deeply touching sweet tidbits (the violin!). The whole thing half comedy, half horror show, captivating for a while, but tiring in its (longer) duration. *Fin de siècle.* One would have gone away almost empty if Paul Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik für fünf Bläser* had not opened the program. Five brief, extremely intimately structured little movements which exploit the tonal character of flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon, playing, singing and juggling. Revival of the oldest spirit of the suite; friendly illumination of a passable way to the future.\(^{63}\)

Theodor Adorno heard the premiere in Frankfurt and was not alone in his rejection of Stravinsky’s work—“*in spite of Hindemith’s fantastic violin playing*.”\(^{64}\) However, he was more sanguine about the *Kleine Kammermusik* than *L’histoire du soldat*:

> . . . The cheerful and unpathetic wind suite shows that what in Busoni’s weighty prose remains a joke has become serious and real.—Igor Stravinsky’s *Histoire du soldat*, offered as the middle piece of the performance, had to disappoint. The expansive work is conceived as a mixture between musical pantomime, scenic dialogue, and a melodramatically based lecture. . . . *in spite of Hindemith’s fantastic violin playing*]


\(^{64}\) Adorno. Emphasis is Adorno’s “Hindemiths Bläserquintett op. 24, 2, leitete den dritten Abend ein. Wer jedes Werk des Komponisten als in sich ruhendes, persönlich voll befrachtetes Dokument nimmt, verkennt darüber das Spezifische seiner nicht bekennerschen, sondern auf über personale Sachlichkeit ausgerichteten Haltung, die ein Werk dur fand die andere korrigiert, wo es not ist, ohne jedes einzelne anders als technisch-musikalisch zum besonderen Problem zu machen, und die in ihrer Ganzeit so fest gegründet steht, dass sie es wagen darf, im beglückend leichten Spiel sich zu lösen, ohne darum spielerisch zu warden; die heitere und unpathetische Bläsersuite zeigt etwas von dem Ernst und wirklich geworden, was in Busonis gewichtiger Attitude Spass bleibt – Igor Stravinsky’s *Histoire du soldat,*” als Mittelstück der ganzen Veranstaltung geboten musste enttäusche. Das umfängliche ist als Mischform zwischen musikalischer, Pantomime, szenischem Dialog und melodramatisch grundierter Vorlesung ausgedacht. . . . Daran vermochten die Dekorationen von Auberjonois, Richard Weicherts Regie, Scherchens vorzügliche musikalische Leitung nichts zu ändern: auch nicht Hindemiths phantastisches Geigenspiel.”

\(^{65}\) Ibid.
Schott published the score of the *Kleine Kammermusik* in October 1922. Again, critics who reviewed the score took a positive outlook and added encouraging words, noting that Hindemith “had the qualities of a true creator.” In what is perhaps the first acknowledgement of woodwind music having parity with string music, one critic who read the score delivers the highest approbation for a work of this type: “truly genuine chamber music.”

Five pieces, very characteristically invented, appropriate to the winds which at times delightfully make music indiscriminately. A small work, smartly set down with its own specific cast. But judged as an artistic work this opus seems to me to be more an occasional work which one probably likes to dismiss given Hindemith’s talent, but yet is somewhat annoyed that he of all people allows himself to write things occasionally which at first glance look quite modern and up-to-date but which with a closer look would hardly be of interest to anyone if they were not by Hindemith. For what is precisely lacking is a self-absorption in modern expression, that which is real and authentic, which descends into the depths to dig for treasures. Sometimes it would be more honest, perhaps even more difficult to be less consciously modern since that means: Show your colors! Viewed as a whole, in spite of everything one gets the impression that the composer has drawn from cool bubbling spring, and one takes pleasure in the direct expression of this truly genuine chamber music.”

Further, another anonymous critic writes

Hindemith had discovered the healthy standard for the chamber music of the present. Even in this work the feeling for form is extraordinary. He never goes off into something endless like the Reger imitators, and is never abrupt like the circle around Schönberg. He

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66 Westermeyer, ibid.

is simply not a decadent follower. That is demonstrated again in the strong invention, the transparency of work, the bow to the homophonic-melodic with often primitive accompaniment technique and the fire in purpose. The fourth movement is interesting from the overarching rhythmical standpoint, representing in its formal entirety an episodic passage.\textsuperscript{68}

Subsequent to the Cologne premiere, the \textit{Frankfurter Bläser-Kamermusik vereinigung} premiered the \textit{Kleine Kammermusik} in Leipzig on 9 and 10 December 1923. One performance was broadcast over the Frankfurt Rundfunk on 17 April 1924. They also performed it three years later, on 18 March and 11 November 1926. According to annotations on Johannes Ruge’s horn part, the quintet was played in public at least seven times between 1922 and 1926.\textsuperscript{69} While performances of the \textit{Kleine Kammermusik}—and all of Hindemith’s music—would soon be banned in Germany, the performance history would begin anew in the United States.

\textbf{ANALYSIS}

\textit{“Aber bitonalität gibts es, und wir haben hier ein Beispiel vor uns!”}

Hermann Erpf

When the quintet was premiered in Cologne in June 1922, Hindemith revealed to the audience at the second \textit{Rheinische-Kamermusikfestes} a different aspect of his creative personality. He introduced a twentieth-century regeneration of the Classical wind divertimento.


Translated by Dorothee Schubel.

Having previously written for larger wind and string groups, Hindemith turned to writing for winds only with the composition of this work, his single extant chamber music work for wind ensemble. Using the term “bläser” only in his internal labeling, Hindemith instead employed the traditional genre label—Kammermusik—as an innovation in his chamber music. As with the Classical model of a serenade, the quintet begins and ends with a march—a form previously used to accompany the arrival and departure of the musicians. Although the quintet was initially characterized as a serenade by the critics who reviewed it, the character and number of movements point more in the direction of the divertimento. Within its five “short, rich and distinctive” movements, Hindemith demonstrated a new and unique melodic vocabulary, displayed by agile and vibrant winds.\(^\text{70}\) Designed with a Baroque-like type of mechanical energy throughout, the quintet makes distinctive use of the diverse wind timbres that outline Hindemith’s use of thick contrapuntal textures.\(^\text{71}\) But with the unparalleled clarity of wind instruments, individual parts are now encased within a smoother, more striking sonority, and they stand out clearly as independent lines in Hindemith’s new, heavily polyphonic style.

The design of the five disparate yet complementary movements is straightforward: with the exception of the fourth movement, all movements are constructed on a fundamental ternary design. Hindemith chose not to use strict classical forms, instead rearranging—or at best, parodying—the traditional formats. In all five movements Hindemith’s then system of


\(^{71}\) Counterpoint is a basic characteristic of most German music, but the more rigorous contrapuntal writing that Hindemith uses here is one of the traits that distinguish his compositions apart from the music of Stravinsky or his French contemporaries during the 1920s.
composition and heavy individual use of the chromatic scale are much in evidence; there are no key signatures, tonalities are rarely clearly defined, and shifting key centers are prevalent. The opening movement, \textit{Lustig}, is an ABA-coda, initially set on a tonal center of C; the coda ends on a tonal center of F. The second movement, marked \textit{Walzer Durchweg sehr leise}, is built as AA′ BCBA-coda; it begins on tonal center of D-flat and ends on F major. Made up of both irregular section and phrase lengths, the movement does not observe the measured regularity of a nineteenth-century waltz, but functions as a caricature of the form for which it is named. The middle movement, marked \textit{Ruhig und einfach}, is an ABA-coda beginning on a tonal center of G, ending on B major. The fourth movement, \textit{Schnell Viertel}, is modeled on the Baroque ritornello principle with six ritornello sections and five solo sections. The ritornellos begin on the basic tonal center of B-flat and end on F major. The final movement, a ternary ABA-coda \textit{Sehr lebhaft}, begins and ends on E major. On a higher level, the first and final movements also offer a ternary design in terms of spirit and tempo as well as formal design.

Clear cut and easily perceptible, the motivic material for each movement is well defined, providing each movement with a discrete musical character and organic cohesion. The unifying rhythmic devices—syncopations, hemiolas, ostinatos, repeated notes, and—in a nod to the rhythmic practices of the fourteenth century, the use of isorhythm—function throughout to unify the work as a whole, as well as internally unifying individual movements. Besieged with meter changes, the opening movement features ever-present ostinatos and cross rhythms. Hindemith’s persistent use of ostinato, a feature for which Stravinsky was renowned, suggests informed knowledge of Stravinsky’s more recent compositions. Although Del Mar suggests that Hindemith had not been influenced by Schoenberg, Bartók, or in particular Stravinsky in his
formative years, Hindemith was, in fact, heavily involved in the performance and premieres of various works of Webern, Berg, Schoenberg, and Stravinsky when he composed the *Kleine Kammermusik.* Stravinsky’s influence in the quintet is surely obvious in the recurrent use of ostinato and the heavily accented metrical rhythms, if not in Hindemith’s choice of winds. Contemporary critics disapproved of these “Stravinskyisms,” but some of these practices would later be translated into Hindemith’s own neoclassical musical language (see Figure 3).

Hindemith’s technique of stressing a line not tied to a thematic motive dependent upon harmony, but to a series of themes with harmony controlled by the melody, created concern on the part of listeners and pundits alike. Upon hearing the distinctive contrapuntal aggressiveness and free use of dissonance, critics initially pronounced the opening movement atonal, polytonal, or in the words of one critic, “bitonal.” “Aber bitonalität gibt es, und wir haben hier ein Beispiel vor uns!” trumped the German musicologist and theorist Hermann Erpf, who heard an early performance of the quintet over the *Frankfurter Rundfunk* in April 1924. After acquiring

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72 Norman Del Mar, *Paul Hindemith: European Music in the Twentieth Century,* ed. Howard Hartog (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957), 61. One can also note the commonalities between Stravinsky’s full version of *L’Histoire du Soldat* (1918) and Hindemith’s *Kammermusik,* op. 24, no. 1 (1922). Stravinsky’s work is scored for a septet of violin, double bass, clarinet, bassoon, cornet, trombone, and percussion. Op. 24, no. 1 was written for string quartet, double bass, flute, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, percussion, and harmonium. This uses of varied winds extends to Webern’s Chamber Concerto and to Kurt Weill’s Concerto for Violin and Winds.

73 The term Neoclassicism was first applied to Stravinsky’s music in 1923. According to Daniel Albright, in 1923 Stravinsky gave himself credit for originating Neoclassicism with *Pulcinella* in 1919. Albright 2004, 276 and 281.

74 Hermann Erpf (fl. 1898–1946) was a German musicologist, theorist, and composer. His public assertion—branding the quintet as “bitonal”—colored the quintet’s reputation in Germany for years. “Das Hörer lebnis der Neuen Musik,” *Vom Wesen der Neuen Musik* (Schwab: Buch-verlag der Demokratischer Druck- und Verlagsgesellschaft, 1949), 75. “Wir haben also hier eine Melodie in einer anderenTonart also die Begleitung, ein ausgesprochener Fall von Doppeltonart. Der Ausdruck “Polytonalität,” der viel gebraucht wird, sollte nur mit äussersterVorsicht angewandt werden; den es dürfte kaum eine Musik geben, in der mehr als zwei Tonarten erkennbar, hörbar nebeneinander geführt warden. Aber Bitonalität gibt es, und wir haben hier ein Beispiel vor uns.” Hindemith’s tonal ambiguity led Erpf to consider the bitonal material as the defining aspect of the work. Erpf was a respected enough as a composer to have his string quartet, the Satzfolge no. 1, op. 26, premiered at Donaueschingen in 1924. See *Donaueschinger Musiktage,* 23.
a score he published sections of the Lustig movement to substantiate his assertion, using it as an example of the new German musical practices. Hindemith’s emphasis on the horizontal aspect with little consideration for the harmonic element and the resultant sequences of chord progressions contributed to the belief that he wrote with no regard for harmonic consequences (see Figure 4). While Hindemith’s harmonic style is primarily triadic, Erpf reacted to

75 Ibid. “Paul Hindemith Wind Quintet, op. 24/II, I. In the following example, an independent melody leads above a two-part ostinato; in measure 5 a pedal point is added. The relationship between the obstinate figure and the measure lines is significant: the latter changes between 4/4 and 3/4, so that the obstinate figure receives altering accents. Hindemith likes these shifts of rhythm inside measure lines; they appear often in his music, as we have observed them in the first measures of example 1. The melody is divided into two sections, the first section, performed by the oboe, is repeated in measure 5 ff., with an additional part added by the flute. These two parts are related to each other, analogous to the two parts of the ostinato. What is the harmonic relationship of both, melody and accompaniment? The ostinato obviously forms a cadence in d minor; but the melody does not comply. If the melody is played separately, it will be obvious that it belongs to a minor (b-d#-f# is the dominant of the dominant, a# in measures 3 and 7 is a raised upper changing note - suspension - of g#, eb in measure 5 (read as d#) a changing note to e). The melody is in a different key than the accompaniment, a definite case of double-tonality. The frequently used expression “polytonality” should be applied with extreme caution; because in a musical piece there are probably rarely more than two keys audible at the same time. But bitonality exists, and we have an example in front of us.” Erpf, 75.
Hindemith’s use of simultaneous major and minor thirds and flattened fifths, sevenths, and ninths which disguised the underlying triads. The predominance of dissonance in the opening movement governed by the harsh and biting wind medium is now perceived as flashes of color in what would otherwise be considered conventional harmony. Viewed through a present-day lens, the dissonant counterpoint of the *Lustig* movement seems neither systematically atonal, nor even “bitonal.” For certain, the first movement is not diatonic in the traditional sense, but the most compelling sound one hears is extreme dissonance in an opaque wind setting. The dissonance to which Erpf objects in the opening theme of the quintet is the linear model for which Hindemith would come to be known. An exemplar of his use of quickly changing tonal groups, is the opening chromatic theme which is constructed in “diatonic units linked melodically by the principle of overlap that informs the harmonic innovations of previous centuries.  

In this period Hindemith’s tonalities are nevertheless always inherent, although rarely established, and constantly obscured by the superimposition of different keys. His dense contrapuntal textures complicate harmonic analysis of the vertical tone structures. The tonal ambiguity results from the rapidly shifting modal or diatonic segments and the strictly independent movement of the melodic lines. While traditional systems of functional harmony could not explain Hindemith’s tonal structure at that time, he would later write about his use of

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76 Ian Kemp, *Hindemith* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1970), 12. Kemp continues “The aural demands of this swift melodic modulation are compensated for by familiar rhythmic patterns, which quite naturally release it from harmonic obligations.”
Figure 5. Hindemith, *Kleine Kammermusik*, op.24/II, I: *Lustig*, mm. 1-6. Quick changing tonal groups in melodic line.

contrapuntal lines with no particular tonality. Shortly after completing the *Kleine Kammermusik*, Hindemith composed *Das Marienleben*, a cycle of fifteen songs for soprano and piano on poems of Ranier Maria Rilke. Common to both works in his chromatic style is an emphasis on the horizontal aspect. Here, too, his melodic ideas trumped the harmonic element; the vocal or solo instrumental lines simply made sense on their own. In the introduction to the 1953 edition of the song cycle Hindemith discussed his earlier style and defended himself against the angular atonality of the 1920s:

A quarter-century ago, it was widely believed that we were witnessing the dawn of a new age of counterpoint. The composer who wished to write contrapuntal music needed only, it was thought, to invent lines that made sense in themselves. For the harmonies resulting from their combination and for the logical sequence of those harmonies Heaven would provide.\(^{77}\)

Particularly evident in the first movement is Hindemith’s belief that the harmonic results would, through a natural process, be satisfactory and logically resolved. With each successive movement of the *Kleine Kammermusik*, Hindemith’s tonal relationships become less ambiguous; the bitonality to which Erpf refers is unique to the opening movement. In the final movement the traditional tonal relationships are clearly defined, and as noted earlier, the final movement begins and ends in the key of E.

Hindemith revealed his intent for tempos in a brief letter to Svend Felumb immediately

prior to the Berlin premiere of the quintet. After the premiere in Cologne, Felumb wrote to Hindemith inquiring about tempo markings. With the exception of the Waltz movement, the miniature score did not indicate key signatures, metronome marking, time signatures, or meter changes, only descriptive markings beginning each movement. Both Felumb and Hindemith were travelling: Felumb to London and New York on behalf of the Danish contingent of the International Society of Contemporary Music. Hindemith, on tour with the Amar Quartet, had left Copenhagen to perform in Prague, then Paris, and had only time for a short reply to Felumb’s request. Both were travelling: Felumb to London and New York on behalf of the Danish contingent of the International Society of Contemporary Music. Hindemith, on tour with the Amar Quartet, had left Copenhagen to perform in Prague, then Paris, and had only time for a short reply to Felumb’s request. The letter written from Halle an der Saale, and dated 23 March 1923, was received by Felumb only days before the 29 March premiere in Berlin. Hindemith concludes the letter with, “I hope you enjoy the piece and wish you all the best for the Berlin performance. I need to go on already. In haste my sincere greetings to you and your colleagues (especially Mr. Hagemann), Your Paul Hindemith (More soon) Halle a[n der]/S[aale]
21.III.23”

78 These are the only directions concerning the Kleine Kammermusik until Hindemith reviewed and prepared a later version in 1956. According to Ravnikilde, the oboist E. Jacobsen, a former student of Svend Felumb, sent this letter in to Kurt von Fischer in October 1972 after the death of Svend Felumb. Fischer, who is one of the editors of Hindemith’s Collected Works, made it available to the Hindemith Institute.

79 Note that Hindemith takes time to send special greetings to Hagemann, who by this time surely realized Schoenberg did not intend to write something for him. Instead, he turned to Hindemith, who wrote the Kanonische Sonatine für zwei Flöt en, op. 31, no. 1, later in the autumn of the same year (c. August–September 1923). The letter reads: Lieber Freund Felumb, Ihre Briefe haben mich erst jetzt erreicht, nachdem sie mir auf meinen Reisen immer zunachst gefahren sind. Für heute nur kurz die gewünschten Auskünfte: I. Satz ....Die Tempo angaben haben nur ungefähre Gültigkeit. Tempo rubato und andere sehr bemerkbare Zeitmass verschiebungen gibt es im ganzen Stück nicht, ausgenommen an den Stellen, wo sie vorgeschrieben sind und beim Hornsatz (einer der letzten Takte) im IV. Und einigen Über eitungen im letzten Satz. Ich hoffe, dass Ihnen das Stück Freude macht und wünsche alles Gute für
As Hindemith indicates, the tempo markings he provided had only “approximate validity,” with “no tempo rubato;” descriptive indications at the beginning of each movement or section have as much credence as do his tempo markings. When Hindemith made revisions in 1961, he reduced the tempos in the first three movements, generally considered the least technically difficult. In the opening movement, originally a quarter note = 112–126, is changed to a quarter note = 112; in Movement II, the dotted half = 60–63 became a dotted half = 66; in Movement III, the eighth note = 132 became the eighth note = 130, a minimal change. The last two movements, considered the most difficult to perform, had their tempos increased: in Movement IV, the quarter note was increased from a quarter note = 144–152, to a quarter note = 152. The final movement tempo changed from a dotted half note = 116–126 to a dotted half note = 132.
“And this, for sure, is a certain facet of democracy!”
Albrecht Gürshing

Hindemith’s decrease in tempo indication for the opening movement Lustig, *Maßschnelle Viertel*, did not appreciably alter the kinetic energy of the movement: M.M. 112 is a reasonable tempo for an opening march-like movement, and it is typical of the divertimento spirit in a wind serenade. An unvarying ostinato built of an eighth note and two sixteenth notes with heavily accented metrical rhythms is the underpinning for the solo clarinet’s thematic introduction. This animated three-note rhythm is the one unifying element, functioning like a basso ostinato and propelling the motion throughout the movement. The melodic basis for the opening movement is a disjunct and wide-ranging theme comprising three motifs, which are
subjected to manipulation through expansion, development, and repetition. Frequently Hindemith changes the size of intervals within a motive to a fourth, his intervallic fingerprint. Hindemith’s use of irregular phrases, coupled with his ability to calculate a near perfect dynamic balance, and the unexpected juxtaposition of voices, are the distinguishing characteristics of his early twentieth-century instrumental writing. The opening theme signals his singular and distinct use of the clarinet, with its expanded tessitura, expressive articulation, and virtuosity.

Hindemith’s textures are marked by frequent exchanges among the three- or four-part contrapuntal lines. Varied new and colorful timbres are often generated by his notation of bassoon above horn and even clarinet. Any hint of the opening C-major tonality is quickly obscured here by the melodic chromaticism in the ensuing solo parts and the dissonant accompanying chordal ostinato, the area highlighted by Erpf.

Hindemith uses short cadenza-like solo figures to mark a change in tempo: “no rubato” he specified in his letter, instead preferring to score tenuto, ritenuto, or even lento. Delineation of form by a change of texture to a solo is a characteristic of Hindemith in the quintet, and it is an especially effective technique in this rhythmically driven movement (see Figure 7). The oboe at measure 23 might suggest a relaxation of tension, the propulsive three-note rhythm of the opening maintains the energetic locomotion throughout the movement. The contrapuntal lines alternating between parallel and contrasting motion, propelled by the shifting between 3/4 and 4/4 meters, heightens the metrical tension. With Hindemith, there is a strict economy and budgeting of the possibilities and material at hand.
The movement is made up of two terse themes and an unvarying ostinato accompaniment, blended with a consistent dactylic rhythm. Yet, in spite of its brusqueness, it is a playful, moderately fast, the metrical tension. A silent quarter-rest signals the coda, the bassoon recalls
earlier thematic and figural motifs, and the movement concludes with a wisp of dissonance finalized in F-major.

There is a marked reduction in contrapuntal and tonal complexities from the first movement to the second, marked *Durchweg sehr leis.* 80 A lightly ironic shadow waltz, conceivably a parody of better times, it is steadily nudged forward by the rhythmic progression of the bassoon (see Figure 8). 81 Consonant with the sound of Stravinsky’s waltz in *L’Histoire du Soldat*, the movement increases the melodic texture from the solo-accompaniment plan of the first movement to integrated groups of three or four soli instruments, replacing flute with piccolo. 82 The opposing timbres in differing design tend to become particularly clear with the remarkable pairing of high bassoon and low breathy piccolo, creating a distinctive coloristic effect. The uncommon use of low piccolo was noted by Schoenberg who scored for it in the waltz movement of his Quintet, op. 26. The effect of a much lowered dynamic creates a “concentrated and pungent detail,” 83 focusing attention onto the sound. Part of the allure of Hindemith’s timbrel writing comes from his notating the horn as the bass instrument, freeing the bassoon from its tradition lower registers. In scoring bassoon similarly to clarinet he shows the instrument capable of a new dexterity, with a wider and more flexible melodic range. To this Hindemith adds a mechanical contrivance-like texture scored for horn and bassoon, to create a unique and eerie sonority. The movement is sectional, with two motives and two sections. Here

80 The characterization “Throughout very soft” forecasts its own emotional state.

81 This can be heard as a parody of the popular barrel-organ music of the time.

82 *L’Histoire du Soldat* and the Kleine Kammermusik were premiered in Frankfurt on the same program. The use of piccolo and textural similarities prefigure the Waltz movement of Schoenberg’s quintet.

83 Cohn, *Twentieth-Century Music*, 114.
the composer scores differently for each section, providing a clear contrast in character and style, and creating a continual succession of prismatic scoring. The coda is a synthesis of the two motives where the styles are combined with unchanged character but different agogics, a successful balance of animation and lyricism. Under the surface the quiet waltz rhythm is yet present, but void of old-fashioned waltzing joy.

The repeated-note second theme—an ostinato pattern in itself—and the ostinato accompanimental patterns provide referential links back to the opening movement. Like the opening movement, a slow bassoon solo leads to a short, rapid conclusion. All five instruments are heard only in the last six measures of the coda, during which the rhythmic movement is temporarily suspended to highlight a delayed resolution, followed by an F-major conclusion.

The *Ruhig und einfach* labeled innermost slow movement forms the emotional center of the quintet. Written as an internally rounded ABA-coda, it is similar in form to the opening and closing movements. Typically, Hindemith does not create color effects *per se*, but the manner in which he lays out his sonorities throughout the gentle motion of this movement generates uncommon effects.\(^8^4\) One remarkable example is the opening flute and clarinet invention, in which the both flute and clarinet are scored in their lower registers, producing the sound of two flutes; later the adjacent voices in the texture are reversed, with the clarinet scored above the flute, now producing a sound resembling two clarinets (see Figure 9).

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\(^8^4\) In his discussion of the changing sound of the wind quintet in the twentieth century, Gürsching uses the unique expressions *Mischklang* (i.e., mixed colors/heterogenous instrumentation) and *Spaltklang*. According to Gürsching, *Mischklang*, the opposite of a “blended sound,” is the texture that Schoenberg used for “his own wind quintet.” Hindemith now used *Spaltklang* (blended colors /homogenous texture) in the third movement. Gürsching, “Bläserkammermusik,”1564.
The movement progresses to an inner section labeled “*Im gleichen ruhigen Zeitmass (nicht scherzando!)*,” an exemplar of matched dynamics, articulation, and timbre. Here Hindemith used an uncommon blend of hand-muted staccato horn, low *Grosse Flöte*,\(^\text{85}\) and clarinet, all played pianississimo, in a feat of orchestration that approximates the sound of a muffled snare drum, perhaps the ghostly reminiscence of a military tattoo.\(^\text{86}\) The quiet motoric now famous Hindemith ostinato is then subordinated into a hushed background march, and counterbalanced by a plaintive oboe melody (see Figure 11).\(^\text{87}\) This section, with the oboe, and subsequently with the bassoon, playing three octaves apart, is woodwind writing at its finest. It demonstrates how Hindemith’s approach to scoring captures the essence of winds producing distinctly new textural constructs not heard in quintets before. This remarkable passage with its textural triad of flute, clarinet, and horn, layered between a dyad of oboe and bassoon, creates a sound based on the harmonic system. Hindemith’s simple technique of wide spacing, or frequent use of the middle registers of all instruments, is combined with carefully stipulated dynamics, making this one of the outstandingly orchestrated movements found in quintet literature.

\(^{85}\) Hindemith changes from piccolo to flute for the remainder of the work.

\(^{86}\) With this striking sonority, Hindemith appears to reach most consciously into his past. He served in a German military musical unit and was familiar with the sounds and sonorities of martial music. As a soldier he had a commandant who assigned him and three other soldiers to perform string quartets.

\(^{87}\) Hindemith and Weill were friends and artistic rivals, frequently influencing or borrowing musical ideas from each other. Weill knew well of Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik*, and used the ostinato accompaniment figure from the third movement of the Hindemith’s quintet in the *Serenata* section of his Concerto for Violin and Chamber Instruments, op. 12, composed in 1924. The Concerto for Violin and Winds, as it is more popularly known, was Weill’s first popular instrumental work. His innovative choice of instrumentation (two flutes and piccolo, oboe, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, trumpet) reveals the then fashionable use of groups of wind instruments in early twentieth century orchestration. His instrumentation of a wind section with percussion plus a double bass, is a technique which sets the solo violin apart entirely from the singular sounds of his ensemble of winds. Additional information on the friendship and musical rivalry enjoyed between Kurt Weill and Paul Hindemith is found in the David Drew’s article above, p. 7 ff.
Figure 9. Hindemith, *Kleine Kammermusik*, op. 24/2, III: Rühig und einfach, mm. 1-9. Flute and Clarinet duet.

Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg Frankfurt am Main.

Figure 10. Hindemith, *Kleine Kammermusik*, op. 24/2, III: Rühig und einfach. Achtel, mm. 59-66. Flute and Clarinet duo.

Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg Frankfurt am Main.
Figure 11. Hindemith, *Kleine Kammermusik*, op. 24/2, III: *Im gleichen ruhigen Zeitmaß*, mm. 30-54. Autograph. Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main.
The practice of voicing sonorities according to the spacing found in the natural harmonic series was common in earlier times; used in this example, it becomes a unique sonic event. When the bassoon line is lowered two octaves, then to three octaves beneath the oboe line, the new texture reinforces the eloquent sonority. Both oboe and bassoon parts lie outside the tessitura of the accompanimental ostinato design. Here the individual instrumental parts display new concepts of sonority spacing and create distinctive effects in the solo and soli passages. Even with its mechanical effect, an air of spontaneity is maintained throughout. Yet even with the admonition “Ruhig und einfach,” the feelings evoked are powerful in the sheer intensity of expression. Like the previous waltz, the movement ends with a synthesis of the motives that have appeared earlier.

The iconic scherzo-like fourth movement functions on multiple levels. Marked Schnell and only twenty-three measures long, the brief monothematic section serves simultaneously as a link and introduction to the final movement. It provides a contrast of texture, style, and form, as well as welcome humor. Offering repeated-note motives and ostinato ideas, the movement is connected rhythmically to previous movements. Based on a Baroque ritornello principle, the fourth movement offers five solo episodes, one for each instrument, and six refrains or ritornellos. Following each chordal ritornello, the now solo instrument offers a cadenza demonstrating its ambitus and acoustical properties. The ritornello features a common early twentieth-century chord type, with the combination of a minor third and a major seventh as a focal point.88 Written in common time, the ritornellos are grouped asymmetrically in 3/8, except

for the third and fourth iteration. Based on the tonal center of B-flat, the movement ends on the
-tonal center of F. The driving ostinato rhythmic patterns and arching melodic contours reflect
similarities in shape and cadence to those from the first and third movements while
-simultaneously offering a preview of the final movement. Hindemith’s brief solo offerings, a
-series of short cadenzas, are simultaneously farewells from each solo instrument and short
-instrumental character sketches. Each solo is performed between and in opposition to the unified
-four instruments playing a fast staccato and fortissimo homophonic ritornello. In this iconic
-movement, the characteristic idioms of the winds are exploited to the greatest degree: kinetic
-energy, individual tone colors, abundant use of staccato, and overall dry incisive sounds.
-Hindemith here takes full advantage of one of the most valuable qualities of wind instruments:
-the ability to produce a true staccato. The six short rhythmic refrains forming the connective
tissue between each cadenza are virtually identical, crafted using the same motoric rhythm but
-slightly adjusted with diverse instrumental combinations to individually accommodate each solo.
The five diminutive cadenzas are not related but display the singular characteristics of each
-instrument, in much the same way as in the final movement of Nielsen’s Kvintet: an agile and
-athletic flute, an amusing bassoon, the expressive-virtuoso clarinet, the melancholy-sounding
-oboe, and last, a highly romantic horn call. While linked in terms of the commonality of
-idiomatic instrumental associations, Hindemith’s characterizations are
without the anthropomorphic suggestions found in Nielsen’s work. What Hindemith presents in this movement amounts to a brief but intense instrumental study wherein each instrument presents a miniature idiomatic solo; in performance it sounds not unlike a fierce game of musical chairs in which the winner gets to perform a cadenza. An air of improvisation is heard in each solo, kindled by Hindemith’s joy of music making. The singular cadenzas offer a farewell, one last idiomatic adieu by each instrument. The final horn solo, a rhythmic diminuendo \( (sofortweiter) \), assumes a connection with the concluding movement and leads directly into the dynamic finale. The homophonic and propulsive opening sounds of the last movement—\textit{Sehr Lebhaft}—herald the conclusion to Hindemith’s musical democracy. The five instruments, heretofore heard in a variety of textures and sonorities, are now unified in an intense and rapid polyrhythmic texture, driving a solid wall of sound beginning in \( E \) major. The impact of the unified kinesthetic movement of the winds and the rich, dense scoring in the conclusion is singular in the quintet literature. The instruments now present parallel and contrary contrapuntal lines largely confined to isorhythmic patterns, but with continual rhythmic variation, through syncopation and augmentation. In contrast to the simple meters of the preceding four movements, the last movement is in a compound meter, an alternation of \( 6/4 \) and an angular \( 9/4 \).

To break up the driving rhythmic patterns, Hindemith introduces an element based on a syncopated jazz rhythmic matrix at measure 39, linked to a homophonic five-part interlude at the center of the movement.\(^89\)

\(^{89}\) Robert P. Koper, “A Stylistic and Performance Analysis of the Bassoon Music of Paul Hindemith” (DMusEd diss., University of Illinois and Urbana-Champaign, 1972), 328. Koper notes that one of earliest uses of stylized jazz rhythms in art music is found in the last movement of the \textit{Kleine Kammermusik}. But Hindemith had previously used “jazz” elements in the Kammermusik, op. 24, no. 1.
Figure 13. Hindemith, *Kleine Kammermusik*, op. 24/2, V: Sehr lebhaft, mm. 1-16. Autograph. Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main.
Figure 14. Hindemith, *Kleine Kammermusik*, op. 24/2, V: Sehr lebhaft, mm. 24-30 and 77-83.

Here the complete structure is intermittently broken up by short instrumental soli, beginning with flute in its most shrill register, weaving in and out of syncopation on two tonal planes (bitonal), with the instrumentation always returning to the unit of five. The procedure gives the music a granite-like sonority. The movement concludes after a passage of climactic intensity generated by textural density, a more complex design, and intense tone quality. Hindemith’s use of textural density here—building up the sound instrument upon instrument—contrasting and superimposing elements from each section provides a dramatic
Figure 15. Hindemith, *Kleine Kammermusik*, op. 24/2, V: Sehr lebhaft, mm. 149-163. Autograph. Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main.

conclusion. The movement concludes with a series of five dramatic chords on E, summoning the sound and intensity of the opening.

Hindemith’s developmental approach for the whole composition is this: the five distinct musical personalities and instrumental colors that dominate the early movements become more and more compelling as a group as the composition proceeds. The soloist becomes a fifth of a whole, and the quintet concludes with a united block of five timbres. The
solo passages heard principally in the first movement, and less throughout the work, progressively develop into collective teamwork. “And this, for sure, is a certain facet of democracy.”

A NEW LIFE IN A REAL DEMOCRACY

“The now celebrated Kleine Kammermusik”
George Barrère

Within four years of its composition, Hindemith’s Kleine Kammermusik was being performed frequently in the United States. A review in Musical America in February 1926 announced a new series of chamber music to be held in the Henry Miller Theater in the “Picturesque Ojai Valley” of Los Angeles. Sponsored by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, under the direction of the famous flutist George Barrère, the series of three concerts was given by the Little Symphony Orchestra of New York. The Hindemith quintet was heard in the first concert, along with works by the Americans Mary Howe, Giulio Harnisch, and Quinto Maganini. Oscar Thompson wrote the review:

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91 Barrère, a protégé of Paul Taffanel, formed La Société moderne pour instruments à vent in Paris while a student. He continued leading the group later as a professional flutist. He came to the United States in 1905, at the invitation of Walter Damrosch, who preferred the sound of woodwind players from France or Belgium in his orchestra. The name of Barrère’s ensemble varied according to the constantly changing size of the instrumental forces, from solo flute up to wind quintet, to Barrère Ensemble of Wind Instruments, the Concertino, to the largest, the “Little Symphony.” In addition to performing new European music, Barrère insisted in including at least one new American work in each performance, music of both women and men.
The Hindemith Kammermusik was preceded by a plea from Mr. Barrère for a “new ear” in listening to modern music, and for recognition of Hindemith’s humor, even when the joke of it was not made plain. The Barrère Ensemble evidently enjoyed playing its ultraist conceits and the audience politely acceded to the conductor’s request not to laugh before the end.92

According to Nancy Toff, at this concert the Kleine Kammermusik was not played during the “regular” program, being “the one listener-challenging item,” but was reserved until “After the Concert.”93 In the third concert of the series the Barrère Ensemble performed the Kleine Kammermusik once more for the Ojai Valley Festival of Chamber Music program on a Sunday afternoon (18 April 1926). This time the Kleine Kammermusik opened the second half of the program, after intermission rather than after the concert. It was “sandwiched in between the Gluck Scene from ‘Orpheus’ with flute solo and Bach Sonata No. 6 in E major, for flute and piano.”94 A review in the Los Angeles Times on 20 April 1926 noted,

The Little Symphony Orchestra of New York gave a Sunday afternoon concert distinguished by Griffes’ “White Peacock” and Hindemith’s “Kleine Kammermusik.” . . . The Griffes is a lovely memory, while the Hindemith piece can be quickly forgotten. Snatches of ideas, suggestions left in suspension, with humorous inferences here and there were its fleeting impressions.95

The work was premiered in New York a year later by the New York Chamber Music Society at the Plaza Hotel for the Sunday Salon series. In what must have been the most impressive venue in which the work had been heard to date, the Kleine Kammermusik was


94 Ojai Valley Festival Program: April 16, 17, 18, 1926. The Barrère Ensemble (The Little Symphony of New York) included the following musicians: “Messrs. Barrère, Mathieu, Van Amburgh, Letellier and Richart. Mr. Harold Samuel, piano, Mr. Georges Barrère, Solo Flute, and Conductor.”

95 Review by Isabel Morse Jones; Ms. Jones was soon relieved from her position with the Los Angeles Times.
performed along with Dvořák’s String Quintet in A, op. 81, Charles Griffes’s suite *The Lake at Evening*, and Vaughan Williams’s song cycle *On Wenlock Edge*. An anonymous and especially vituperative critic described the concert, virtually apologizing for its appearance on the program:

And then came the most excruciating novelty of the evening, a quintet for wind instruments by the young German composer Paul Hindemith played for the first time in New York. Would it be tolerant to say that these sounds and squeaks issuing from flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and French horn were an experiment in cacophony? The fact that the musicians were all Philharmonic Orchestra artists was hardly a consolation, and could not deaden the pain. The audience at least was forbearing and listened politely. . . . But such occasional “music” on its programs is no reason for feeling discouragement over the Chamber Music Society or for failing to appreciate the genuine service it is doing each year in the spreading of true chamber music.\(^6\)

But performances on the west coast were more positive. After hearing the *Kleine Kammermusik* performed in Los Angeles and San Francisco, the Los Angeles Woodwind Quintet acquired parts, frequently performed the work, and made a recording in 1939.\(^7\) This recording, which was the first recording of the *Kleine Kammermusik*, made the Los Angeles Woodwind Quintet famous. Widely popular, the score and parts were quickly disseminated to other wind ensembles in the United States, contributing to Hindemith’s reputation. Although the piece was still considered *avant garde* in the late 1930s when the recording was pressed, the bassoonist Don


\(^7\) Los Angeles Wind Quintet, 2 LP records, 78 rpm, Columbia: 17169/70D, Set X-149, 1939. There is a review by Jay Walz of this first recording in *The Washington Post* from 19 December 1939: “. . . Hindemith’s Study of ‘Kleine Kammermusik’ is Pleasant. . . .” “Paul Hindemith is at once a daring modern composer and a popular one. He can be atonal to his heart’s content and still have a hearing every time he wants one—or it seems so. And it’s probably because atonal, or not, he is always interesting. . . . there is always a point to his music. . . . His ‘Kleine Kammermusik,’ just recorded by Columbia, is a good illustration. The music of its four movements is certainly not of the ‘pleasing to the ear’ variety. And yet it is pleasant. Its lack of harmony makes for most satisfactory listening. As the program annotator points out, the ‘Kammersik’ is a kind of divertimento, its movements being unrelated but complementary in that they afford good contrast. They’re light and humorous—if you admit there is humor in irony. . . . The composition was written in 1922 when Hindemith was living in an inflation-suffering Germany. . . . Incidentally, its harmonic structure is not all that unusual about this piece. It is written as a wind quintet—flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and French horn. The Los Angeles Wind Quintet does the playing and Columbia Set X-149 covers the whole piece neatly with two small discs.”
Christlieb of the Los Angeles Woodwind Quintet noted that programming chamber music was a new affair, often making performances an “exclusive happening.” But more than that, performances of Hindemith’s work led to other professional assignments for the musicians and contributed to the acceptance and performance of additional modern chamber music. Christlieb noted,

For example, our performances of Hindemith’s Kleine Kammermusik gave our quintet an introduction to Alfred Newman, composer and conductor of the Goldwyn Studios, and immediately three of us worked for him for the next thirty years (the other two were working at M.G.M.). As our Los Angeles Woodwinds expanded to be able to do works larger than just woodwind quintets, many young new players got chances for exposure to Monday Evening Concerts audiences.

While there is no evidence Hindemith ever met with the American composer Henry Cowell during Cowell’s tours of Europe, Hindemith knew of him and subscribed to the publication New Music, of which Cowell was the founder and editor. After returning to the United States from his fifth tour of Europe, Cowell programmed Kleine Kammermusik on 15 February 1934, in a program which included Piston’s Three Pieces for Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon and Aaron Copland’s “As it Fell Upon a Day” for soprano, flute, and

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98 Don Christlieb, *Remembrances of Lawrence Morton* (Los Angeles: Lawrence Morton Fund of the California Community Foundation, 1987), 33. Christlieb, a well-known chamber music and recording studio bassoonist in Los Angeles notes that performances of Hindemith’s quintet in particular stimulated not only “the performers who played it, but those to who heard it, expanding its influence to other players and conductors.” Further he writes that the public performances of the Kleine Kammermusik contributed to the programming of further works of the wind repertoire by the younger conductors Pierre Boulez, Robert Craft, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Michael Tilson Thomas, who programmed “works such as Le marteau sans maître. . . Zeitmass, Casella’s Septet for Winds, Stravinsky’s Reynard, Octet, Soldat, an all Carter program, . . . the wind quintet by Donald Martino.” For more on the bassoonist Donald Christlieb, see the Schoenberg chapter.

99 Ibid.

clarinet.\textsuperscript{101} According to a review by Alexander Fried, Piston’s Three Pieces “rivaled the German work [Hindemith’s \textit{Kleine Kammermusik}] in its mood and fancy.”\textsuperscript{102}

Many performances of contemporary music were held in the intellectual milieu of the West Coast through the sponsorship of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge for the Ojai Festival and were given by the Los Angeles Woodwind Quintet. But the Barrère Quintet, which travelled throughout the United States, contributed heavily to the dissemination of wind chamber music and to that of the \textit{Kleine Kammermusik} in particular. Originally established by George Barrère, the touring wind quintet made its reputation during the 1920s, existing only a few seasons. It was replaced by the Barrère Little Symphony, a larger group. Barrère believed the Little Symphony would have a more universal appeal to a new listening public than a wind quintet might have; further, it would be able to present a wider range of chamber music genres. Barrère tried to persuade Hindemith to travel to the United States to attend the five-day Chicago Festival of Chamber Music at the Field Museum of Natural History in the October 1930. Hindemith’s new Concerto for Piano and Chamber Orchestra, commissioned at great expense, would be performed. Barrère’s performances of the \textit{Kleine Kammermusik} contributed decidedly to the acceptance, if not the popularity, of the work in the United States. In a note to Mrs. Coolidge, he writes,

\begin{quote}
I think your plans are very interesting. I hope Hindemith will come. I have a great admiration for this composer whom I never met. I have often played compositions by him, and always liked them, one of them is the now the celebrated Kleine Kammermusik
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., 429 fn 117. In addition to his own Suite and Hindemith’s \textit{Kleine Kammermusik}, Cowell programmed Schoenberg’s Quintet.

for 5 blaserinstrumente,[sic] and the other a most amusing Kanonische Sonatine for the Floten. . . I shall be glad to play a Sonata with [Emma] Lübbecke-Job, or even with Landowska.\footnote{Georges Barrère to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, letters of 3 February and 25 March 1930, Library of Congress, Coolidge Foundation Collection (Box 5, Barrère File). Emma (Ronnefeldt) Lübbecke-Job, who premiered Hindemith’s early works, immigrated to the U.S. with her husband after their home was destroyed during World War II. She was able to resume her career. The Kanonische Sonatine für zwei Flöten, op. 31, no.1 was written for Paul Hagemann.}

On 25 March he wrote to her again: “I am anxious to hear if you have finally secured Hindemith for Chicago, I am so eager to know him personally.”\footnote{Ibid. Letter of March 25, 1930.} Hindemith had declined to attend, disappointing Barrère and Mrs. Coolidge, who was then Barrère’s patron, and who in time would become Hindemith’s patron. The Concerto for Piano and Orchestra was not well received, but Hindemith, still in Germany, was spared embarrassment. Although Hindemith had been unable to come for the Chicago Festival in 1930, he did eventually travel to the United States three times. During his third tour, in 1939, he attended a performance of the Kleine Kammermusik, “the only ‘old’ work on the program,” given with other works at Town Hall in New York.\footnote{Luther Noss, \textit{Paul Hindemith in the United States} (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 53.}

In the journal he kept for his wife Gertrude he wrote the following:

The hall was filled, the cheaper seats were all full, almost all young people. “Never-ending applause filled the festival-minded hall” [a quote from a review] when I came upon the stage. The playing was very good throughout and the concert was a great success. . . . I have a recording of the entire concert so I don’t need to say more about it now. It was broadcast over the radio and a recording was made so it can be sent by short wave to South America. One of the radio critics gave it a rating of “four stars,” like cognac. This rarely happens to modern music—but only to Greta Garbo.\footnote{Entry from 23 May 1939, in \textit{Paul Hindemith: Das private Logbuch: Briefe an seine frau Gertrude}, ed. Friederike Becker and Giselher Schubert (Mainz: Schott Musik International, 1995), 380; translation from Noss, 54. According to Hindemith in the same letter, ‘Many free tickets had been given to students at the last minute.’}
By the 1950s the “acerbic” *Kleine Kammermusik* was popular with professional wind quintets and was performed so often in the United States that it achieved “American” status. Harold Schonberg writes “The Hindemith ‘Kammermusik’—what was this product of Germany in the Nineteen Twenties doing on an American program?—was superbly interpreted by the wind players. . . .” As of 1958, just thirty-six years after its composition, the *Kleine Kammermusik* was now venerable in the United States:

Figure 17. Letter from Paul Hindemith to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, in Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Collection, Box 5, Folder 14, Library of Congress.

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107 H.C.S. [Harold Schonberg], “WNYC Music Festival Offers One Premiere,” *The New York Times*, 17 February 1950. The review reads: “Last night’s program in the eleventh annual WNYC American Music Festival was given in Times Hall. The program was a completely variegated one, with such things as Victorian-sounding part songs by Felix Gorowsky cheek to jowl with the objective Stravinskian, the violin and piano duo by Arthur Berger, Aaron Copland’s folksy Violin Sonata hovering near Paul Hindemith’s acerbic *Kleine Kammermusik,* and some quasi-ecclesiastical part songs by Leo Sowerby and Hermann Hans Wetzler nestling above Broadway’s Gershwin and Kern; a premiere was a march by William Presser a slight, agreeable work. . . . was superbly interpreted by the wind players . . . .” The performance was given by the New York Woodwind Quintet.”
Hindemith’s Quintet is by now something of an old stand-by in the repertoire of wind groups when it comes to the representation of contemporary music. But it is always welcome for it wears well and manages to hold one’s attention with some fetching bits of melody and rhythm. . . .

CONCLUSION

Like Carl Nielsen’s Kvintet, op 43, Hindemith’s Kleine Kamermusik is a gift to the twentieth-century wind repertoire. An expert at miniaturization, he composed the five short movements with few extraneous notes, “no padding, and no fat.” The work has a perfect balance between form and content. Each movement is differently constituted, its weight and tone color carefully chosen for balance and contrast, highlighting different textures and styles. Amazing for its emotional range within a circumscribed instrumental compass of five winds, the work introduces instrumental virtuosity and elegant new textural combinations, becoming a harbinger for the new era.

Above all, it shows Hindemith’s facility for condensation and intensification. While invoking the outdoor wind divertimentos and serenades of the eighteenth century, it rises above any implied utilitarian and functional aspects with its virtuosity and inventiveness; it is a watershed composition in the lineage of wind music. Hindemith’s approach to the wind quintet, with his artistic and philosophical changes, as well as his lighthearted and subtle humor, created a vigorous and adventurous style which advanced the quintet genre into the modern period. It is balanced between Baroque-like mechanical energy, with Bach-like polyphonic textures, and the

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108 Walter Arlen, “Wind Quintet plays Rarely Heard Works,” Los Angeles Times, 10 March 1958. “In UCLA’s Schoenberg Hall, the Paramount Wind Quintet performed . . . an assembly of rarely heard compositions for such an ensemble Bläserquinte: Danzi’s Opus. 56, No. 2, the Quintet for Wind Instruments, Opus 24, No. 2 by Hindemith; a Wind Quartet by Rossini and the Quintet in E Flat for Winds and Piano, K. 452, by Mozart.”
ingenuity and creativity of the twentieth century. Hindemith does not indulge in extreme or unexpected instrumental effects, no virtuoso effects for his audience. Yet his understanding of the importance of motor action and kinesthetic values in writing extended passages of staccato for wind instruments provides new examples of a heretofore unused technique, giving a driving muscularity to the medium. Hindemith played many instruments, and his music frequently transcends the instruments for which he wrote. His concentration on rhythmic motion establishes potential for virtuosic instrumental techniques, and provides opportunities for the innovative tonal possibilities for each of the five instruments. Written to convey warmth, energy, and the joy of making music, the work stands as the “first work to reveal the poised hand of a master.” It foreshadows—if not forewarns—the impending composition of Schoenberg’s quintet, two years hence. A tribute to his companions, the wind soloists of the opera orchestra of Frankfurt, the Kleine Kammermusik stands as a monument to the wind quintet genre.

CHAPTER THREE
SCHOENBERG’S EARLY MUSIC AND COPENHAGEN

“It is chamber music and must therefore be played very exactly, because every note must be heard!”
Arnold Schoenberg

Schoenberg’s early music was popular in Copenhagen, where Paul von Klenau had conducted “Schoenberg Evenings” at the Danish Philharmonic Society, with performances of *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *Verklärte Nacht*. In a second concert the members of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet and the Breuning-Bache Quartet gave a well-received premiere of *Pierrot lunaire*. In addition to his activities in Denmark, Klenau had taken over the direction of the choral concerts of the Vienna Konzerthausgesellschaft, conducting a performance of Schoenberg’s *Gurre-Lieder* in Vienna during December of 1923, which he did to much acclaim.¹ The success and number of concerts of new music in Copenhagen and the affirmative reception of Schoenberg’s music encouraged Klenau to continue with his plan for additional concerts. He wrote inviting Schoenberg to Copenhagen:

Dear Mr. Schönberg! You probably know that I performed your symphonic work *Pelléas et Mélisande* and your *Verklärte Nacht* and *Pierrot Lunaire* in Copenhagen. For this season (23 January 1923) I have put on my program your *Kammersymphonie* which I intend to give with soloists. Now, revered maestro, I would like to inquire whether there exists the possibility that you could be our guest in Copenhagen. It would be a great honor and pleasure for us to welcome you here and to hear your work interpreted by you yourself.² (See Figure 1)

Schoenberg answered a second letter from Klenau on 13 November 1922, with specific requests, and as always, with his habitual impatience and demands for strict performance standards:

¹ Paul Hindemith sang in the chorus for this concert.

I am much looking forward to conducting my chamber symphony under your auspices on the 30th January 1923, and agree, furthermore to all the terms you mention. Especially that I can have as many rehearsals as necessary! Then I can, I suppose, have as many as ten? But if the gentlemen of the orchestra prepare well on their own beforehand, I am sure to be able to manage with less (probably 7–8). Of course, in the event each of them would have to have worked out each rhythm with the utmost exactitude (mathematically!), to have got all the dynamic and technical aspects beyond reproach and perfectly under control, and to have achieved very pure tone. Then I shall need still fewer rehearsals. But I know quite well it’s idle to expect that. In my experience only the best musicians are capable of preparing in such a way, and all instrumentalists, no matter how good they may be, learn only at rehearsals. In any case it would be a good thing to draw the attention of the gentlemen of the orchestra to the fact it is chamber music and must therefore be played very exactly, [emphasis AS] because every note must be heard!3 (See Figure 2)

Schoenberg welcomed the invitation to conduct a concert of his own works as performances of his music were becoming more and more sporadic. After 1913, he wrote only the Four Songs for Orchestra, which he completed in 1916, and he did not finish another work until 1923. A financial agreement was reached with Klenau, and Schoenberg began working on the necessary musical arrangements for the concert.4 Although Klenau had once anticipated a performance of Schoenberg’s cantata Gurre-Lieder, an undertaking requiring over 400 instrumentalists and

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4 At this time Schoenberg was nearly impecunious, but the money proffered, and the opportunity to conduct a concert of his own music, made the request agreeable. The Dansk Filharmonisk Selskab, founded and conducted by Paul Klenau, was financially backed by Elisa Schou, wife of the Danish estate owner E.V. Schou. A good friend of Paul Klenau, she financed the Danish Philharmonic Society and it is assumed she contributed financially to the success of his concert in Copenhagen. Schoenberg spent some time with her in Copenhagen; her address is written at the bottom of the second page of his pocket calendar, an indication perhaps that he intended to write a note thanking her for the time and support she provided.
Figure 1. Letter from Paul Klenau to Arnold Schoenberg, 31 July 1922. Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 17, Folder 47.
Figure 2. Letter from Arnold Schoenberg to Paul Klenau, 13 November 1922. Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 4, Folder 17.
soloists, Schoenberg envisioned a chamber music concert, selecting from it only the mezzo-soprano solo “Tauben von Gurre! Sorge quält mich” (known as “Lied der Waldtaube,” Song of the Wooddove).5

In addition to “Lied der Waldtaube,” Schoenberg would be conducting his Kammersymphonie, op. 9. For the performance he enlarged the orchestra from its original ensemble of fifteen instruments, adding more woodwinds, plus trumpets, four horns, and a trombone, creating a wind-heavy chamber ensemble.6 And in mutatis mutandis he reduced the orchestration for the “Lied der Waldtaube” to a comparable size and sound. Both works could then be performed by the same chamber ensemble. As a substitution for the originally programmed Second String Quartet op. 10 (1908), Schoenberg added four songs from Acht Lieder op. 6 (1903–1905). These he did not reorchestrate, retaining them for voice piano.7

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5 This solo is part I, no. 12, of the cantata. Schoenberg became acquainted with Danish culture after discovering the poetry of the Jens Peter Jacobsen many years earlier, reading the German translation by Robert Franz Arnold. He turned his enthusiasm for the poetry into the text of a three-part cantata, Gurre-Lieder, working on it sporadically over a period from 1900 until 1913. The Danish national legend of Gurre is a historical narrative based on the life of a Danish king named Waldemar and his mistress Tove. Schoenberg’s adaptation of the happenings in the twelfth-century castle in northern Denmark was uniquely appropriate for a Copenhagen audience.

6 The 1912 Universal-Edition publication of the Kammersymphonie op. 9 is scored for fifteen solo instruments: flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet in D, clarinet in A, bass clarinet in A, bassoon, contrabassoon, two horns, a string quartet of two violins, viola, and cello, plus contrabass. The score is in E major with transposing instruments noted. When Schoenberg reorchestrated the Kammersymphonie op. 9 as the op. 9b version for Copenhagen, he added the additional subordinate and accompanying voices as above.

7 The Acht Lieder, op. 6, were originally titled Acht Lieder für eine Singstimme und Klavier. Willi Reich’s assertion that Freund sang four songs from Gurre-lieder is incorrect. She sang four songs from op. 6, and one from Gurre-lieder. Willi Reich, Schoenberg: A Critical Biography, trans. Leo Black (New York: Praeger, 1971), 144. Maegaard speculates that the four songs from op. 6 were substituted for a performance of the Second Quartet, believing that the Breuning-Bache Quartet, overwhelmed by the amount of material to rehearse, were unprepared to perform the quartet also. Maegaard 1996, 417–418. My translation.
Both the “Lied der Waldtaube” and the four songs from op. 6 were sung by Marya Freund, Schoenberg’s langzeit Brieffreundschaft.⁸

“And now, dear Mr. Schönberg,
I would like to know how things stand with your wind quintet?
When do you think it will be finished?”
Paul Hagemann

Before leaving for Copenhagen, Schoenberg received a letter from Paul Hagemann, another Danish acquaintance, inquiring about a wind quintet. (see Figure 3) Hagemann hoped that Schoenberg would have completed the work and would bring it with him. The Copenhagen Wind Quintet, scheduled to perform the wind quintets by Nielsen and Hindemith for the New Music Week festival in Berlin, needed a third work to round out the program. The letter indicates that there had been previous correspondence regarding a wind quintet.

[Letterhead Fr. & Ed Gotschalk KØBENHAVN]

….The last part of the old year was very difficult for you;⁹ I hope the new year will bring you much good fortune so that it will be possible to forget the sad hours. . . . A month ago I received a very beautiful sonata from Kurt Striegler in Dresden; he has dedicated the sonata (to me) and I will arrange its performance very soon. And now,

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⁸ Marya Freund (1876–1966), was for many years a good friend of Schoenberg’s with whom he frequently corresponded. An acclaimed French soprano and an eminent interpreter of German song and twentieth-century music, Freund gave early performances of Pierrot and Das Buch der hängenden Gärten. At his request, she travelled to Copenhagen to present the first performance of the new orchestration of “Lied der Waldtaube.” A letter from Schoenberg to Freund in the Arnold Schoenberg Collection (Box 2 Folder 37), dated 30 December 1922 reveals that he asked her to sing the songs from the Acht Lieder, as they were already in her repertoire. The correspondence between Schoenberg and Freund can be traced from 1912 through 1949.

⁹ At this point in the original letter typed by Hagemann, he has crossed out “Ihnen” and replaced it in pencil with the more intimate “du,” thereby ascribing to or assuming a more intimate relationship with Schoenberg. The idea that any work of his would have only a month of rehearsals must have irritated Schoenberg, for he usually demanded numerous rehearsals for a new work.
Lieber Herr Schöenberg,


Falls Sie gelegentlich mir ein paar Worte schreiben würden, würde es mir eine grosse Freude machen.

Mit den herzlichsten Grüßen, auch von meiner Frau, verbleibe ich

Ihr ergebener

[Signature]
New York, but he wrote me just yesterday that he will be back again at the beginning of March. So perhaps we could perform it here the end of March or the beginning of April and possibly also in Berlin.\footnote{This is Hagemann’s (first extant) letter to Schoenberg, dated 4 January 1923. Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 17, Folder 47, trans. Arthur W. McCardle.}

Schoenberg received Hagemann’s letter three weeks before travelling to Copenhagen and three months before the Berlin concert. Aware that Hindemith composed the *Kleine Kammermusik* in five days and that Nielsen took only a few weeks to write his own quintet, Hagemann assumed Schoenberg could just as quickly produce a wind quintet.

In Copenhagen preparations were made for the concert of Schoenberg’s music and for the composer’s arrival. A musically sophisticated people, the Danes were excited that the composer himself would visit the city. Klenau conducted many advance rehearsals, the musicians were well prepared, and Schoenberg did not need “as many as 10” rehearsals that he had requested. But he took the seven rehearsals, as promised by Klenau, to make modifications. In addition to the rehearsals and the concert, Schoenberg spent time socializing and making business contacts while in Copenhagen. His *Taschenkalender* shows that he began his travel from Mödling to Copenhagen on January 20, arriving there late in the evening of January 22. (see Figure 4) The next day it appears that Schoenberg, recovering from the journey, slept late, travelled first to speak with the Danish publisher Wilhelm Hansen, and conducted his first *Probe* from 4:00 to 6:00. On January 24 there was another two-hour rehearsal, after which he spent an hour with Elise Schou.\footnote{See fn. no 5.} At 6:00 in the evening Schoenberg met with Gunna Breuning-Storm to walk down Gothersgade, a major street in the City Center of Copenhagen, passing Rosenborg Castle and
Gardens, the Nørreport Station, and the Copenhagen Botanic Gardens on the way. The next day he had a three-hour rehearsal, after which an afternoon lunch with Paul Hagemann. In the evening Schoenberg attended the opera with Mrs. Schou. The fourth rehearsal was held on January 26, after which Schoenberg had lunch again with Hagemann, and a longer walk. His day finally ended “abends allein Kino.” He spent the next day with Paul Hagemann, who no doubt already knew that a wind quintet by Schoenberg was not forthcoming in time for the Berlin concert. Presumably, Hagemann plied Schoenberg with fine dining, splendid wine, and certainly additional pleas for music. On January 28, he rehearsed the “Lied der Waldtaube” with Marya Freund for two hours before lunch; he spent the evening with Wilhelm Hansen. On January 29, the day of the concert, Schoenberg had a two-hour rehearsal (the sixth), followed by a dress rehearsal of the same length, at which he spoke. An unsigned preview in the *Politiken* mentions that many people appeared for the final public dress rehearsal, noting that after the concert Schoenberg gave a lecture explaining his musical theories. The short speech, in “kindly and unpretentious form,” was greeted with applause.

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12 Gunna Breuning-Storm (1891–1966) was the first female violinist to be admitted to the Royal Danish Chapel. She was also first violinist of the Breuning-Bache String Quartet. Schoenberg admired her and later encouraged Alban Berg to send her a copy of his String Quartet, op. 3 to preview for its premiere. As a violinist, she appeared with the Berlin Philharmonic under Arthur Nikisch and Felix Weingartner. Later in life she became a well-known as an orchestral conductor.

13 There were seven rehearsals, counting the dress rehearsal.

Figure 4. Schoenberg’s Taschenkalender for Copenhagen. Courtesy of the Archiv Arnold Schönberg Center, Zaunergasse, Wien.
The January 30 concert, held under the auspices of the Dansk Filharmonisk Selskab, was given in the great hall of the Odd-Fellows Palace. Schoenberg’s *Kammersymphonie*, op. 9, was performed first on the program by musicians of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, augmented by additional performers from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Breuning-Bache String Quartet plus double bass, and Christian Christiansen, piano and harmonium. Following the *Kammersymphonie* Marya Freund performed four songs from Schoenberg’s *Acht Lieder*, op. 6. After the intermission Freund returned to present the premiere of Schoenberg’s re-orchestrated
“Lied der Waldtaube.” The concert concluded with a second performance of the Kammersymphonie, a convention of the Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen.15

Reviews were not all positive this time, as can be seen from a discussion conducted by the Danish critic August Felsing, which—in contrast to the earlier affirmative reviews—was not negative, only merely ambivalent.16 There are no comments written in Schoenberg’s pocket calendar for the day of the concert. Nevertheless, a kind of success d’estime can be ascertained. After the concert, he spent the remainder of the evening with Hansen and returned home the following day. But Schoenberg was pleased with his time in Copenhagen, as confirmed in a letter to his pupil Erwin Stein after he returned to Mödling:

I’ll tell you about Copenhagen when we meet in Vienna. I at least was very satisfied; more than usual, for I was dealing with very charming people. Besides, I have come back with a very satisfactory offer from the Hansen publishing company, which looks as though it will almost certainly come to something.17

Schoenberg had every right to be satisfied with his time in Copenhagen. He had been received with friendliness and hospitality and had successfully conducted a concert of his own

15 On the first page of the score of the new orchestration of the Kammersymphonie, op. 9, Schoenberg had earlier noted: “Prepared in connection with the performance of the Chamber Symphony in Copenhagen, on which occasion, besides the 2nd Quartet, the Song of the Wood-Dove is to be sung by Frau Marya Freund from Paris. The further use of this arrangement is permitted exclusively in small halls, in connection with the Chamber Symphony.” Quoted in Maegaard 1996, 417.

16 August Felsing was music critic for the Kritische Rundschau der Musik. Both Felumb and Hagemann were enthusiastic about Schoenberg’s music, as were many Danes, and mentioned him to Carl Nielsen. Nielsen himself had something to say about Schoenberg, a week before the concert. In an interview with Axel Kjerulf, which appeared in the Politiken on January 24, 1922, he said, “I am convinced he is a completely honest musician. And that which I understand of his, I find splendid. So there are sufficient grounds for believing that, that which I do not understand is also good. I simply don’t understand it.” Trans. by Knud Ketting. Carl Nielsen, conducting a concert of his own music in Berlin, was unable to attend the concert.

works. The Danish Schoenberg scholar Jan Maegaard writes that Schoenberg’s first visit to Copenhagen brought many good things with it: among other things, the special arrangement of the “Lied der Waldtaube,” and the new arrangement of the *Kammersymphonie*, op. 9. More important, however, was the fact that he had been able to conclude a contract with the music publishing house Wilhelm Hansen concerning his most recent and still unfinished compositions, the *Fünf Klavierstücke*, the *Suite für Klavier*, and the *Serenade for Seven Instruments*. These important works, which later appeared as opera 23, 24, and 25, mark the access to Schoenberg’s twelve-tone technique. Preceding his time in Copenhagen were disputes between Schoenberg and his publisher Emil Hertzka from Universal-Edition of Vienna, which nearly came to a breach since the publisher did not want to agree to Schoenberg’s new and very high honorarium demands. Hertzka had released Schoenberg from his general contract and had given him the freedom to find another publisher who possibly would be willing to accept his demands. Signing a contract with Schoenberg was something Wilhelm Hansen was only too pleased to do.

Concluding with a successful concert and an advantageous publishing contract before leaving Copenhagen left Schoenberg with a sense of confidence and optimism about his future compositions. But more than that, he had conceived the idea for the wind quintet. Svend Ravnkilde writes that Felumb certainly would have mentioned Carl Nielsen’s new quintet to Schoenberg, and that the members of the Copenhagen Quintet probably also showed him the score of Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik*. Undoubtedly, Hagemann pressed Schoenberg for a

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work during the time they spent together in Copenhagen. Further, Maegaard surmises that
Schoenberg heard a reading of Nielsen’s quintet and was probably shown the score:

. . . there seems to exist no doubt that the members of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet acquainted Schönberg with Carl Nielsen’s [quintet]. It is not documented whether the musicians also had the opportunity to play the work for him, and in this context it is also not decisive—the rehearsals for the concert with Schönberg’s music must have shown the composer-guest conductor that the Copenhagen Wind Quintet consisted of competent musicians. If he perhaps said to himself, “I must also do something like that,” then it is hard to imagine that this decision should have arisen from a collegial enthusiasm for Nielsen’s lovable-stubborn suggestion of a new music in a new age. . . .

When Schönberg came to Copenhagen the beginning of 1923 he did not necessarily have to have known of the new wind quintet by the leading, ten-year-older Danish composer. On the other hand, he can well have noticed that the young German rapidly writing comet Hindemith [das junge deutsche Schnellschreiber-Komet Hindemith] had written a piece in the same genre, and theoretically Schönberg may also already have heard the “Kleine Kammermusik” and looked at the score. . . . It would be highly improbable if during Schönberg’s visit Felumb at least would not have spoken of the two new masterful wind quintets with which he had recently become so familiar; it also would not be very improbable if already at that time the agreement of the Danish ensemble with the international Music Week for the performance of both works in Berlin (about two months later) had not been set. Schönberg may now have said to himself here: Two, even if known, but still smaller intellects have each composed a new wind quintet which is “interesting” and has gained public favor to some extent and which reputable publishing houses, with one of which even I myself have a contractual arrangement, immediately decided to print and publish. Moreover there is in any event an ensemble which on the one hand is competent enough and on the other could just use a third, freshly composed piece in order to have a full program with which they can travel around everywhere in the world of new music. Of course, this piece must surpass the two others in substance, and so the task can only fall to me—and in that situation I will simply have even more that I can stick under the nose of Mr. Hertzka of the Universal-Edition. . . .

THE INAUGURATION OF SERIALISM

“I mean to try and polish up the luster of my name:
by trying to write some new works.”
Arnold Schoenberg

The winter of 1923 was satisfying but demanding for Schoenberg. When he left Denmark for his home in Mödling at the end of January with a new publishing contract, he had enthusiasm and motivation to complete the piano works and Serenade. But more than that, he had an idea for new material. He had published no new works between 1915 and 1923; attempts to compose had been thwarted. He had earlier been called twice for service in the Austrian military and had given seminars at the Schwarzwald School to some of his best pupils. His near total involvement in the activities around the Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen left him little time to compose, and he eventually had to retire “because there is no time left for my own work.” Further, writing to Alexander Zemlinsky before travelling to Copenhagen, he said, “I mean to try and polish up the luster of my name: by trying to write some new works.” Schoenberg then became preoccupied with further development of his new method. After returning to Mödling he read of the publication of Joseph Matthias Hauer’s own approach to the same practice. Two years

21 Arnold Schoenberg Letters. ed. by Erwin Stein. Trans. by Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser. (London: Faber and Faber, 1974). 83. Schoenberg wrote this in a letter to George Alter, then secretary for the Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen, when he decided to relinquish major responsibilities with the organization.

22 In a letter to Zemlinsky on 13 January 1923, Schoenberg related why he was retiring from the Society for Private Concerts in Prague, as there was “no time life for his own work.” Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 8, Folder 12.

23 Joseph Matthias Hauer (1883–1959) was an Austrian theorist and composer. He is known for predating Schoenberg’s use of the twelve-tone method with an alternate system in his publication Von Wesen des Musikalischen: ein Lehrbuch der Zwölfton-Musik (Schlesinger: Leipzig, 1923); he articulated more in “Die Tropen,” Musikblätter des Anbruch vi (1924): 18–21. For a discussion about the differences between Schoenberg’s “Twelve-tone trope” and Hauer’s tropes see Elliott Antokoletz, A History of Twentieth-Century Music in a Theoretic-Analytical Context (New York: Routledge, 2013), 38.
earlier in the summer of 1921 Schoenberg is reputed to have spoken to Joseph Rufer about the twelve-tone method he had been developing, with the now familiar words, typical of his unquestionable and emphatic confidence: “I have made a discovery thanks to which the supremacy of German music is ensured for the next hundred years.”24 He had not mentioned it again, but with the publication of Hauer’s work he was now compelled to present his own theories, since as Richard Hill remarks, “sparks from Hauer set Schoenberg’s tinder once more in flame.”25 On February 17, he met privately with students and friends to introduce what would be called “Method of composing with twelve tones which are related only with one another.”26 To Anton Webern, Hanns Eisler, Egon Wellesz, Eduard Steuermann, Erwin Stein, and his son-in-law Felix Greissle, he explained his theory. Erwin Stein took notes, which he would later publish in the article “Neue Formprinzipien.”27 He “also showed us certain fragments he had composed


25 Richard S. Hill, Liner notes for Schoenberg Quintet for Wind Instruments, op. 26, Philadelphia Wind Quintet, LP (Columbia ML 5217), 1957.


27 Erwin Stein, “Neue Formprinzipien,” in “Sonderheft: Arnold Schonberg zum fünfzigsten Geburtstage (13 September 1924),” special issue, Musikblätter des Anbruch (August–September 1924): 286–303. Published on Schoenberg’s fiftieth birthday, this is the earliest discussion of the twelve-tone principle of Schoenberg’s formative period from the opp. 23, 24, and 25. He does not discuss the Quintet.
this way,” relates Felix Greissle, who would recount circumstances of the evening in a later interview.28

On 1 March 1923, Schoenberg received another letter from Paul Hagemann, still hopeful that a quintet would be forthcoming:

[Letterhead: Fr. & Ed Gotschalk KØBENHAVN]

First I want to express my sincerest gratitude to you for the interesting days which I spent with you here in Copenhagen. For me, who always was a great admirer of your art, the rehearsals under your direction and the concert at which we performed your Chamber Symphony and “Die Waldtaube” were an artistic experience I will never forget and which, as I already told you, will be of the greatest importance for my future musical development. Only too bad that the lovely hours are now over, and what shall I as a poor flutist now do whenever I wish to enjoy your beautiful sounds. I hope that quite soon you will write either the wind quintet or something for the flute, e.g., a sonatina. Such a work would be of greatest interest not only here where we understand and admire your art, but also in Paris, London, and Berlin where the interest in wind instruments is now awakening. Such a work would also be for me a valuable memory of you, and of course I would have a special pleasure of being involved with the publication and even publishing the work at my own expense in the event that the Universal Edition is of the opinion that there is not sufficient interest in wind music. Yet it would be a naïve idea of mine to believe that any work of yours would not be received with the greatest interest. Give some thought to this question, dear Mr. Schönberg, and consider the great importance for wind players a work would have, especially for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and horn. My quintet had its first rehearsal yesterday for our concert on the 29th in Berlin in the Singakademie where we will perform the wind quintet by Carl Nielsen and the completely new wind quintet by Paul Hindemith. Hindemith’s quintet is a cleverly written modern piece and quite interesting. For this occasion it would be nice if we had a quintet from you, but we are hoping for next time. . . .29

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28 Joan Allen Smith, *Schoenberg and His Circle: A Viennese Portrait* (New York: Schirmer, 1986), 173–219. In the chapter “The twelve-tone method,” Greissle discusses the circumstances surrounding the evening Schoenberg spoke about his new system, and the others present that evening. It is not known if Alban Berg was at the meeting.

Hagemann tells Schoenberg of the forthcoming concert in Berlin and makes no secret of the fact that the Copenhagen Quintet would like to premiere Schoenberg’s quintet, underlining his earlier request. There is much to suggest that the genesis for Schoenberg’s op. 26 can be traced to Hagemann’s entreaties, which were no doubt reinforced during Schoenberg’s time in Copenhagen. The idea of a Schoenberg premiere was certainly encouraged by Felumb, if not other members of the quintet, still needing a third work for the Berlin performance. Hagemann’s letter of 1 March 1923 may indicate that Schoenberg did not see the score to Hindemith’s Kleine Kammermusik during his stay in Copenhagen, although the comment may have been made to entice Schoenberg. Although Schoenberg would compose a wind quintet, it would not be for Paul Hagemann and the Copenhagen Wind Quintet. He designated that task to Alban Berg, by suggesting to Hagemann that he write to Berg with his request. The letter Hagemann quickly typed to Berg on 5 April 1923 also contained twenty Swiss francs (230,000 Crowns) for a Wozzeck score. Berg earlier had sold the score directly to Hagemann on a subscription basis. Berg wrote to his wife on 9 April 1923:

The flute-player from Copenhagen, the rich man who bought the score and has a wind quintet, (he wants to commission my Chamber Quintet for them) wrote charmingly, quite a long letter. He wanted me to let him know candidly how much I would ask for it, if I intend (as Schoenberg suggested) to dedicate it to his ensemble and sell them exclusive performing rights.

In a subsequent letter to his wife, the now annoyed Berg writes that Schoenberg is already

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30 Juliane Brand, Christopher Hailen, and Donald Harris, eds., *The Berg–Schoenberg Correspondence: Selected Letters* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), 327, fn 2. Berg was then still studying with Schoenberg, who, during the time he was working on his own wind quintet required his students to write a wind quintet as well.

... recommending my concerto, which doesn’t even exist yet, to “an ensemble in Copenhagen” in fact he is already asking for an advance on it, instead of recommending the Pieces for Orchestra, which have been finished quite a while, to some important German or Austrian conductor. With the name he has today, that would be enough to get them performed.  

On Sunday 8 April 1923, Berg travelled to study with Schoenberg who, he wrote, was “again criticizing everything about me: ‘that I’m still working on Wozzeck,’ . . . that I smoke, that I ‘shouldn’t imagine Wozzeck will have any success, it’s too difficult,’ and worst of all that I’ve still not started on the Chamber Concerto.” In another letter, Berg wrote

The Schoenbergs were in good spirits. But it wasn’t too pleasant an atmosphere, because he kept finding fault with my Chamber Concerto. He doesn’t like the piano in this combination. Only he doesn’t know, of course, that it is a concerto, not an ordinary octet. And yet he wants me to tell how the piece is shaping, what sort of thing it will be, and all the time with advice, admonitions, warnings, in fact generally pouring cold water. Well—first I have to get it composed!

A week later Berg again saw Schoenberg but noted that this time, “he did not pester me about the wind piece.” Berg’s composition for the Copenhagen Wind Quintet may have begun as a wind quintet, but it quickly broadened to become an octet for piano, violin, and six wind instruments. From that instrumentation it then morphed into a chamber concerto for piano, violin, and ten wind instruments. In its final form it expanded into the Chamber Concerto for piano, violin, and Thirteen Wind Instruments.

32 Ibid., 306.
33 Ibid., 315.
34 Ibid., 306.
35 Ibid., 321. The letter is dated 15 April 1923. Schoenberg had begun his own quintet the day before this letter.
36 Alban Berg dedicated the Chamber Concerto to Arnold Schoenberg for his 50th birthday.
Although Berg initially acquiesced to Hagemann’s appeal for a wind quintet after much pressure from Schoenberg, he was ultimately unable to provide the work, as he noted in a letter of 12 July 1923 to Schoenberg:

From the many plans growing out of my intention to write something for the Copenhagen wind group, as well as from much earlier plans, the following has finally emerged: a concerto for piano and violin with accompaniment of 10 winds (woodwind and brass). Admittedly I have therewith distanced myself significantly, perhaps even completely from the opportunity to have Hagemann do it and I am terribly sorry about that. But for years the idea I’ve had for a piano concerto (originally suggested by you, by the way) then for a double, triple, or even quadruple concerto (excuse my incurable elephantiasis!), moreover: first with large orchestra, then with chamber orchestra accompaniment—would give me no peace. So when the wind idea came up I wanted to accommodate the piano concerto idea at least to the extent of including piano and a few, then later a great many winds. But—as you know:—that was all wrong!\(^\text{37}\)

DAS BLÄSERQUINTETT UND DEM BUBI

“A Quintett für Flöte Oboe Intelligent Klarinette Intelligent Horn Fagott”
Arnold Schoenberg

Schoenberg had his own notions for a wind quintet. Composing a work for wind instruments only was at the time a totally new idea for Schoenberg, as he chose to use the medium of chamber music—his cherished domain—to present his new theoretical system. That the composition of a wind quintet was foremost in his mind can be validated by the fact that upon his return from Copenhagen Schoenberg immediately began completing the works he had promised to Wilhelm Hansen. He began with the two piano works, completing the \textit{Fünf}

\(^{37}\) Alban Berg to Arnold Schoenberg, Trabütten, 12 July 1923. Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 11, Folder 26, as translated in Brand et al., \textit{Berg–Schoenberg Correspondence}, 326.
Klavierstücke, op. 23, on February 17, and the Suite für Klavier, op. 25, on March 8. At the end of March he made time for a trip to Berlin, where he met with his publisher Emil Hertzka during the New Music Week. It is probable that he heard a reading of Nielsen’s Kvintet and Hindemith’s Kleine Kammermusik by the Copenhagen Wind Quintet during his time there. After returning home, on April 11, he began the finale of the Serenade, op. 24, completing it on April 14; this was the last of three works which had been awaiting completion for several years. There are two works he could have finished—a septet for strings or a violin concerto—for which he had sketches from 1922, and both of which he had begun only in the previous year. Instead, on the same day (14 April 1923), without preliminary sketches, he began the draft, inscribing at the bottom of the first page “Quintett für Flöte Oboe Intelligent Klarinette Intelligent Horn Fagott.” It would become the first large-scale, multi-movement work he had composed in fifteen years (see Figure 6).

Of the alacrity with which Schoenberg began the quintet, Maegaard notes, “as is often seen in the work of Schoenberg, once the final conception of the basic idea was arrived at, the whole piece was written in one large breath.” In a retrospective discussion of the composer, Felix Greissle recounts the following: “In the beginning he made a [row] chart for himself. And

38 Wilhelm Hansen published both works in 1923 and 1924, respectively.

39 Analysis of Schoenberg’s quintet, with its musical and textural associations with the Nielsen Quintet and the Hindemith’s, Kleine Kammermusik seems to confirm that he heard both works, or had access to the scores.

40 Universal Edition published the Serenade in 1925.

41 Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Oversize Box, photocopy of Sketch SK504 (third movement sketch).

then, when he started working, he already knew it by heart.” And, in another account he continues, I saw how he worked for instance on the woodwind quintet and it was from measure to measure. In the evening, he stopped and it was continued from there the next day. He did a little erasing once in a while, when he wrote something down wrong, but very little—only when there was a slip of the pencil. Otherwise, it came out of his mind. When he was in the last movement, he knew the row in all its forms by heart. He didn’t have to write it down again.  

In the spring Schoenberg had made plans for a summer holiday with his family in Traunkirchen, Upper Austria, at a spa that had been a favorite of his since 1907. His family at this point included his wife Mathilda Zemlinsky Schoenberg, their 17-year-son Georgi, and their daughter, Trudi, now married to Felix Greissle. Trudi gave birth to Schoenberg’s first grandchild and namesake in Schoenberg’s home on 9 April 1923—five days before he began sketching his ideas for the quintet.

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44 Joan Allen Smith, “Schoenberg’s Way,” *Perspectives of New Music* 18 (Fall–Winter 1979): 261–262. Schoenberg devised two methods for computing the rows, transpositions, and permutations. One, which he called his “12-Ton Reihenschieber” (Rechenschieber), was similar to a handmade slide-ruler; the other was circular, enabling him to rotate one of several dials to produce the correct row. Both can be seen in NuriaNono-Schoenberg et al., *Arnold Schönberg 1874–1951: Lebensgeschichte in Begegnungen* (Klagenfurt: Ritter Klagenfurt, 1992), image numbers 709 and 711.

45 Felix Greissle (1899–1982) was a pianist, conductor, and pupil of Schoenberg’s, and for a period functioned as secretary of the Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen. He married Schoenberg’s daughter Trudi in 1921.
While waiting for Trudi and his grandchild to be ready to travel, he worked on the quintet, beginning the first movement in earnest on April 21. When the baby was six weeks old, the family travelled to Traunkirchen. When he arrived at the spa on June 1, he had the first movement of the quintet with him, having just completed it. The composition of the first movement had been interspersed with sketches for the other three movements. The third movement was more difficult for Schoenberg, involving the most drafts. By 30 May 1923, Schoenberg had worked out the melodic idea he wanted to use, noting underneath “Ich glaube Goethe wüsste ganz zu frieden mit mir sein.” Below the final page of the draft he sketched a doodle, the visual representation of the row assigned to the horn and bassoon duet (see Figure 6).

The doodle depicts the distribution of the row at the beginning, mm.1–7, showing the notes of the horn melody and the contrapuntal bassoon lines. It illustrates the regularity of notes used in the melodic line, and Schoenberg referred to the doodle later in 1975 saying that

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46 See Maegaard “Chronology,” 106.
47 “I think Goethe would be pleased with me.” Arnold Schoenberg, photocopy of sketches Arnold Schoenberg Collection Box Folder Library of Congress. SK525 Oversize Box Sk 535 ‘30/V/1923’
48 For some years the doodle was considered a puzzle. In the first issue of The Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute, the editors published a copy of the sketch asking if readers could discover the significance of the doodle and the meaning of the inscription. The correspondence received concerning the doodle is found on pages 181–190 of the Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute 1/1 (October 1976).
“there is a definite regularity in the distribution of tones in the Andante from the same quintet. . . . the Basic set appears three times; here also, some of the tones appear in the principal voice (horn) while the others build a semi-contrapuntal melody in the bassoon.”49

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Figure 7. Draft of first page with “Intelligent Klarinette, intelligent horn.” Arnold Schoenberg Collection Library of Congress, Oversize Box IV, Sketch SK525. Used by permission of Belmont Music Publishers, Los Angeles.
As to Schoenberg’s assertion “Ich glaube Goethe wüsste ganz zu frieden mit mir sein,” Kuhner writes,

He invoked the spirit of Goethe when he discovered that the idea towards which had been working step by step possessed an underlying, unsounding beauty of its own, a beauty initially unperceived yet from the start ineluctably providing the inspiration which led him to the final melody.50

But Schoenberg’s assertion was more than an allusion to Goethe’s theory of organic philosophy; it symbolized the well-being and peace of mind the composer felt for the first time in many years

with parts of his life coalescing: his great satisfaction with the birth of a grandchild, the discovery of an elegant solution, the linchpin that would allow him to finish the quintet, and with it the completion of his first score to realize the full potential of serialism.\footnote{Schoenberg’s current state of mind must have paralleled the German philosopher Immanuel Kant’s “Rules for Happiness: something to do, someone to love, something to hope for.”}

\begin{quote}
INTERRUPTION, LOSS, and LIFE BEGINS AGAIN AT FIFTY

“The quintet for winds is only half finished. The inherent difficulties are very great. In addition there is the problem of digestion: who can so quickly digest so much entirely new music?”

Arnold Schoenberg
\end{quote}

That Schoenberg expected to have the quintet finished shortly is seen from several cheerful letters he wrote to friends early in the summer. The quintet is mentioned early to his friend and patron E.H. Boissevain of Amsterdam:

I have something favorable to report about myself. I have three new works completed, and a fourth will probably be finished yet this summer. Of these, if Dr. Kronheim, to whom I suggested such an evening, agrees, Steuermann might play two series of new piano works this year in Amsterdam. These and the new Serenade (Septet) and a wind quintet will probably be performed also in Berlin (2 weeks) during a complete performance of my chamber music works. . . . Have I already told you that I am a grandfather? My daughter, Mrs. Gertrud Greissle has a boy named Arnold, who is now three months old already!\footnote{Schoenberg to Charles E. H. Boissevain (1842–1927), 9 July 1923, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 1, Folder 32. Carbon copy, trans. Arthur W. McCardle.}
Figure 9. Schoenberg, with his daughter Gertrude Greissle, and his grandson Arnold “Bubi” at Traunkirchen 1923. Archiv Arnold Schönberg Center, Zaunergasse, Wien.
Two weeks later, on July 27, he wrote to Marya Freund indicating his preference for a “European ensemble” to premiere his new works, including the quintet. That summer in Traunkirchen saw not only an intense period of work on the wind quintet but a number of theoretical and historical writings. By the middle of July 1923, Schoenberg had drafted the first twenty-five measures of the fourth movement. On August 7 and 8, he had a visit from Alban Berg and Paul Hagemann, who had driven together from Salzburg to Traunkirchen in Hagemann’s new autocar. Hagemann remained especially cordial, knowing by this time that neither Schoenberg nor Berg would provide him with a wind quintet. But Berg would later write to Webern that Schoenberg was in good form and working on the Quintet.”

On August 30, Schoenberg wrote to Fritz Windisch, who was planning a series of concerts in which Schoenberg would be involved: “The quintet for winds is only half finished. The inherent difficulties are very great. In addition there is the problem of digestion: who can so quickly digest so much entirely new music?”

But his familial contentment and progress on the quintet would not continue, and the much anticipated concert of his chamber music in Berlin did not occur. The “inherent difficulties” of the quintet were not the only matter preventing Schoenberg from completing the quintet.

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53 Schoenberg to Freund, 27 July 1923, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 2, Folder 37, trans. Arthur W. McCadle. This is perhaps the first indication that Schoenberg never intended to have the musicians from Copenhagen involved. The Danes were not considered “Europeans” during this period. Reviews of the Berlin concert refer to the musicians of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet as “foreigners.” A premiere of his own works in Berlin would have more import for Schoenberg than a premiere in Copenhagen, or even Frankfurt, where his wind quintet was originally scheduled for a first performance.


55 Schoenberg to Windisch, 30 August 1923, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 8, Folder 10, trans. Arthur W. McCadle. Fritz Windisch, was the editor of the journal Melos. As concert organizer in Berlin, he was planning a series of concerts that would include works by Schoenberg. “Die Bläserquintett ist erst zur Hälfte fertig. Die bis jetzt vorhandenen Schwierigkeit ensind bereits sehr gross. Dazu kommt die Verdau ungefragte: Wer kann so schnell so vielvel dauen ganz neue Musik?”
Mathilda Zemlinsky Schoenberg became ill during in the summer and rapidly declined. In September the Schoenberg family returned to Vienna, where she was admitted to a sanatorium, and Schoenberg’s work on the quintet was interrupted.\textsuperscript{56} She passed away on 18 October 1923, the twenty-second anniversary of their marriage. The work that he began with such enthusiasm would not be completed that year. After the first months of mourning and the restructuring of his life, Schoenberg abandoned composition, including the quintet.

\textbf{“Ich habe noch nicht angefangen zu komponieren.”}
Arnold Schoenberg

In January of the new year, 1924, Schoenberg wrote to Alexander Zemlinsky—who was also still mourning his sister—“Ich habe noch nicht angefangen zu komponieren. . . .”\textsuperscript{57} However, as winter turned to spring, Schoenberg’s sorrow turned into happiness, and with it came a new creative period and personal satisfaction. For some months he had been cultivating a close friendship with Gertrud Kolisch, the sister of his pupil Rudolf Kolisch.\textsuperscript{58} This friendship soon developed into a more intimate relationship, and they would marry later in the summer—two days after he completed the wind quintet.

In June, Paul Hindemith, trying to establish the new program for the 1924 Donaueschingen Chamber Music Festival, wrote: “How is it with the Schönberg Serenade? If

\textsuperscript{56} See Maegaard “Chronology,” 107–108. Schoenberg may have stopped work on the quintet as early as 15 July 1923.

\textsuperscript{57} Schoenberg to Zemlinsky, 5 January 1924, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 8, Folder 12. My trans. “I have not yet returned to composing.”

\textsuperscript{58} Rudolf Kolisch (1896–1978), a right-handed virtuoso violinist, formed the Kolisch String Quartet, known for performing modern music. He worked closely with Schoenberg in the Verein für Musikalische Privataufführungen.
you cannot get it, at least try to get the new wind quintet.”

Schoenberg had not returned to complete the quintet since leaving it unfinished the previous year. He was still working on the Serenade and Die glückliche Hand, op. 18. The opera was due to be given its premiere on October 14 at the Vienna Volksoper, under the direction of Fritz Stiedry. Schoenberg completed the Serenade first and conducted the first public performance at Donaueschingen on July 20.

The earliest clue to Schoenberg’s intent is found in a letter to Emil Hertzka of 17 May 1924, in which Schoenberg acknowledges the “soon to be finished quintet for wind instruments.” The quintet is mentioned in another letter that Schoenberg wrote—as a father—to Karl Stiegler, inquiring about Georg’s progress on the horn:

Dear Professor Stiegler, I would be very obliged to you if you would be so kind to tell me how satisfied you were this year with my son. Unfortunately, I was underway so much

59 Dieter Rexroth, ed., Paul Hindemith Briefe (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1982), 115. “Was ists mit der Schönberg-Serenade? Wenn Du die nicht bekommst, versuche wenigstens das neue Bläsquintett zu kriegen, lasse kein Mittle unversucht; wir müssten unbedingt etwas von ihm so wohl als auch von Webern haben.” My translation. The letter is undated. Hindemith was now chairman of the program committee for Donaueschingen. His letter was to fellow committee member Heinrich Burchard.

60 There had already been a private hearing of the Serenade on 2 May, before an invited audience at the home of Dr. Norbert Schwarzmann in Vienna. Schoenberg’s Serenade was not the only important work heard during this festival. Anton Webern’s Sechs Bagatellen für Streichquartett, op. 9, and his Sechs Lieder für Gesang, Klarinett, Bassklarinett, Geige und Violoncell, op. 14, were also performed.


62 Schoenberg was asking about his son, Georg, born in 1906, the second child with his first wife Mathilda. Karl Stiegler (1876–1932) was the principal horn player in the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and an acquaintance of Schoenberg’s. Steigler, who took part in the premiere of the quintet in Vienna, was a professor at the State Academy for Music and Art in Vienna, well-known for his proficiency on the Viennese F-horn. Georg studied with Stiegler at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Vienna. When at the Villa Spaun in Trauenkirken as guests of the Baron Ronen, Schoenberg regularly stipulated in the rental agreement that his son must be allowed to practice three hours per day. “Gorgi (as I have already emphasized) must be allowed to practice his horn every day in the house. (We shall, of course, also in our own interest, see to it that this is done as painlessly as possible for all parties concerned! Otherwise I myself would be disturbed in my work!)” Quoted in Ena Steiner, “Schoenberg on Holiday: His Six Summers on Lake Traun,” Musical Quarterly 72 (1986): 47.
that I did not get to make the oft-planned visit to your class. Please do not regard this as lack of interest. Perhaps it will interest you to learn that I am just completing my wind quintet which, as Dr. Bach has told me, is to be premiered at my request by the Philharmonic Wind Ensemble at the music festival, if you are interested. On this occasion, I hope, I will often have the pleasure of seeing you. By the way, for a long time I have wanted to draw your kind attention to a young, very talented pupil of mine who likewise has written a wind quintet. His name is Hanns Eisler. If you wish, he will submit his work to you. Thanking you in advance, yours truly.

“I rejoice with all my heart! Well then, to the point!  
 I shall be delighted to join in!  
I must, however, mention some difficulties and make some suggestions!”
Arnold Schoenberg

Another proposal for a full concert of his chamber music, with a specific request to premiere the quintet, was the catalyst for Schoenberg to complete the quintet. Hermann Scherchen and Paul Hindemith planned a birthday celebration in honor of Schoenberg’s fiftieth birthday, 13 September 1924:

Paul Hindemith and I have organized a festival in Frankfurt-am-Main from the 15th to the 18th of September. . . . Wind Quintet [is] to be played the 3rd night . . . Our wish in doing this is to honour you, as musicians, out of our own resources, entirely without the

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63 Dr. David Joseph Bach (1874–1947) was an Austrian musicologist and music critic, and more importantly, a close childhood friend of Schoenberg. Schoenberg credited Bach with helping him develop his ethical and moral powers. Dr. Bach organized Schoenberg’s fiftieth birthday celebration in Vienna, insisting that the premiere of the wind quintet take place there.

64 Schoenberg to Stiegler, 6 July 1924, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box7, Folder 19. As mentioned earlier, Schoenberg assigned his students the composition of a wind quintet when they were studying with him during the period he was working on his own quintet. Hanns Eisler’s Divertimento for Wind Quintet, op. 4 (1923) is a product of this class. It is a frequently performed work in two movements, the second of which is a set of six variations with coda. It is highly chromatic and not strictly serial. Alban Berg’s “wind quintet” became his Chamber Concerto.

65 Hermann Scherchen, the famous German conductor, was responsible for many Schoenberg premieres including the 1911 performance of his Kammersymphonie, no. 1 and Pierrot lunaire in 1912.
aid of any committee or ignorant financial backers. Please write immediately and tell me—and please do let it be affirmative—that it is all right to start everything with all speed. It would do if you were here from the 16th–18th (please you must contrive to slip away from Vienna for those few days)—and I shall rehearse the Chamber Symphony so thoroughly as to leave no technical work for you to do so that musically you will be able to do just what you want with the Ensemble. Dear Schönberg, make this festival possible for us by coming. Paul Hindemith begs this of you as earnestly as I do. We musicians want to acclaim and honor you. . . . Yours, Scherchen.66

Hindemith had become the director of the planning committee for the Donaueschingen Festival and was an enthusiastic advocate of Schoenberg’s music. The response to Scherchen from his home in Mödling, dated 12 August 1924, reveals Schoenberg’s dependence on and admiration for Hindemith, who had assisted in getting the Serenade premiered at Donaueschingen.

Schoenberg’s reply to Scherchen reveals his habitual demands and an impassioned encomium to Hindemith:

Your delightful plan gave me really very great pleasure. Let me waste no words: you will know for yourself how beautifully this thing has been thought out and that it comes from your hearts and that it therefore cannot fail to have the corresponding effect on me: I rejoice with all my heart! Well then, to the point! I shall be delighted to join in! I must, however, mention some difficulties and make some suggestions [emphasis AS]. . . . Now let me thank you once again most warmly and ask you to tell Hindemith too that I am extremely pleased with him [emphasis AS]. By doing this he is making a splendid sign of a proper attitude to his elders, a sign such as can be made only by a man with a genuine and justifiable sense of his own worth; only by one who has no need to

66 The letter is undated, but must have been written early in June 1924. Schoenberg to Stein, Mödling, 1 March 1923, in Arnold Schoenberg Letters, ed. Erwin Stein, trans. Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser (London: Faber & Faber, 1974), 111.
fear for his own fame when another is being honored and who recognizes that precisely such an honor does honor also to him as he associates himself with it. I once said: only he can bestow honor who himself has a sense of honor and deserves honor. Such a man knows what is due to him and therefore also what is due to his peers. AS.67

On 2 August 1924, Schoenberg replied to the oboist Alexander Wunderer, who had written inquiring about the quintet premiere:

I am surprised that Dr. Bach, to whom I communicated my wish to have my new wind quintet premiered by the Vienna Wind Ensemble, has not yet reached an agreement with you on this matter. . . . I hope to have the score finished shortly. As soon as I have written out the parts I will be in touch. I am very happy about the kind interest that you have in my work and have high hopes for this performance. . . . 68

Schoenberg was anxious because the wind players of the Vienna Philharmonic had not yet given assurance of their participation in the premiere, nor had they been provided contracts. Yet, he had not completed the score—much less provided parts. It was now only six weeks until the premiere, and the group had not begun rehearsals.

Ten days later, 12 August 1924, Schoenberg wrote to David Bach again since he had not yet hired the performers for the concert, and Schoenberg had earlier demanded specific musicians: “. . . whereby I want to remind you that you have not yet spoken with the Wind Ensemble of the Philharmonic, as Prof. Wunderer informs me!! It is already high time that you

67 Schoenberg to Scherchen, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 6, Folder 3. Some of the difficulties and suggestions made by Schoenberg include a change of venue for the quintet premiere. Originally the winds of the Vienna Philharmonic were scheduled to rehearse in Vienna, and travel to Frankfurt to premiere the quintet. Finally the premiere was moved to Vienna, and held as part of the festival.

68 Schoenberg to Wunderer, 2 August 1924, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 8, Folder 10, trans. Arthur W. McCardle. In addition to being president of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Alexander Wunderer (1977–1955) was the oboist with that orchestra. He performed the premiere of the quintet.
did so!!"⁶⁹ But Schoenberg was still busy working on Die glückliche Hand, on which he had resumed work after conducting the premiere of the Serenade in Donaueschingen. Finally, on August 17, he returned to work on the final movement of the quintet, completing his op. 26 on August 26, with the dedication “dem Bubi Arnold.”⁷⁰ According to Gertrud Kolish, Schoenberg had indeed been very busy during the summer of 1924 trying to finish the quintet in time for his birthday celebration.⁷¹ The date and venue were changed, and the celebration was moved from Frankfurt to Vienna to coincide with the Viennese Festival of Music and Drama, sponsored by the city during a month-long celebration of his fiftieth birthday. Held between September 14 and October 15 of 1924, the festival included many celebrations and performances of his music. The quintet was premiered on 16 September 1924 by winds of the Vienna Philharmonic. Conducted by Felix Greissle, who had rehearsed the group for only three weeks before the premiere, it had left the musicians little time to “digest so much new music.”

On August 28, two days after completing the quintet, Schoenberg married Gertrud Kolish in a ceremony in the Mödling Lutheran Parish Church. To many of his acquaintances Schoenberg had flouted the requirements of convention by remarrying within the statutory twelve-month period of mourning, something for which he was heavily criticized. In personal notes he had made a vow to compose a requiem for Mathilda. But he wrote only the words. After

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⁶⁹ Schoenberg to David Bach, 12 August 1924, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 1, Folder 14, trans. Arthur W. McCadle.

⁷⁰ “Dem Bubi Arnold” is Schoenberg’s grandson, Arnold Greissle. The date of completion was intentional: Schoenberg was superstitious, and triskaidekaphobia controlled many facets of his life. The quintet is his opus 26. When Dr. Bach asked to premiere the quintet on September 13, coincidentally his birthday, Schoenberg refused birthday or no. The date of the premiere was moved to September 16.

a hiatus of nearly a year, he completed the wind quintet, dedicating it to his new grandson. As
the product of years of experimentation and searching for a method that he believed would
change the course of music, the Quintet was both an end and a beginning for Schoenberg.

In his letter of 13 September 1924 to Schoenberg on his birthday, Alban Berg wrote

. . . casting a glance into your new score [Wind Quintet] a while back was immeasurably
exciting. How long will it be before I understand this music as thoroughly as I fancy, for
example, that I understand Pierrot. For the present I am slowly familiarizing myself with
your Opera 23–26, the only scores I have up here with me. But [to think] what you have
achieved in the meantime?! Who could possibly keep pace with you, that is follow your
footsteps, except those who outlive you by decades. Isn’t that how I am to interpret the
dedication “to the little boy Arnold”?  

Two years later, in 1926, Alban Berg wrote again of Schoenberg’s dedication to “Dem
Bubi Arnold”:

It was no mere act of grandfatherly affection, when he dedicated his wind Quintet, op. 26
to an unsuspecting child; I believe he also means that this music, with which the
unsuspecting child of our time is a much at a loss as is the “Bubi Arnold” of today, may
remain reserved for a time when the next generation but one, at least, will have matured;
a time when what today seems merely like a prophecy will at least have turned into the
 incontrovertible truth. 

While perhaps preferring to look forward rather than back, Schoenberg began a new life
with Gertrud Kolish. He had published the Five Pieces for Piano, op. 23, the Suite for Piano, op.
25, compositions initiating his new method, married a young woman, had become a grandfather,
and had crystalized his compositional technique in the quintet. This work, embodying the

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72 Schoenberg to Berg, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress, Box 1, Folder 4, translation by Brand et al., Berg–Schoenberg Correspondence, 338.

twelve-tone technique for a new generation, imparts a sense of optimism, confidence, and joy that Schoenberg would be able to bequeath to the future. He embedded the initials of his grandson in the first three notes of the row: Es-G-A, Arnold Greissle Schoenberg.\(^7^4\)

**ANAYLSIS: IN THE DOMAINS OF SCORING AND TEXTURE**

“Instead we must ask: is the quintet truly deducible? Is there no more to it than its dodecaphony? What would remain if all its twelve-tone aspects were subtracted?”

Theodor Adorno

Two levels of composition exist in the quintet, the first of which is the theoretical *cum constructional*. The second is found within the domains of scoring and texture, the means through which Schoenberg enhanced and illuminated the complexity of his compositional language. It is here in the textural formations, timbres, and new instrumental colors that his

\(^7^4\) The name his grandson would eventually take was Arnold Greissle Schoenberg. The following account is given much later by Arnold Greissle: “As I mentioned to begin with, throughout my life I have been known to one and all as Arnold Schônberg’s oldest grandchild. I was named after him, and this has always prompted people to make comparisons—very unfair ones, I might add. A conversation in my young manhood often began, ‘So, Arnold, what musical instruments are you proficient at?’ And when I answered, ‘None,’ then followed ‘Well, you must compose then?’ And when that, too, elicited a negative, the inevitable would come: ‘So how do you feel about the Twelve Tone System?’ To this I had a fairly standard response, something like, ‘Well, that was certainly a turning point in modern music.’ But the fact is that I was never very fond of the later compositions of my grandfather, finding them tendentious, arbitrary, wantonly opposed to tradition, and generally unpleasant to the ear, and only in recent years have I come to appreciate his unique genius and even some of that ‘new music’ (which is not so new anymore). It was only a matter of listening from a different perspective and of learning to understand unfamiliar relationships between sounds—even if what greeted my ears wasn’t dripping with beauty. So what kind of music do I like? The well-known pianist Eduard Steuermann posed this question in 1939 when my parents and I visited him in New York one day, and the answer I gave then is essentially the same as what I would give now. I am a well-tempered listener, and besides Johann Sebastian Bach and Mozart, my special loves are Telemann, Buxtehude, Heinrich Schütz, Vivaldi, and the music of the Middle Ages, which has always been able to lift me from everyday life into the wonderful world of thought. Yes, I was and still am an early-music buff—and it should be noted that I became one long before the recent craze. Steuermann, by the way, who had been a pupil of Schônberg’s and remained one of his most enthusiastic followers, was utterly flabbergasted by my response that day, and later in our visit he drew my father aside and whispered, ‘Sag, Felix, ist das dein Sohn?’ (Tell me, Felix, is that really your son?).” Arnold Greissle (Schoenberg), in *Arnold Schoenberg’s European Family*, in Schoenbergseuropeanfamily.org (accessed 15 March 2014).
consciousness to sound is most clearly expressed. Since its inception, the quintet has been used as a model for the study of Schoenberg's serial theory; for some, the work stands as a demonstration piece for the twelve-tone movement. The work represents on the one hand a transition from his period of Expressionism to Constructionism—his Bauhaus contribution—while on the other, the first striking achievement toward a systematic handling of the entire twelve notes of the octave within the bounds of one composition. Because Schoenberg’s quintet stands as a compendium of his theoretical practice and procedures, it has been analyzed repeatedly; few composers and theoreticians have heard the work in a recording, less in a live performance. It is a fundamental tool of the classroom rather than of the auditorium. For that reason, this study does not address the serial technique; rather, this part of the chapter is intended as a detailed gloss to contemplate the piece, not the process.

The Wind Quintet, op. 26,
was begun in one of the composer's most difficult years
and completed in one of his happiest.
Therese Muxeneder

Completed in two compositional phases, the quintet is Schoenberg’s first large-scale composition of the twelve-tone idiom, using a single unifying row for each of the four movements, and with this he drafted the laws of twelve-tone music. As a milestone in the development of contemporary music and a turning point in his work, the wind quintet functions simultaneously as a laboratory for Schoenberg’s strictly polyphonic twelve-tone technique while becoming the presentation piece for his new theoretical system. At this juncture in his compositional evolution, Schoenberg’s experimentation with the method reached a cogent conclusion.76 The work became the first composition fully endowed with all of the resources that are now associated with the technique: as Greissle notes in the prolegomena to the 1925 publication of the quintet:

It is the first large work in which Schoenberg has substantiated the laws of composition with twelve tones (*). All themes and sound combinations are derived from the basic series (E-flat, G, A, B, C-sharp, C, B-flat, D, E, F-sharp, A-flat, F) and a number of Subsidiary series (Inversion, “Crab” or Retrograde motion, etc.). The homogeneity and uniformity thus achieved constitutes an equivalent to the form-building functions of a fixed tonality. 77

76 By this, I mean the end of his experimental period of opp. 23–26.

77 Arnold Schoenberg, Wind Quintet op. 26, für Flöte, Oboe, Klarinette, Horn und Fagott, Universal Edition, 1925. The structural analysis was prepared by Felix Greissle, and first appeared in the Austrian music journal Musikblätter des Anbruch, February 1925. The prolegomena, instructions, and structural analysis are provided in German, French, and English. At the asterisk, there is a footnote: “For details of this technique see Erwin Stein, in the special issue of the ‘Musikblätter des Anbruch,’ August–September 1924; and Felix Greissle, in the ‘Musikblätter des Anbruch,’ February 1925.”
Composing a work for winds exclusively was at that time a totally new notion for Schoenberg, as he continued to use the medium of chamber music to work out his theory. As color emerged to become a major factor in music of the twentieth century, his choice of a handful of winds to interpret his new material was both resolute and insightful. The foundation for the return of new instrumental colors and sonorities, and the exploration into the capabilities of the wind instruments had been led by Stravinsky, who scored for significantly larger groups of winds, in 1921 and 1923. But it was Schoenberg who chose the medium of chamber music as the means to introduce his new material. Bojan Bujic confirms that “it is here in the field of chamber music, that as a creator and human being, he [the composer] fully achieves his freedom. It is no surprise that from Mozart onwards compositional problems have often been solved in chamber music with consequences felt far beyond that field.”

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78 Stravinsky’s Symphonies of Wind Instruments, originally for 24 wood and brass winds, was premiered by Koussevitzky in London on 10 June, 1921. His Octet, also for wood and brass winds, was premiered by Koussevitzky in Paris 18 October 1923, six months after Schoenberg began the wind quintet.

“Every musical medium has within it certain inherent compositional possibilities.”
Melvin Kaplan

With Schoenberg the quintet became an exemplar for that particular characteristic which had long been considered its liability; the inability to blend.80 “Every musical medium has within it certain inherent compositional possibilities” and “composers constantly try to grasp and incorporate this potential in their music.”81 Before beginning a composition the composer normally affirms the idiomatic characteristics of the ensemble for which he will compose, noting the advantages, limitations, and color possibilities.82 Even when a work is played in modo ordinario—without extended techniques—the possibilities for variant timbres are practically infinite. As a sound mechanism the wind quintet offers a vast array of sonic combinations. With their vivid coloration and distinct timbres, the five instruments are well suited to producing sounds that vary greatly throughout the tessitura of each instrument, alone and in combination.

With regard to texture and sound, the composer must also question whether the objective of the instrumentation is to produce heterogeneous or homogeneous sounds, i.e., to blend

80 This is precisely the concept Elliott Carter would espouse some twenty-five years later. On reflecting upon the composition of his first wind quintet he wrote, “In 1948, several woodwind players asked me to write a work for woodwind quintet. I accepted. But when I came to think it over, I began to find the combination quite strange. As you know, a woodwind quintet employs four woodwind instruments, a flute, an oboe, a clarinet and a bassoon, but its fifth member is no woodwind at all but a French horn, one of the brass family. On looking over some earlier quintets, I found that the composers were in the habit of overlooking the fact that each of these instruments has a different sound. I, on the other hand, was particularly struck by this, and so decided to write a work that would emphasize the individuality of each instrument and that made a virtue of their inability to blend completely.” Elliott Carter, liner notes for “The Avant Garde Woodwind Quintet in the U.S.A.,” performed by the Dorian Quintet, 3 LPs (SVBX 5307, Vox Box 1977), 1976.


(Spaltklang) or to individualize colors (Mischklang).\(^{83}\) Schoenberg’s choice was the latter—easily realized with winds—the distinct sonorities and individualization of sounds carrying the rows was critical to this concept. With Schoenberg, each instrument develops an independent linear existence, integrated into the musical fabric.

The Quintet’s texture, which is generally overloaded with thematic references and polyphonic activity, is made clear by the choice of instruments, placed in carefully and clearly defined vertical registers. Individual and specific colors, rather than composite sounds, dominate most of the texture, serving the fundamental need of tracking the series; thus, clarity of line is focused on a polyphonic texture replete with contrasts of rhythm, color, and register (see Figure 10). Since the row is indeed the overriding compositional strategy, and it is applied throughout the entire work, the multiple traits and characteristics of the quintet made it the ideal medium for the presentation of Schoenberg’s contrapuntal and polyphonic ideas. When speaking about the wind quintet years later Schoenberg would say:

> To be specific: transparency of sound can be more fully achieved when the elements used are heterogeneous rather than homogeneous. Similar colours, particularly similar tone-colours, melt too easily into one another, forming chords, and it is then certainly harder to follow the construction of the texture (e.g. when parts cross!). It will surely have been noticed that very often I give chords, and also chordal progressions of simultaneous parts, to heterogeneous instruments. Though that only happens within homophony.\(^{84}\)

\(^{83}\) In his discussion of the changing sound of the wind quintet in the twentieth century, Gürsching uses the unique expressions *Mischklang* (i.e., mixed colors/heterogenous instrumentation) and *Spaltklang*. According to Gürsching, *Mischklang*, the opposite of a “blended sound,” is the texture that Schoenberg used for his own wind quintet. Hindemith used *Spaltklang* (blended colors/homogenous texture) in the third movement of *Kleine Kammermusik*. Gürsching, “Bläserkammermusik,” 1564. See Chapter 2, fn 51.

Figure 10. Schoenberg, *Bläserquintett*, op. 26, I: *Schungvoll*, mm. 1-11. Showing initial placement of row in flute part.
“Each instrumental voice is treated with magisterial clarity and definiteness.”

Paul Rosenfeld

Like Nielsen and then Hindemith, Schoenberg took advantage of the kinetic energy intrinsic to winds and the ability to produce a genuine staccato. The complex interweaving of instrumental lines and the subdivision of the series among the instruments require the utmost attention to dynamics and balances. The ability to make sudden or frequent dynamic changes is an effective tool of woodwinds. Schoenberg’s scoring propels an admixture of attacks, dynamics, and articulation, a natural affinity of wind players, providing passages that winds can perform with a taut unity of tone, phrasing, and attack, in turn producing splendid shows of technique. His sensitive manipulation of agogics, dynamics, and timbre assures that his winds comply with his earlier charge that “It is chamber music and must therefore be played very exactly, because very note must be heard!”85 (See Figures 11 and 12)

Schoenberg was able to explore and utilize a rich spectrum of sounds—timbres, dynamics, and articulation—incorporating the sum into his op. 26. His “pit band of five” was substantial enough to shoulder the formal structures of the classical forms he used; never viewed as a subordinate, the medium partnered, enhancing and augmenting the series. Rimsky-Korsakov and others have argued that orchestration is not a separate act, but a part of the very act of composition itself; there is a close bond between the use of a thoroughly contrapuntal technique, which demands clarity for its exposition, and Schoenberg’s choice of the wind medium. As

Arnold Whittall best describes it, “[it is in] the Wind Quintet that the composer’s polyphonic dexterity [is] nourished by the medium itself. . . .”\textsuperscript{86} An understanding of this bond provides a deeper understanding of the reason why Schoenberg chose winds. And, if he had any doubts

\textsuperscript{86} Arnold Whittall, \textit{Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 166.
about the suitability of his proposed medium, his ear would have confirmed and reinforced this
decision at the Festival of New Music in Berlin, two weeks prior to beginning work on the
quintet.

**Above all, and in every detail “woodwind music” par excellance.**
Robert Craft

That winds were always the intended instrumentation is clear from the style of writing in
register, notation, articulation, phrasing, or dynamics; there is no _spiccato, bariolage, arco_ or
multiple stop techniques specified. Jan Maegaard sustains this idea:

Very seldom, even in the slightest sketches, are you left in doubt of which instrument was
in his mind. Either it is obvious from the style of writing, or it is indicated in the notes.
Schoenberg did not compose abstract music which was later assigned to this or that
instruments; the very sound of the music, along with the various preferences and
idiosyncrasies of each instrument, was alive in his mind whenever he composed.\(^{87}\)

By specifying the need for “intelligent” clarinet and horn on the first draft, Schoenberg
gave notice that each instrument must be notated in C—at sounding pitch—with no transposition,
traditional for those instruments. Answering a letter from Bette Rothe of Universal Edition, who
wrote inquiring why the clarinet and horn parts were not transposed, and if they should be for the
publication, Schoenberg said the following:

The parts of my wind quintet: clarinet and horn should not be transposed but should be written as in my score. Namely, for the following reasons: 1. I hope to force musicians to learn to play in C. 2. In an emergency it would be easier and more reliable, to transpose the parts after the parts have been extracted and corrected; and that 3. [the transposition to] be done best by the player of the first performance. But I hope, as I said, that this will be implemented in a very short time and much would gained by that.88

It has been said that while working on the draft, Schoenberg “got into a muddle,” transposing the clarinet and horn parts, while simultaneously using permutations of the row.\(^8^9\) His decision to write in C for the first time, notating all instruments in the sounding note, was new with the quintet. The technique served his purpose, as he used it for the op. 31 Variations for Orchestra, which he began in 1926 and finished in 1928.

Using a full C score was not the only accommodation Schoenberg made in composing for the quintet, for as Robert Morgan writes, “. . . it was with the Quintet that Schoenberg, aware of the difficulty of recognizing the principal voice in such a heavily thematic context, began using the notational signs Hauptstimme and Nebenstimme to distinguish between main and ancillary parts of a thematic area.”\(^9^0\) “The notation of Principal and Secondary parts is for the purpose of making clear to the performers the various meanings of their parts. They should then know which parts have to take a secondary place.”\(^9^1\) Notational signs were necessary in the highly contrapuntal work, and the interrelated problems of balance and blend were critical for a conspicuous presentation of the series. Use of the markings was but a “partial solution” to the fact that there are only relative and not absolute dynamics, “a generally unrecognized fact.”\(^9^2\) As

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a rule Schoenberg’s handling of the row is discreet enough so that the subject nearly always—whether in full or in part—dominates the texture. This effect is achieved by using strong-sounding instruments or open spacing, or by thinning out the texture.

The mistaken impression is easily formed that this is
“some sort of musical taxidermy—rondo and sonata-allegro skins stuffed and mounted with chromatic sawdust.”

In the prolegomena Greissle gives an explanation of Schoenberg’s twelve-tone method, accompanied by a short glossary of performance practice instructions. This Aufführungspraxis dictates guidelines for dynamics and articulation. Tempos are established using metronome numbers, but with the caveat that they “must not be taken literally—they merely give an indication of the tempo.”93 Performance instructions are found in great profusion throughout the work, with explicit instruction for articulation; for short notes, “one must differentiate between the hard, heavy, punctuated, and the light, elastic, thrown ones,”94 each of which he gives a special mark. He does the same for length of notes, “tenuto and portato, staccato, and a special mark assuring the stress on upbeats,” noting later that “trills must always be played without grace notes. Appoggiaturas should not be regarded as upbeats.”95

Possibly the most startling aspect of the preface is Greissle’s structural analysis that reveals Schoenberg cast each movement in classical sonata or symphony model: “Sonata,

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93 FG, in Arnold Schoenberg, Wind Quintet, op. 26 für Flöte, Oboe, Klarinette, Horn und Fagott, Universal Edition, 1925

94 Ibid.

95 Ibid.
Scherzo and Trio, Ternary Song Form, and Rondo.” By using traditional forms of the eighteenth and nineteenth century he provided a familiar framework for the introduction of a new, complex musical language, a consolidation that revealed he was looking backward as much as forward.86

Embedding the serial technique within classical formal structures produced misunderstanding and diverse comments. The music critic and philosopher Theodor Adorno remarked that the quintet was “the first of Schönberg’s major works to crystalize the new technique in its pure form” and that he had written “a sonata about a sonata.”87 Hans Stuckenschmidt would later describe the quintet as Schoenberg’s “most conservative attempt to combine strict twelve-tone technique with classical methods of writing and forms.”88 But the most insightful observation concerning the form comes from theorist Andrew Mead:

[Op. 26] is perhaps the most notorious example of a twelve-tone movement imitating a tonal form. It appears to be a text-book sonata-allegro, with a repeated exposition complete with “first theme,” “second theme, and a transitional passage connecting them; it also contains a development section, and, most damning of all, a recapitulation in which the “second theme” is transposed up a perfect fourth, the appropriate interval had this indeed been a tonal work with the second key area the dominant. All this looks mighty suspicious, but we shall see that each feature, even the transposition in the recapitulation, reflects relations within the piece’s row class working in an overriding compositional strategy for the whole movement.” 89

86 Schoenberg had not used the classical model since 1908, with the composition of his String Quartet no. 2 in F-sharp minor, op. 10.


88 Stuckenschmidt 1977, 295.

Figure 13. Schoenberg, *Bläserquintett*, op. 26, IV: Rondo, mm. 1-12. Use of strong-sounding instruments, open spacing, or thinning out the texture.
The series Schoenberg uses for each movement is handled in an essentially linear manner, with all melodic and accompanimental material derived from a small number of motives stated at or near the beginning of each movement. Thus, as Robert Morgan writes, “everything becomes ‘motivic’ in the sense that all of its material is drawn from the same basic source, the row.”

The distinguishing feature of the basic set Schoenberg created for the quintet is characterized by his use of hexachordal partitioning. This, simply stated, is a division of the row into two sections: in this case, the second half of the set is written a fourth lower beginning on B-flat, exactly following the course of the first half of the set, but the final tone of the set, instead of being a semitone, is a minor third. Thus, the two halves are related analogously to the use of tonic and dominant in tonal music, which, like the form of the movement, provides an additional link with tradition.

![Figure 14. Row, with retrograde, inversion, retrograde inversion.](image)

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100 Morgan 1991, 195.

101 Elliott Antokoletz further describes this technique as “the concept of segmentation is joined with the serial principle.” Emphasis EA. Elliott Antokoletz, Twentieth-Century Music (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998), 42.
The formal partitioning described by Greissle in the prolegomena is also defined by
tempo changes, texture, timbre, and the appearance of the row, which in each case provides
remarkable aural and structural clarity. Each movement has its own recognizably consistent and
distinct rhythms, melodic contours, mood, and motivic interplay. Several techniques are used to
link formal sections. Schoenberg uses timbres that lock together sections; reducing the
instrumentation to one instrument, thus forecasting by rhythm, timbre, or mood the material that
becomes prominent in the following area. This is nearly always done in association with a
ritardando into the ensuing material, creating a rhythmic elision, not unlike the technique used by
Hindemith in the first movement of the *Kleine Kammermusik*.

“The work’s significance lies in the seriousness of purpose
with which Schoenberg approached the work and its intended ensemble.”

Bruce Creditor

In terms of stamina and technical ability, Schoenberg required maximal effort from his
performers. He extended Hindemith’s idea of instrumental democracy, found in the finale of the
*Kleine Kammermusik*, to a full instrumental egalitarianism throughout the four movements.
Presentation of the primary serial material is distributed evenly among the instruments, with each
instrument scored as an equal contributor to the linear texture, carrying the melodic fabric in turn
and taking part in all textures and thematic situations.

This instrumental egalitarianism is applied to articulation, upward or downward legato
passages, intensity in tone quality, dynamics, and extended staccato passagework. As noted

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earlier, the ability to produce a natural and precise staccato is a given wind attribute. A flute can generally tongue more quickly and easily than other instruments, with double-tonguing, triple-tonguing, and flutter tonguing, always in a manner which is usable and effective. Schoenberg requires his bassoon and horn to perform with comparable facility, as he does the flute or oboe. But he does not require ostentatious virtuoso effects from any of his performers.

Figure 15. Schoenberg, *Bläserquintett*, op. 26, I: *Schwungvol*, mm.183-198. Double and triple tonguing.
Long accustomed to fluid emotive passages, the oboe, with its distinctive and incisive timbre, is given staccato passages fast enough to necessitate double-tonguing, and passages that might require triple tonguing if the performer is capable. Schoenberg treats his oboe idiomatically, choosing a mixture of long melodic and rapidly repeated notes, broken chords, legato lines, large leaps, and staccato phrases generally played in mid-range of the instrument. Continuously attentive to the oboist’s particularized need for frequent inhalation and exhalation, he requires no exceedingly long phrases.

Wind quintets are traditionally shorter than comparable chamber works for strings, for the fundamental reasons of breath control, stamina, and embouchure fatigue. The performance time for Nielsen’s Kvintet varies from twenty-four to twenty-six minutes. Hindemith’s piece is even shorter, at twelve to fourteen minutes. Nevertheless, Schoenberg gave no ground in this respect, noting in the score that the “time required for performance: ca. 40 mins.” The work is now commonly played in forty-five to fifty minutes. Schoenberg was surely aware of the relative short-windedness of winds—as opposed to strings—which makes continual playing taxing. Scoring conventionally with a four-part texture, he commonly reserved the full complement of five as a signal of formal articulation or for intensification and culmination of strategic formal sections. The richness of overtones in winds can tire the ear if used

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103 Ertuğrul Sevsay writes that both double and triple tonguing are impossible on the oboe (The Cambridge Guide to Orchestration, [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013], 78). Both are possible, depending upon the performer, but not always practicable.

104 Timing is taken from averaging twelve recordings and from performances by the author. The first recording of the quintet, made by the Metropolitan Wind Quintet is slightly over 38 minutes.
continuously, an aspect especially true of the oboe timbre, which is another justification for letting the winds rest more frequently. By omitting one instrument at a time Schoenberg provided limited rest in a texture in which all tones are relevant, and in which every note is structural, with no doubling or filler notes. But, as the structural importance of every note increases, the sense of participation, the investment, and the inclusive responsibility contributes further to fatigue. In addition to the use of notation signs, the score is marked by scrupulous and persistent use of dynamic indications, constantly raising or lowering dynamics as needed in the accompanying material. The ongoing physical effort required to produce wide leaps, both up and down, in addition to his entreaties for extreme dynamics, further underscores the technical demands placed on the performers.

Individualized by distinctive rhythmic patterns, each of the four movements also exhibits a dominant color, mood, and character. The sound of the flute and horn govern sections of the texture in the aggressively rhythmic first movement; the oboe’s animated staccato and dry timbre drives the energy in the Scherzo. French horn and bassoon begin the third movement with a change of texture to a lower register, now languid and legato, with ongoing syncopation. Here Schoenberg explores the difference in instrumental colors and tone quality in a constantly changing texture that can be heard at both ends of the instruments’ registers. Here too he takes advantage of the idiomatic capabilities of the individual instruments, while not extending the registers beyond what was the considered conventional playing range for that period; there is no fixed hierarchy of instrumental positions or evidence of predominantly enforced delineation in

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105 Sevsay 2013, 119.
registers. Schoenberg uses the highest ranges cautiously but deliberately, not exploiting extended ranges or textures for their sensuous values, but for clarity; always his treatment of timbre and texture is for the purpose of outlining the set. The best example of this appears in the flute at the opening of the quintet, where the high register offers a contrast in tone color, resulting in brief flashes of color, illustrating and illuminating the initial appearance of the row.

The score is particularly difficult for the horn, for which Schoenberg wrote numerous staccato and bravura passages, giving it a nearly privileged status. In the classical period, the French horn served primarily to provide harmony, but this is not the case with Schoenberg, who assigns the instrument a dual purpose: performing the traditional “romantic” horn calls and numerous breathtaking staccato passages.

The horn is frequently scored in the extreme high register, where there are multiple occurrences of high E (or E-flat) for which he usually scores an increased dynamic level, simplifying execution. The brassy and unmistakable timbre is used frequently as a timbrel axis or signal for defining form and linking sections sonically. A prominent example of this is Schoenberg’s use of the horn opening the first movement on a B-flat, (at the end of the exposition), for the transition to the development, where it may act as a surrogate dominant in preparation for the appearance of statement on the prime series on E-Flat, and again as preparation for the Coda. Schoenberg consigns many of the same techniques to his bassoon as to the horn, scoring wide and fast intervals, unusual articulations, extreme changes in dynamics,

106 Before and during the time Schoenberg was working on the quintet, his son Georg was studying with Richard Wunderer of the Vienna Philharmonic, who took part in the premiere of the quintet. Thus Schoenberg knew only too well the possibilities of the instrument.
and long passages of rapid tonguing—always difficult for all winds. His bassoon tessitura is somewhat restricted, in that he eschews the extreme high notes that Stravinsky used in *Le Sacre du printemps* in 1913. At the opposite end of the register, Schoenberg scores not lower than C, while Carl Nielsen ends his quintet on a low A.

Figure 16. Schoenberg, *Bläserquintett*, op. 26, I: *Schwungvoll*, mm. 67-75. Horn on a Bb, for the transition to the development, where it acts a “dominant” in preparation for the appearance of as preparation for the Coda.
Although an outstanding quality of the bassoon is its ability to blend, the instrument proves to be Schoenberg’s workhorse, in convention with the horn, as it is given frequent virtuoso staccato sections, requiring both double and triple-tonguing.

Like the bassoon, the clarinet is equally well suited to fast and low passages, but Schoenberg does not exploit the clarinet’s dexterity, extreme volume, or range as did Nielsen and Hindemith. Nor does he assign the instrument frequent upper register fortissimo passages where it would sound very bright. Although the clarinet possesses a larger range than other woodwind instruments, Schoenberg makes minimal use of this virtue. His use of the instrument is found generally in the pliant chalumeau register, an area where the odd-numbered overtones dominate, providing a distinct rich and dark timbre, a timbre Schoenberg seems to prefer. The clarinet was long ago released from its function of playing antiquated Alberti bass figurations, although Schoenberg occasionally assigns the instrument both chromatic scales and arpeggiated figurations. (See Figure 17)

Figure 17. Schoenberg, Bläserquintett, op. 26, I: Schwungvoll, mm. 151-153. Clarinet arpeggios.
“and this seems to me to be further proof of the rightness of such a rhythmic method of construction.”

Alban Berg

Generally the most scrutinized of the four movements is the first, Schwungvol (with vigor), which Schoenberg planned as a sonata with “principal theme, transitory subject, subsidiary theme, and closing subject, Introduction to development, Development, Recapitulation and Coda.”\footnote{Felix Greissle, *Arnold Schoenberg Quintet für Flöte, oboe, Klarinette, Horn und Fagott.* [Unpaginated.] The prolegomena that appeared in the publication of the quintet is a précis of his article, “Die Formalen Grundlagendes Bläserquintetts von Arnold Schönberg,” published in *Musikblätter des Anbruch* 7 (February 1925): 63–68.} The opening of the first movement is scored analogously to a nineteenth-century wind quintet, beginning with flute in the highest register, oboe and clarinet in the middle, and horn and bassoon in the lowest. The opening notes of the quintet are widely spaced, easily allowing the ear to discern the timbre of each instrument in a distinct and transparent texture. A strong opening, it immediately establishes the credibility of his chosen medium. The introduction of the series by the flute sets a precedent for the movement; as the instrument with the fewest overtones in the group and thus the purest sound, it highlights the set, standing in relief by register and tone color to the accompaniment of the horn, clarinet, and oboe. The accompaniment begins with a French horn announcement on B-flat [P0-12], the final note of the set, with clarinet [PO9], which is immediately followed by the flute playing an E-flat, the first note of the series. At this point it is prudent to note that E-flat—the first note of the row in prime—suggests an overall key center, subliminal perhaps, as E-flat is an intuitive and complementary key for winds; E-flat and the here-presumed-dominant B-flat, serve as
clandestine sonic connections throughout the work.\textsuperscript{108} The flute traces the prime form of the row in two balanced four-bar phrases. The antecedent phrase uses the first hexachord of the basic series; the consequent phrase uses the second hexachord. The flute then presents a retrograde version of the row, which is accompanied likewise in retrograde, first by three-part simultaneity (oboe, clarinet, and horn), followed by a linear presentation of the row. By measure 20 Schoenberg has presented virtually all of the characteristics found throughout the quintet: a determined and unrelenting contrapuntal texture combined with vigorous rhythmic complexity. Now overlaid by the kaleidoscopic wind color, each instrument is defined by distinctive rhythmic or thematic patterns and melodic contours. The change in texture adds richness and variety to the instrumental tone. Schoenberg expands and overlaps ranges, placing the flute beneath the oboe, and horn with a high E-flat [I. Mm 67] above both clarinet and bassoon. These thematic-rhythmic shapes are a feature that Alban Berg remarked upon in his “open letter” to Schoenberg, in the dedication of his Chamber Concerto to him:

And I have just read an article by Felix Greissle (\textit{Anbruch}, February 1924) about the formal foundations of your Wind Quintet in which he writes, among other things, in the last sentence “The theme always has the same rhythm, but in each case it is made up of notes from a different series,” and this seems to me to be further proof of the rightness of such a rhythmic method of construction.\textsuperscript{109}

\textsuperscript{108} The E-flat (Es) is also the first letter of the composer’s surname. And as Stefan Kostka notes, each movement begins and ends with the E-flat pitch class. Stefan Kostka, \textit{Materials and Techniques of Twentieth-Century Music} (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1990), 151.

To mark formal sections and for transitions, Schoenberg adjusts his scoring from the ongoing contrapuntal writing to briefer sections based on lyrical vertical sonorities. Frequently this includes a change from the four-part texture to three or fewer voices, with closer spacing and lower registers, in contrast to the previous material. An example of this occurs between the exposition in the opening movement and the beginning of the development (or return to the exposition). A characteristic found throughout the work is the technique of building up simultaneities (upward and downward), noticeably at mm. 118–119. The continuous use of particular tetrachords --both in vertical and horizontal form—provides overall unity in this movement in particular, and throughout the four movements.

Vertical sonorities, more frequently found in transitions, afford a change not only in movement, but in texture and sound, as they advance into the following section. Sonically conspicuous, the vertical sonorities also function as an aural connection bridging formal sections, and in the coda they provide closure. While there are a number of accidental tonal harmonies, most simultaneities are deliberately chosen fourth chords not unlike those found in the Kammersymphonie, op. 9, which Schoenberg had recently reorchestrated for the concert in Copenhagen.

The movement is remarkable for its seamless transitions, its transparent texture, and most notably, its rhythmic complexity. Unaccustomed leaps in the melody line—both upward and downward—are combined with odd accentuations in the nearly total linear texture. Rhythmic stratification, a composite of stressed and unstressed beats and the concentration of aggressively diverse rhythms found in the movement account for the quintet’s notorious reputation as the
most technically difficult quintet in the literature. Succeeding movements are less demanding than the *Schwungvol*, with more regular rhythmic structures.

While the opening movement is characterized by rhythmic stratification, with the colorful and varied registers intermittently dominated by the counter colors of flute and horn, in contrast, the second movement, *Anmutig*, illustrates Schoenberg’s deft wind writing through articulation, cadence, and structure. In this movement, he takes advantage of kinetic animation to create a metrically offbeat staccato oboe motif which is propelled along by horn punctuations defining the whole movement. His lively metronomic marking “dotted half-note equals 63” and his additional indication, *Anmutig und heiter: scherzando* (charming and gay, scherzando) indicate that he conceived the triple-meter Scherzo in the character of a waltz. Once again the movement follows traditional forms, styled, according to Greissle, as “Principal theme, 1st Subsidiary subject, Recapitulation of the Principal theme, Trio and Coda.”

The opening oboe melody begins on the fourth note of the basic series, the first three notes having already appeared in the accompaniment of horn (E-flat), clarinet (G), and bassoon (A), recalling in sound and texture the material from the opening movement. A staccato oboe limns the series, and unlike other similar passages, the accompaniment here uses the same tones found in the melody, but not simultaneously. When Schoenberg heard Nielsen’s and Hindemith’s quintets performed in Berlin, he carried the sounds with him throughout the ensuing summer. The memory of the *Kleine Kammermusik*’s second movement, *Durchweg sehr leis*, found its

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110 Greissle, ibid.
way into this movement as Schoenberg emulated the mood, texture, and instrumentation found in
the shadow waltz of the younger composer’s work.

Both waltz movements are caricatures of the form, set with irregular section and phrase
lengths.\textsuperscript{111} Schoenberg also imitated Hindemith’s instrumentation by scoring for piccolo, an
uncommon convention in chamber music of this period. Schoenberg uses the distinctive piercing
tone of the piccolo only infrequently in its highest range, reserving the
unique soft and low breathy tone, as does Hindemith, for sonority and not register. (see Figure
18). Hindemith uses the instrument melodically, whereas Schoenberg uses the piccolo’s ethereal
sound as a connection or bridge between sections and in several unusual free cadenza-like areas,
where it completes the series which begins on oboe. Attentive to the need of the musician when
changing instruments, Schoenberg scores the piccolo \textit{tacit} for twenty-nine measures,\textsuperscript{112}
providing more than enough time for the musician to switch. In a later passage where the piccolo
descends initially to a low E, and later to a D-flat, he writes below the score, “if it is too difficult,
it can be played on the ‘grössen’ Flute, [but] an octave higher.”\textsuperscript{113} Unlike the first movement,
with its characteristic rhythmic complexity, the Scherzo has a well-defined ongoing waltz tempo,
beginning with a bass line accompaniment,

\textsuperscript{111} The same type of parody is found in the waltz scene in Berg’s \textit{Wozzeck}.

\textsuperscript{112} Hindemith gives the flute player fifteen bars to change to piccolo.

\textsuperscript{113} Arnold Schoenberg, \textit{Wind Quintet, op. 26 für Flöte, Oboe, Klarinette, Horn und Fagott} (Vienna: Universal
for bassoon and horn in hocket with clarinet. Laid over the accompaniment is the oboe presenting at first a staccato version of the row in irregular unbalanced phrase lengths, creating the effect of a mischievous, limping waltz, which becomes the essential distinguishing characteristic of this movement. Since the oboe is naturally well suited to playing staccato and accented forte tones, Schoenberg’s scoring of oboe for the row here contributes effectively and significantly to the rhythmic vitality of the movement.
Figure 19. Schoenberg, *Bläserquintett*, op. 26, II: *Anmutig und heiter*, mm. 141-145. Piccolo bridge and series.

Figure 20. Schoenberg, *Bläserquintett*, op. 26, II: *Anmutig und heiter*, mm. 31–45. Piccolo series and melodic example.
Throughout, the movement is punctuated by frequent four-note scale passages, four-chord sequences, and singular statements of the row, developed through stretto and contrapuntal manipulation. The four-note passages are played legato for the most part, but varied by dissimilar articulation and by parallel or contrary motion, creating vivid and colorful intrusions to the ongoing staccato fabric. There are marked differences between the use of staccato and the short legato contrapuntal phrases, with the legato passages serving as formal articulation, to contrast and balance the generally articulated movement. A study in articulation, the complex interweaving of instrumental lines in the second movement requires the utmost attention to dynamics and balances—but it is also notable for the many different and distinctively articulated phrases. The dry and driving nature of this scherzo is a fine contrast to the fluid and legato third movement.

The *Etwas langsam (poco adagio)* is a broadly constructed third movement, identified by Greissle as a “Ternary Song Form, with ‘Principal Subject, Subsidiary Subject, Recapitulation of the Principal Subject, and Coda.’” A difficult movement for Schoenberg to compose, it involved the most drafts. Goethe was not Schoenberg’s only muse. The spirit of Carl Nielsen is noticeably apparent in texture, mood, and the use of horn and bassoon in this movement, an inspiration probably also gained from hearing his work in Berlin. A comparison reveals undeniable similarity between Schoenberg’s melodic structure and concept of instrumentation for the contrapuntal bassoon and horn duet in the opening seven measures with the horn and bassoon variation in Nielsen’s quintet.\(^{114}\) Nielsen’s variation is canonic in style, a variant of the hymn

\(^{114}\) See Variation I in Chapter I, page 69.
theme, and tonal. Similarly, Schoenberg’s example, itself a variant of the row as theme, is a semi-contrapuntal melody, sharing in turn the notes of the row.

Based more on a texture than on a theme, the movement is highly expressive with cantabile melodic elements set predominantly in the lower and darker registers. Syncopated throughout, the movement has frequent meter changes, accommodating and prolonging the steady but persistent unfolding motion. Schoenberg’s performance instructions, indicating his specific thoughts, are found in great profusion throughout the work and address his strategy for the movement:
The sections of this movement, particularly the main theme, which are especially highly syncopated must be played with great naturalness. This will occur if the performers make a point to: 1) completely suppress the strong part of the beat which is tied over (the syncope is a whole, half, quartet, or eighth note which starts on an off-beat) and 2) accent the weak part of the beat from which a tie begins only when it is explicitly indicated. The syncopes should to some degree always seem like “up-beats” (but without “inner accent,” but in any case should not be played like downbeats when not specifically indicated as such. (Always distinguish between accent displacement and syncopes!)

As noted earlier, bassoon and horn timbres dominate the first section, shifting to higher registers for the middle section dominated by the oboe. The movement is a play on darker colors and thicker textures. Generally legato, the movement is occasionally broken by short staccato passages.

The overall lyrical soundscape is punctuated by fourth chords and intermittent flute cadenzas, the latter an aural reminiscence from the second movement and a timbrel reference to the piccolo cadenzas. The always upward-arching thematic and rhythmic melodic lines are continually driven forward and are reminiscent of the opening movement. The Coda, introduced by reiterative E-flats from the flute, (106) is matched by a B-flat in the bassoon. This expands to a C in the flute with an F in the bassoon, a fleeting suggestion to, or possibly a longing for, a mere suggestion of tonality. Beginning and ending on E-flat, the Etwas langsam has more than

115 Arnold Schoenberg, Wind Quintett op. 26 für Flöte, Oboe, Klarinette, Horn und Fagott (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1925), 44.
“an underlying, unsounding beauty of its own.” The totality and interdependence of its parts—in short, the organic whole of the movement—reflecting and foreshadowing musical material as an aggregation of the whole, would certainly have pleased Goethe.

The final movement, simply labeled “Rondo,” is characterized by Greissle as a “ternary song with elaborating and varying repetitions.” It follows the expected pattern for a classical seven-part rondo, with motivically and rhythmically distinguished sections in a design

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designated as A–B–A′–C–A″–B′–A–coda. Here, the composer’s principle of developing variation is dramatically obvious. Each of the rondo theme’s three reappearances is varied in a distinct manner, with each of the episodic sections subjected to intensive thematic reworking and instrumental interaction. The initial appearance of the set is presented by a trio of clarinet, horn, and bassoon, with the clarinet announcing the series. The series is now more noticeable for its driving rhythmic aspect than for any thematic contour. It is not unlike the propulsive rhythmic ostinato found in the first and fourth movements of the Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik*. Basically a staccato movement, the rondo is energized by ongoing strings of sixteenth and thirty-second notes. It places the highest demands on stamina with its relentless and compelling forward motion. The expanding and continually unfolding movement is interrupted by strategically placed ritardandos which culminate with one statement of the series, while the ensuing a tempo presents a new series. While the opening movement is difficult due to rhythmic stratification and displacement, this movement is characterized by compressed rhythms, faster notes, and diversely barred thirty-second notes. At measure 39, the first and briefest episode, Schoenberg introduces a secondary theme, reminiscent of the piccolo passages in the Scherzo movement, while retaining the rhythmic-thematic aspect of the opening. The clarinet next introduces what will become a common trait in the movement, a variety of different shapes involving thematic, polyphonic, and rhythmic metamorphoses. The instrumentation clearly separates individual instruments through the use of different motives, registers and performance techniques.
Variations continue through the appearance of the second rondo, itself a variation of the opening but now with compressed rhythmic figures. The Trio is the heart of the movement, with richly varied tempo, color, and texture. It is characterized by statements of the series played in augmentation by the bassoon and horn in turn, followed by clarinet and oboe. In each occurrence, the row is accompanied by a two-voice obbligato figuration—virtuoso repetitive patterns—underpinning a cantus-firmus-like appearance of the set. Assuming a variety
of shapes, the series appear in the texture as an obbligato-like elaboration on a chorale theme. Generally, the instrumental groupings are individualized in a series of virtuoso passages, usually sixteenth notes.

At m. 225, during the third appearance of the rondo, Schoenberg again asks for piccolo, but he uses it for only seven bars, at the end of the second recapitulation of the first theme, returning to the flute for the recapitulation of the second and closing themes. In this section the tone of the piccolo serves as a connection between this movement and the Scherzo, recalling both timbre and the opening motif from the Lustig.

By far the longest stretch of music in the score is found between mm. 226 and 304, at the recapitulation of the second and closing themes (Etwas breiter; aber schwungvoll). In earlier movements, Schoenberg had reserved the full ensemble for only certain strategic points; in this episode the five-voice texture is more fully utilized as he compresses his means of expression and exploits the rhythmically varied matrix. He spreads his voicing and enlarges the acoustical properties, providing a new density and concentration of the music material. As earlier, the row reappears in different guises, seemingly helter-skelter, but Schoenberg has treated the row to the traditional techniques: inversion, retrograde inversion, segmentation, reconnection, compression, and elaboration. The techniques completely transform the row, totally saturating the fabric of the episode. At the coda, which has a short development, Schoenberg lessens the complex rhythmic and thematic horizontal texture, replacing it with a series of interconnected and interdependent ascending and descending fourths. A dynamic climax concludes the perpetuum mobile.
movement, which ends as it began, on E-flat. The quality of the invention, the richness of Schoenberg’s contrapuntal writing, and the organic cohesion found throughout the movement contribute to making this a remarkable conclusion to the quintet.
All softly playing, with head to the music bent,  
And fingers straying upon an instrument.  
James Joyce, Chamber Music I

James Joyce might have been contemplating a performance of Ludwig Beethoven’s *Grosse Fugue*, op. 133, when he wrote *Chamber Music I* in 1907. But another spellbinding performance of the quartet, “faithfully rehearsed and nobly and energetically performed”\(^{117}\) by the Gottesmann Quartet, preceded the premiere of Schoenberg’s Wind Quintet during his fiftieth birthday festival in Vienna. Referring to Beethoven’s work, Erwin Schaeffer, music critic for the *Wiener Zeitung* wrote that

A chamber music night started the string of many great events. On the top of the program stood—not without reason—Beethoven’s Große Fuge in B-flat major. . . . This probably most problematic of the works of the grandmaster of classical music was supposed to help prepare for something likewise or even more problematic in the field of contemporary music. A support like that was needed by the listener to advance to the understanding of the following first performance of Schönberg’s wind quintet.\(^{118}\)

But the performance of Beethoven’s work opening the program did not help. The audience, energized and expectant, was bewildered, disgruntled, even enraged. The spell was broken. Most people in attendance for the premiere of the quintet on 16 September 1924 were aware of Schoenberg’s reputation, but they did not fully anticipate the “obstinate, consistent emphasis of

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\(^{118}\) Ibid.
the pure principle of atonality.”¹¹⁹ During the final movement, members of the audience rebelled, a riot ensued, and Schoenberg saw a second, albeit smaller Skandalkonzert of his career.¹²⁰ “His friends and students, all present, applauded fiercely, but the rest of the auditorium, unbiased, which sat there yawning, slouching, apathetically, reacted to that with a no less energetic hissing. . . .”¹²¹ As an antidote to Schoenberg’s quintet, those who remained in the Vienna Kleiner Musikvereinssaal heard a performance of Haydn’s String Quartet, op. 33, no. 3, again played by the Gottesmann Quartet.¹²² Still, Schoenberg’s new work “infuriated the listeners long after the length of the performance was over.”¹²³

Indeed, Schoenberg had finally completed the fourth and final movement on August 26. The musicians had only received the first three movements a few days earlier and had begun rehearsing with Greissle, who conducted the premiere. The eleventh-hour completion of the quintet was widely known chatter in Vienna, and as Heinrich Kralik of the Neues Wiener Tagblatt caustically but accurately noted in his review,

¹¹⁹ Ibid. Both Erwin Stein and Felix Greissle had published material discussing the form and the twelve-tone technique used in the quintet. This information was also included in the program notes available to the audience.

¹²⁰ The first Skandalkonzert took place on 31 March 1913, when Schoenberg conducted a concert of contemporary music at the Konzertverein in Vienna. The program consisted of Anton von Webern’s Six Pieces for Orchestra, op. 6, four parts of Zemlinsky’s op. 13 (nos. 1, 2, 3 and 5), Alban Berg’s op. 4 (no. 2 and no. 3 from the Altenburg Songs), and his own Kammersymphonie no. 1, op. 9. Of course, a larger and certainly more infamous uproar and melee occurred just two months later, during the premiere of Igor Stravinsky’s Le Sacre du Printemps in Paris on 29 May 1913.


It is the newest revelation of the atonal magician. Ten days ago completed specifically for the music festival. So to speak: “Quite fresh still, the writing? And the ink still wet?” One anticipates that the performance of such a Preislied is not easy, and to make it pleasing seems to be after all very surprising. But the gentlemen of the wind ensemble of the state opera with their angel breath master the darkest devil’s arts; and the audience has given up its fighting position in the tonal aesthetics long ago.124

There was scant approval for the score but abundant praise for the musicians, “with their angel breath,” and “with the performance of the exorbitantly difficult work the members of the Philharmonics Sonnenberg, Wunderer, Pollatschek, Strobl, and Stiegler accomplished something nearly impossible.”125

“es sagt der Farbe den Krieg an!”

Theodore Adorno

No concession was given to the composer for his newest work even on the occasion of his birthday. The Musik- und Theaterfest der Stadt Wien was a month-long festival devoted primarily to theatrical presentations, but orchestral concerts—chamber music and opera, in varying styles from traditional to contemporary, avant-garde and experimental—were also presented. It was organized by Dr. David Josef Bach, “the cultural supremo” of Vienna, and Schoenberg’s childhood friend.126 Of the many and varied performances that took place during the festival, the premiere of Schoenberg’s quintet was among the most heavily reviewed; some

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125 Schaeffer. Wiener Zeitung 25 September 1924. The musicians were the Bläser-Kammermusikvereinigung of Vienna: Wilhelm Sonnenberg (flute), Richard Wunderer (oboe), Viktor Pollatschek (clarinet), Karl Stiegler (horn), and Karl Strobl (bassoon). Wunderer, Pollatschek, and Stiegler concurrently held positions in the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna State Opera; in 1948 Pollatschek became principal clarinet for the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

critics spoke favorably of his use of traditional forms; most wrote unfavorably, or worse, of what they heard. Undoubtedly the most perceptive assessment of Schoenberg’s quintet came from Theodor Adorno: “The Quintet, probably the most difficult piece to listen to of any that Schoenberg wrote, brusquely drives sublimation, in one dimension, to an extreme—it declares war on color.”

Portraying the quintet as conceived in logic, aesthetically and tonally unpleasant with a lack of emotion, the critics found gratification in their own disapproval. The poverty of its harmony—except that which was perceived as serendipitous harmony of the fourth—and the absence of “tonal aesthetics” drove most of the critics to sweeping reproof and condemnation. The reviews were arrayed from the derisive to the comical:

Compared with the squeaking, squealing, and bawling of this composition, the productions by the Town Musicians of Bremen must have been of significant, perfectly structured beauty.

To add to the comical there were the uninformed but sardonic comments of the music critic for the Neues Wiener Tagblatt:

Incidentally, the wind quintet is relatively tame Schönberg. The five instruments allow the production of only five dissonant notes at the most at the same time, and, naturally, make the famous and infamous twelve-tone-formations and agglomerations impossible.

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129 Heinrich Kralik, Neues Wiener Tagblatt, 18 September 1924, trans. Arthur W. McCardle. Kralik was then a well-known Austrian musicologist as well as critic for the Tagblatt.
While the quintet was almost universally reviled as aesthetically unpleasant, Erwin Schaeffer understood what the composer had attempted with the quintet:

Here Schönberg breaks new ground, which perhaps surpasses his five orchestra pieces and “Pierrot lunaire” in its obstinate, consistent emphasis of the pure principle of atonality. Technically, the four old sonata form movements are left in place, harmonically, melodically, contrapuntally it is a music, which detaches itself completely from all coherence of concepts, handed down through centuries, so that completely new standards are necessary to evaluate here. One thing is certain, however: This music comes from the brain, not from the heart, it is perhaps art of “absolute expression,” but nothing that reaches the heart.\footnote{Schaeffer. \textit{Wiener Zeitung} 25 September 1924.}

The review by Heinrich Kralik mentions Schoenberg’s quartal harmonies, heavily criticized when introduced in 1913, but now looked upon favorably by \textit{Kenner} if not \textit{Liebhaber}:

The glorious art of composition and the contrapuntal enigmas from the wind quintet, from which the initiated can tell something, will hardly be able to please the ears of the laymen, because these are fully occupied to collect the acoustical sensations, and for their ambition it is perfectly enough, to take something from the giggling figures of the flute, from the oboe’s sighs, from the clarinet’s caprioles, from the grumbling mourning of the bassoon, and the comical leaps of the horn, which would speak to fundamental musical emotions one way or another. There is not much of that, to be sure; but after all one finds here a funny phrase or a sparkling motif chase, which forces one to join in the laugh, or there a comforting quartal harmony structure, which invites the ear to a pleasant sojourn. . . . Besides, Schönberg seems to have returned to the method of strictly motivic and formal composition techniques. The outer structure is almost old-fashioned; with repeats, with Scherzo and Trio and with a Rondo-Finale. And the harmonic phantasy always returns back to the blissful quartal harmony structure of the good old times of the “Chamber Symphony.”\footnote{Heinrich Kralik, \textit{Neues Wiener Tagblatt}, 18 September 1924, trans. Arthur W. McCardle.}

Emil Decsey finishes his review thus:

Externally built in old forms (four movements, the last one a rondo) and the movement structures going back to old types (augmentation, diminution, retrograde), the quintet stands for the most reckless attempt in the atonal or twelve-tone language. Its beauty is
harder to detect than its boldness, perhaps it cannot be detected at all, and the quintet solely on its impudence.\textsuperscript{132}

Naturally there were critics of Schoenberg’s use of a 12-Ton Reihenschieber (slide rule), both the circular and the rectangular, one of whom opined that the woodwind quintet was “constructed on a series of ‘note-circles.’”\textsuperscript{133} Between the Vienna premiere of the quintet in March and the performance for the ISCM in Zürich, the quintet was performed in the United States, a fact noted by the critic Louis Gruenberg:

Schoenberg’s Quintet, now also known in America, is a work of which it is difficult to speak, unless one takes violent sides for or against it. The writer cannot accept this work as a work of art, for the deadly monotony, the meaningless passages, the thousand themelets going nowhere, gradually hypnotizes one into a state of coma, in which one only has an unsatisfied vague feeling that things must have been better or happier—at any rate different—oh different! And to achieve this atmosphere five martyred musicians rehearsed over a month steadily. Towards the last ten minutes (and surely the work lasts several days) the audience definitely turned its attention away from what was being perpetrated on the stage and frankly and fiercely entertained itself. Schoenberg composes now-a-days by chart according to reports from those near to him and the greatest service they can possibly do to the fast-dwindling fame of this extraordinarily stubborn but great musician is to burn the chart.\textsuperscript{134}

And finally, one review of the premiere turns to the ineffable:

The wind quintet by Arnold Schönberg is the newest work by Schönberg. It lies so far away from outside of my imagination of music, that, after hearing it only once, I do

\textsuperscript{132} Emil Decsey, \textit{Die Musik} 17 (1924): 152, trans. Arthur W. McCardle.

\textsuperscript{133} Literally, “row pusher.” W.H. Haddon Squire, “The Zurich Festival,” \textit{Christian Science Monitor}, 10 July 1926. Squire was the London-based critic for the CSM.

\textsuperscript{134} Louis Gruenberg, “Fourth Festival of Modern Music at Zurich,” \textit{Musical Leader} 51, no. 29 (27 March 1926):6. Critics, friends, and students all knew what Schoenberg used to find the correct row when he was composing the quintet. This is probably the Louis Gruenberg (1886–1964) who studied with Busoni, and wrote for American periodicals.
not feel competent to describe or criticize what I did not understand and what did not impress me.\textsuperscript{135}

The German musicologist and critic Hugo Leichtentritt penned his review over six months after the premiere, in defense and support of Schoenberg and his newest work:

The festival opened with an official homage paid to Arnold Schönberg, in celebration of his fiftieth birthday, and one of the first concerts brought forward this unique composer’s newest creation, a quintet for wind instruments. . . . It is a gigantic work: gigantic in its proportions—forty minutes duration—and gigantic in its demands upon the players. The instruments are driven to the very limit of their capacity: Schönberg calls for trills in the bassoon, for frequent employment of the “Flatterzunge” with the flute and the clarinet, and for runs of 32nd notes. Shall I say that the piece is really “melodious”? Those who cling to the century-old meaning of the term melody will not believe it; yet there is melody in the five instruments who gaily juggle their strains among themselves in merry intercourse. . . . \textsuperscript{136}

But Leichtentritt’s subsequent discussion of the twelve-tone technique only added to the confusion of an already bewildered public:

What makes the quintet a thoroughly characteristic manifestation is the fact that the “twelve-tone scale”—the ordinary eight-tone scale augmented by its semitones—furnishes the harmonic basis of the composition. The twelve-tone scale, as we all know, is the new dogma of the Schönbergian school and its secrets will shortly be disclosed by Schönberg in a new book which he proposes to write on it. The characteristic feature of the twelve-tone scale lies in the fact that the semi-tones are reached not by alterations of the existing chord combinations; they are independent entities by themselves, as it were, and lead a life by themselves, irrespective of their neighbor fellows. Schönberg’s new score abounds with ingenious applications of this twelve-tone scale.... Suffice it to say, that it contains no melody which does not embody in itself—or in its accompaniment—of the twelve tones of this scale. And the thematic treatment of the themes is a wonder of dexterity; there is not mere repetition of any theme, yet each motive recurs innumerable times in ever new guises, in reversions and multiplications which it is well-nigh impossible to survey without the aid of a printed score. In its last consequence, the employment of the twelve-tone scale means nothing less than a twelve-part polyphony. In


\textsuperscript{136} Hugo Leichtentritt, “Vienna Hears Schönberg’s Twelve-Tone Scale Quintet and Two Strauss Pseudo Premieres,” \textit{Musical Courier} 89, no.19 (6 November 1924): 7.
the present case, there being but five instruments, the polyphonic texture is limited to five parts or “voices”; only when applied to orchestral compositions will the mysteries of the twelve-tone scale discloses themselves fully.\textsuperscript{137}

However, Leichtentrett tried to come to Schoenberg’s defense against other painful and critical assessments of the quintet:

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Needless to say there was hardly one man in the audience in position to grasp completely the meaning of Schönberg’s new work as viewed in the light of these new ideas. Nor did the Vienna press rise to the occasion. Whatever honors went to Schönberg from those who stand by him, on his fiftieth birthday and on the premiere of this work, the press comments were replete with venom and hatred. And one good lady of the critical fraternity, in her effort to belittle Schönberg’s international standing ventured the printed sentence that “Schönberg could count the number of his performances on his twelve fingers.”\textsuperscript{138}

\textbf{“our musical sensibilities remain skeptical.”}
Aaron Copland

The disappointing premiere of the quintet did not deter Schoenberg. He had been fêted throughout Vienna for ten days during the celebration of his fiftieth birthday. He married Gertrud Kolish two days after completing the quintet, and he was anticipating the premiere of \textit{Die glückliche Hand} the following month. Subsequently Schoenberg submitted the quintet for a performance during the Fourth Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music, held in Zürich in June 1926. A jury of international judges accepted the work, but with the stipulation that Webern, not Greissle, nor even the composer himself, would conduct.\textsuperscript{139}

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{139} The jurors were Arthur Bliss, Arthur Honegger, Herman Scherchen, Walther Straram, and Karol Szymanowski. Anton Haefeli, \textit{Die Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik (IGNM)} (Zurich: Atlantis Musikbuch-Verlag, 1982),
The directors of the 1926 ISCM festival in Zürich had previously invited Webern to conduct the premiere of his Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10, at the same festival, and now he would now also conduct Schoenberg’s Quintet.¹⁴⁰ The musicians of the *Bläser des Tonhalleorchester* from Zürich would perform.¹⁴¹ Before the concert Schoenberg allowed Greissle to prepare a piano reduction of the quintet, which Berg and Webern played together, rehearsing for the performance Webern would later conduct. Webern requested a minimum of ten rehearsals, to be held under his personal supervision, and stipulated that each wind player in the quintet know his part thoroughly before full rehearsals.¹⁴² Of the rehearsals, Berg wrote to Schoenberg:

> Slowly, very slowly I am beginning to understand the quintet. Not long ago I played through it with Webern (the reduction is very good). With one small exception: the missing rests, (which greatly impede fluent reading), I enjoyed it tremendously and since then have felt deep regret that I cannot be in Zurich. I am sure that Webern will do it quite particularly well. I imagine he wishes you could be there! Unfortunately, I must make do with the thought of it and with closer study of the score—the only score I brought along.¹⁴³ [Emphasis AB]

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¹⁴⁰ Other notable works heard during the six day festival included Hindemith’s Concerto for Orchestra, op. 38, and Kurt Weill's Concerto for Violin and Chamber Orchestra.

¹⁴¹ Webern sent a postcard to Schoenberg on 19 June 1923, indicating the rehearsals were going well, signed by each member of the quintet: J. Nada, flute; Emil Fanghauel, clarinet; Marcel Faillez, oboe; Gustav Seidl, bassoon; Mr. Schneider, horn. It was also signed by his publisher Emil Hertzka.


¹⁴³ *Berg–Schoenberg Correspondence*, 347.
In Zurich, the audience again disrupted the performance as they had in Vienna two years earlier. The English music critic Basil Maine reported that the festival in Zurich was a comparatively quiet affair, with very little to write home about, “except that [Schoenberg’s quintet] was conducted with ascetic devotion by Anton Webern, and caused a little domestic quarrel at the end: for there were those who said ‘it may be,’ and others who shouted ‘It cannot be. . .’”

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144 Basil Maine, “The Zürich Festival,” *The Musical Times* 67 (1 August 1926): 705. Maine was the English music critic with the ISCM.
Max Marschalk also notes the disruption with personal note of despair:

I must admit that I have to throw in the towel when it comes to this extensive work in four movements—the performance easily takes more than an hour. Is it music or mathematics? If music, then perhaps music of the future; thus our ears and hearts will have to wait a long time before they will be able to comprehend and assess its meaning, its beauty. Staunch Schönbergers assert that already today they at least have an inkling of its meaning, its beauty. With amazing calm and patience, the audience put up with the hieroglyphic music. Just shortly before the conclusion patience gave out, attempts were made to interrupt the performance. Therefore—I gave up. . . . \(^{145}\)

As in the premiere, many were openly hostile; others were simply indifferent. Karl Holl remarked:

Seldom was a new work by the Viennese master such a disappointment as this Opus 26, praised by his loyalists as a breakthrough into musical entertainment, but which in truth was problematic to the core. As a genuine, in itself proper document for his theory of the “composition with twelve tones connected only to each other” it may already claim historic importance today, but regarding its present-day impact it remains ineffective for the time being. . . . In construction everything is in best order. The eye revels in the intellectual clarity of this score. But initially the ear can do nothing with its mathematical beauty which the Zürich musicians did their best to bring to life. For about 45 minutes the voices, harshly colliding against each other in the auditorium, glide along. Their detailed polyrhythm makes it almost impossible to grasp the individual figures. Peculiar construction; far removed from the ordinary. It caused some stirring among the otherwise perfectly quietly following listeners. Be that as it may!\(^{146}\)

Heinz Pringsheim wrote in the Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung:

Of course Schönberg himself again fought his way through, unfortunately, from the condensed brevity of his last works to larger forms: his Quintet op. 26 for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon has four fully-grown movements, which in spite of its restless atonality imitates the tonal classical sonata movements, and lasts \textit{praetor propter} one hour. Times are changing: just last year it would have been unthinkable that a work by the divine pioneer could have been laboriously played to the end amid all-around impatience which was given vent in laughter, shuffling of feet and loud talk. If Schönberg

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does not succeed in time in finding his way back again he will end up as bankrupt as atonality [and] in sad isolation. . . .

But there were also more considered reviews, one of which appeared in *Melos*, the scholarly German periodical which promoted modern music and the study of the relationship between music, musical life, and society.

In this work the third of the possible tonal situations is realized. Here with the functional regularity of the twelve-tone-music the reorientation of listening begins. Since it is impossible to speak briefly and only superficially about this work, what is important in this context can only be alluded to: Here hearing recedes behind the end in itself of a structural fulfilling of autonomous systems; for this fulfilling of immanent rules—which unleashes the pleasure of the listener—cannot be experienced itself here; the rule itself cannot be heard in its being fulfilled as can the formal will of a fugue or a sonata, since with every work it can come into effect in a new, individual possibility as a formal law. What can be heard—as I experienced the quintet—is the fact of a quite consistent, strict compulsion from which results the intensively uniform completion without however being comprehensible as fulfillment. Thus, here the Romantic idea of a self-contained work is intensified as an isolated meaning of existence whose tonal reality remains secondary like the empirical tangibility of the Romantically understood thought concept of Kantian philosophy. The score of the quintet is a rhythmic wonder; but here the rhythm is not the expression, but rather the servant of the constant filling out of a continuing happening; it does not coerce the listener, it serves only pure existence. The most solitary continuation of old intellectual traditions, which today are drowned out by Stravinsky and Jazz. . . .

The review of the ISCM festival by Aaron Copland that appeared later in *Modern Music* showed that many were yet unconvinced and doubtful. Copland offers a small promising note in what had again been a succession of dismal reviews:

Of equal significance is the fact that no one work proved an outstanding success this year; but there was, so to speak, an outstanding failure—the Arnold Schoenberg Quintet for Wind Instruments. Seldom has a new work from the pen of a composer of wide repute

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suffered such universal condemnation. Except for certain parts of the scherzo and the final rondo, there seemed to be nothing but principles and theories of composition leading to complete aridity. The Schoenberg disciples, however, are undismayed. Mr. Anton von Webern assures me that one has no more reason to expect to appreciate this Quintet on a single hearing than to understand Kant after a cursory perusal. This sounds well enough to make us hope that there is truth in it, even though our musical sensibilities remain skeptical.149

Even Schoenberg’s student and friend Adolf Weissmann fundamentally misunderstood the purpose for Schoenberg’s winds as seen in his comments:

In the little hall of the Tonhalle we were first greeted with chamber music. Everyone eagerly awaits the middle piece, Arnold Schönberg’s wind quintet. One already knows enough about the twelve-tone series that provides the building material for the Schönberg today. We are assured that it enables not only a satisfying architecture but also the variation within a work. It is further claimed that the creative power by no means is to be limited or inhibited by the method of construction. Since I can always rely only on my receptive senses, however, which until now have proven themselves to some extent, I can only confess that the fifty minutes of the Schönberg wind quintet, in spite of exemplary performance under the direction of Anton von Webern, was the most distressing thing I have heard in a long time. I note very well what craftsmanship is in the construction. Indeed, at times I even feel the background mood of the work. But all artistic empathy is made impossible for me by the constructive sameness. I do not understand why Schönberg makes use of five different winds: flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon, only to use them homogeneously without regard to their sound; just as little do I understand why the orthodox use of a dry building material is carried out for four movements since they differ only in tempo, not in effect. In brief: as much as I esteem Schönberg as a personality, just as certainly I sense an imagination dried up in theories. . . . 150

However, insightful and optimistic words came from Theodor Adorno, who wrote later,

“Thereafter Schoenberg in one of his most reticent works, the Wind Quintet, intensified his polyphonic capacity, thanks to the twelve-tone technique, to the point where it became a kind of renewed pure style [reiner Satz] and he acquired the freest command of that technique, as


well.” But Alfred Heuß, in the *Zeitschrift für Musik*, came to Schoenberg’s defense. He debates the perceived contradiction between “new” versus “contemporary” music, and how the institution—the ISCM—betrayed Schoenberg, undermining its fundamental *raison d’être*, its aesthetics, and its very name:

By the way, Germany embarrassed itself most of all, namely through Schönberg. There was his Wind Quintet op. 26 which already had its premiere two years ago, but in the meantime had to go through the experience that people have at least to some extent become fed up with attending the emanations of twisted musical brains, but quite gradually dare to voice the opinion that, if music is to be a public affair it has to provide not torments, but somehow pleasure. So here, with this work, the audience’s great patience was exhausted, and whether it was first the French or Italians, Swiss or even Germans who with a shuffling of feet wanted to have the process end, to reveal that would actually be a quite important matter for the association. Schönberg, earlier in his works heard here [as] a good dentist insofar as he limited the pain, is today a bad one who tooled around for about three quarters of an hour in his patient’s teeth without accomplishing anything so that in the end even the most patient Saxon would jump up and would burst out with his: “Now listen here.” But what did this demonstration mean? The belief in a “New” Music is over, finally over. What is considered such has either become, like Schönberg’s, unpalatable, or, however, such which perhaps still more or less openly operates intensely with the new technique spoken of before, but for the rest increasingly strives for foundations which are anything but new and are in fact quite old. So, what is the new supposed to be? Are you technicians? Then call yourselves a lobby for new-technical music. Or, if at all costs the comedy of human errors is to be set to music, then instead of “new” choose the word “contemporary” because already at this festival it happened that the one who claimed to be the least “new” in your sense enjoyed the greatest success. Even now, your name contradicts your practice, and in a few years you perhaps will have to look feverishly for “new” works without finding them except with Schönberg. For the time being you have brought him, your leader, the shame of a public defeat in the context of one of your festivals. If that is not a reason for reflection, then everything is lost. . . .


THE QUINTET AND SCHOENBERG’S NEW LIFE IN AMERICA

“. . . had richly rewarding passages . . .
Two movements of Schoenberg’s uncompromisingly contrapuntal work
for flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn, and bassoon were also persuasive”
Paul Rosenfeld

It was thanks to the American new music societies that Schoenberg’s quintet was heard in
the United States. The reviews on the East coast were derisive and hostile, but on the West coast
the quintet was received far more positively. The League of Composers premiered the work in
March of 1926, three months before the ISCM performance in Zurich. An advertisement in the
New York Times read that the League of Composers “Presents a Program of New Music,” which
included Schoenberg’s Quintet for Winds. Known as the more moderate of the several new
music societies in the United States, the League was consistently receptive to programming new
music. Only three years after its 1923 inception, the League of Composers had become the
“major force in the promotion of modern music” in the United States. The musicians for the
performance in Town Hall were from the rosters of the New York Philharmonic and the
Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Of the reviews Sabine Feisst writes, “with only rudimentary
technical knowledge, generally open-minded critics and American composers rejected the
quintet vigorously.” But it was only a temporary setback for Schoenberg, for as Claire Reis

155 The performers for this concert were Quinto Maganini, flute; Michael Nazzi, oboe; A. Williams, clarinet; David
Swaan, bassoon; and Lucino Nava, horn. Two conductors were listed in the program, Julian Carillo and Alexander
Small; it is probable that one conducted the quintet.
writes of the performance in New York, it “marked a change in American Schoenberg reception. . . . It sparked overwhelmingly antagonistic reactions”\textsuperscript{157} in what had earlier been a friendly and open-minded attitude toward his music. But these opinions were counterbalanced by the music critic Paul Rosenfield, who penned what was certainly a most perceptive and reasonably positive review of the quintet:

March thirteenth was prolific of modern German novelties. Koussevitzky played Hindemith’s new Concerto for Orchestra op. 38 in the afternoon, and in the evening The League of Composers presented Schoenberg’s equally recent Quintet for Wind Instruments op. 26, and a Dance Suite for Chamber Orchestra op. 30, by Ernst Toch. . . . All three of the musical works presented that crowded Saturday had richly rewarding passages. . . . Two movements of Schoenberg’s uncompromisingly contrapuntal work for flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn, and bassoon were also persuasive. These were the grave emotive lento and the dynamic rondo, blasty with Varèsiæan toots.\textsuperscript{158} No work by Schoenberg makes following more difficult. In none is the movement more abrupt and seemingly arbitrary. The style is pellucid, indeed. Each instrumental voice is treated with magisterial clarity and definiteness. The material is unified and condensed: for the binary form Schoenberg strives to substitute the excessively ingenious exploitation of a single theme: and he disregards harmonic considerations completely in behalf of relentless logical part-writing. Unfortunately, the bald sallo[sic] skull of the theoretician again obtrudes. The idea of holding the first two movements down to minute volumes of sonority has been carried out too mechanically, and to the exclusion of musical feeling. Again Schoenberg has confused an emotional issue, and lost the effect of smothered life.\textsuperscript{159}

The American composer Marion Bauer wrote that it was “music of geometric design . . . excessively dissonant . . . which left the audience gasping for fresh air.”\textsuperscript{160} But, on the west coast,


\textsuperscript{158} This comment is a reference to Varèse’s \textit{Offrandes}, which had earlier been premiered in New York (1922). \textit{Hyperprism} was premiered in 1923, and \textit{Octandre} in 1924, not by the League of Composers, but by the International Composers Guild.

\textsuperscript{159} Paul Rosenfeld, “Musical Chronicle,” \textit{The Dial} 80 (May 1926): 442–443.

where the composer would eventually emigrate to find freedom and security from the constraints of war in Europe, the quintet found a favorable climate.

**Music of the Atonalists Comes to San Francisco!**

Mason Redfern

Henry Cowell’s New Music Society, based in Los Angeles, and later in San Francisco, was the other contemporary music organization in the United States that offered an early performance of Schoenberg’s Quintet. In 1923 Cowell began a series of tours throughout Europe (1923, 1926, 1929, 1931, and 1932), performing his own compositions and visiting the cities of Berlin, Vienna, Paris, and London. During his early tours he heard performances in the Verein für Musikalische Privataufführungen and the Donaueschingen Festival, and in Berlin, performances given by the Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik (ISCM). He met Hindemith, Bartók, and Schoenberg during early tour years in Europe. After returning home from his second tour, stimulated and encouraged by the number of music festivals and

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162 After hearing a program by Cowell, Béla Bartók asked permission to use Cowell’s tone clusters in his own compositions. During his 1926 tour, Cowell attended a performance of a concert by Arthur Schnabel in Warsaw. The pianist invited Cowell to an after-concert dinner with Schoenberg, after which a friendship developed between Schoenberg and Cowell based on their common love of tennis. Cowell played tennis with Schoenberg in Berlin, where they became steadfast tennis partners, an alliance which continued throughout many years after Schoenberg had moved to Los Angeles. According to Rischitelli, Schoenberg was unaware that Cowell was also a composer, in addition to being a pianist, because “Schoenberg did not like to read journals” (Victor Emanuel Rischitelli, “Henry Cowell (1897–1965) and the Impact of His First European Tour (1923)” [M.M. Thesis, Australian Catholic University, 2005],15). According to Joel Sachs, Cowell founded his new music society in part based on his knowledge of the Verein für Musikalische Privataufführungen (Joel Sachs, *Henry Cowell* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012], 138). When Schoenberg finally discovered Cowell was also a composer, he invited him to Berlin to perform for his class in 1932. For more on the longtime friendship between Henry Cowell and Arnold Schoenberg see Sabine Feisst, “Henry Cowell und Arnold Schönberg—eine unbekannte Freundschaft,” *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 55 (1998): 57–71.
performances of new music, he founded the New Music Society of California, a concert series of instrumental and vocal chamber music.\textsuperscript{163} It is not known if Cowell heard the premiere of Schoenberg’s quintet in Zurich during the Internationale Musikfest in Zurich during his 1926 tour, but it is possible. Before returning to San Francisco that summer, he purchased a score from Universal Edition for $2.00. Later, he paid $10.30 to have the parts copied out of the score, and $4.00 for another score to be made.\textsuperscript{164}

For the opening of the New Music Society in San Francisco on 25 October 1927, Cowell programmed a concert of chamber music that began with Schoenberg’s Wind Quintet. Following was Carl Ruggles’ “Angels,” arranged for wind quintet and trumpet, and Ruggles’s “Lilacs,” for seven wind instruments.\textsuperscript{165} The last work on the program was Edgar Varèse’s “Octandre,” for wind quintet, trumpet, trombone, and string bass.\textsuperscript{166}

\textsuperscript{163} In 1927, he established the \textit{New Music Quarterly}, which was first published on 17 October 1927. The NMQ published ultra-modern works and distributed new music scores to its subscribers. Cowell founded the New Music Society in part because of European domination in new music festivals he heard in Europe. He wanted to achieve balance between European and American composers, and would early program music of Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Charles Ives, Carl Ruggles, Aaron Copland, and later, in 1934, Hindemith’s \textit{Kleine Kammermusik}.

\textsuperscript{164} Rita Mead, \textit{Henry Cowell’s New Music, 1925–1936: The Society, The Music Editions, and the Recordings} (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1981), 65. Mead includes a list of expenses of the New Music Society for 1928. The $10.30 also included the right to copy parts from the score, with permission from Universal Edition. He did not have enough money to purchase instrumental parts when touring Austria.

\textsuperscript{165} “Angels” was originally scored for six muted trumpets. Ruggles’s “Lilacs” was taken from the \textit{Andante} of his symphonic trilogy, “Men and Mountains” of 1924. It was originally scored for two violins, two violas, two cellos, and double bass; he arranged it for seven wind instruments; there is no indication which instruments performed for Cowell’s concert.

\textsuperscript{166} The performers were from the San Francisco Symphony: Anthony Linden, flute; Vincent Schipilitti, oboe; Harold B. Randall, clarinet; Ernest Kubitschek, bassoon; Walter Hornig, horn; Fred N. Tait, trombone; Vincent Drucker, trumpet; and William Bell, bass viol. Henry Cowell conducted.
Before conducting the performance, Cowell gave an enlightening and entertaining pre-concert talk about Schoenberg and the quintet to a receptive and expectant audience. He also provided program notes:

Schoenberg’s woodwind quintet, opus 26, is scored for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon. It is a later work, as is in the style for which he is famous—a highly wrought dissonant fabric of as closely knit a polyphony as could be found in the time of Bach. Music which is primarily intellectual, it nevertheless has a strange power of appeal and a strong individuality. The music lover is often thrown off the track in listening to Schoenberg’s music because of its lack of bulk—it is not music that one can partake of with enjoyment, by sitting back, and allowing it to waft through one! The quintet is a highly mature work, in which Schoenberg is at his best, having entirely rid himself of the sentimental leanings of his earlier music.167

Mead writes that in San Francisco, Cowell was “No longer interested, as he had been in Los Angeles, in mollifying the critics with music by Milhaud or enticing the audience with a mystic like Feodor Kolin. Cowell assaulted his audience with a program of wind ensemble music by Schoenberg, Ruggles, and Varèse.”168 But assaulted or not, the reviews were not as vitriolic as those seen in Europe:

. . . the New Music Society of California gave its first and what is promised to be typical concert the other evening before a small audience inclined to disbelieve its ears. The latest modernisms of composition have only rarely been heard in San Francisco, so that it was not unexpected that the strange productive dispositions of Arnold Schonberg, Carl Ruggles, and Edgar Varèse should have been introduced to mixed astonishment and vexation. . . . The performances may have been stodgy and pedantic in comparison with what the composers intended, but the players, inexperienced in such extremities of cacophony, were at the least capable and devoted. Schonberg’s Quintet is one of his typical works, long drawn out, lugubriously lyric, and regardless of his efforts to free himself from diatonic tradition, as rampant with cliché in its own manner as the veriest secondary romantic could be in the tear-eyed chromaticism of the last century. The

167 Mead, 77. The program is printed on 77–78.

168 Ibid.
Viennese composer examines his moods with a microscope, and thus contrives vast distorted symphonies from a simple chord of the German sixth.\textsuperscript{169}

But Mason Redfern of the \textit{San Francisco Examiner} was more confident in his reading of the work, in alluding to Cowell’s quote about Bach in the program notes:

Like Dickens’ “Poor Jo,” we didn’t quite know what it all meant, but it certainly interested us. Ernest Bloch was in a fine flame of indignation when he emerged from the Community Play House where the concert was held; Alfred Hertz smiled and said nothing.\textsuperscript{170} . . . Which was the “Lilacs?” a lady asked me, and I shamefacedly confessed I did not know. But I do know that Schoenberg’s quintet for woodwind sounded like Bach in everything but his inspiration. The dialectic counterpoint was there, the intellectual hair-splitting, but . . . Like olives, ultra-modern music is an acquired taste. Maybe we shall acquire the taste if we are submitted long enough to the dissonant infection. Meanwhile, it has one distinct social advantage. Like it and you will pass for a person of superior sensibility.\textsuperscript{171}

Under the banner headline “Latest in Tone Art Enthralls Audience in Stormy Sea of Dissonance,” the music critic Alexander Fried alludes to Cowell’s program notes and Schoenberg’s lack of sentimentality:

Afloat for an hour and a half on a stormy sea of dissonance, the audience of the New Music Society in the Community Playhouse last night looked dizzily in all directions for a comfortable haven of silence. The music stopped, the players left the stage before the battered senses of the crowd could realize quiet reigned once more. A belated burst of applause signified the gathering was pleased with the adventures in real musical modernism. . . . In thoughtful humanitarian spirit Cowell preceded the Schoenberg performance with the warning that the Viennese composer’s Quintet is long. The audience spent the next forty minutes agreeing with him. Schoenberg no doubt, has the non-aesthetic virtue of sincerity. He means and feels his art with eyes full of tears. One may weep with him when his music is played, but for different reasons. . . . The Quintet has no key structures. Each voice sings lugubriously, elaborately its own queer lyric. The

\textsuperscript{169} Unsigned review, “Music of the Atonalists Comes to San Francisco,” special to the \textit{Christian Science Monitor}, 19 November 1927.

\textsuperscript{170} Alfred Hertz was then conductor of the San Francisco Symphony.

combination of his parts is fantastic, his static chord relationships are arbitrary, his melodic and rhythmic imagination rarely springs directly from the romantic German spirit that lives at the music of Wagner, Brahms, Mahler and other masters of the tender Lied. Despite his immense care to avoid cloying clichés of the nineteenth century harmonic system, he is as sentimental as a crocodile.  

There is little doubt that the program notes Cowell prepared, and his lively pre-concert discussion with the audience, contributed to a marginally more assured reception by the audience and to varying optimistic reviews. Cowell had previously programmed and promoted American avant-garde music, in Los Angeles and San Francisco, so his audiences were prepared for the introduction to additional contemporary music from Europe. Sabine Feisst notes that Cowell’s program of Schoenberg’s quintet received “somewhat friendlier responses from the audience and press.”

“It is one of the few transcendent experiences in the world of wind chamber music!”

Samuel Baron

Although Schoenberg’s wind quintet has had more than its share of critics, it also has its advocates. A private performance and radio broadcast of the work is believed to have been made by René Leibowitz (1913-1972), who had spent a number of years fleeing the German occupying forces in Vichy France. When he did not succeed in emigrating, managed to survive hidden for a time in Paris, and later lived with his family in the Unoccupied Zone. It was probably during this time it is said he acquired his knowledge of the serialists and their music primarily through intensive study of their scores. Anticipating the liberation of Paris, Leibowitz returned and in the

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172 Alexander Fried, San Francisco Chronicle, 26 October 1927.

173 Feisst, 30.
ultimate act of defiance against the Germans, recruited musicians, rehearsed them, and then conducted the legendary clandestine and unauthorized recording of the quintet. Broadcast from the studios of the RDF Télévision Française, it was a highly symbolic and dangerous act: the radio station was still occupied by the Germans. The broadcast was heard by the young French composer Pierre Boulez, who recalls:

One evening, in 1945, I heard a private performance of Schoenberg’s Woodwind Quintet, conducted by René Leibowitz. It was a revolution to me. It obeyed no tonal laws and I found in it a harmonic and a contrapuntal richness and a consequent ability to develop, extend, and vary ideas that I had not found anywhere else. I wanted, above all, to know how it was written. Therefore I went to Leibowitz and brought with me other students from Messiaen’s harmony class.

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In his biography the imminent flute player Jean-Pierre Rampal writes about performances during the occupation at the radio station in Paris, but he does not mention Leibowitz. “[W]e came together in 1944 to create the Quintette à Vent Française with bassoonist Paul Honce, horn-player Gilbert Coursier, Pierre Pierlot, oboe, clarinetist Jacques Lancelot … But that night back in 1944, it was a ragtag bungle of unknown musicians who converged on the little studio at rue du Bac after the curfew. We played works by Hindemith, Milhaud, and Schoenberg. I never felt it was a risky thing to do– the only people who could have denounced us were the technicians, and they were all friends – and I didn’t feel heroic, either…. I have always said that I was not particularly courageous during the war, but perhaps I was merely insouciant. I simply never saw the dangers clearly. After all, I was living without papers and illicitly helping to record works by outlawed composers. This was something we as musicians felt it was important to do at that time when most of our energy was being called upon for survival. It was a resistance of sorts. The tapes we made were shipped to America, but I am not sure who heard them, or when. Sometimes we called ourselves the Quintette à Vin Française.” Jean-Pierre Rampal. Music, my Love. New York: Random House, 1989, 46 and 185, fn 972.

175 Joan Peyser. Boulez: Composer, Conductor, Enigma. London: Cassell, 1976, 32. But Paul Griffiths writes that “In retrospect it is surprising that Schoenberg’s Wind Quintet should have been the work to reveal to Boulez the scope of serialism, for he was soon to criticize its adherence to Classical models of form, but clearly he was sufficiently impressed by its technical virtues to ignore for the moment aesthetic misgivings.” Paul Griffiths. Modern Music: The avant garde since 1945. London: J M Dent & Sons, 1981, 20.
This is not the only direct influence the quintet had upon modern music in Europe and the United States. Like many composers, musicians and artists, Schoenberg immigrated to the United States in 1934. Igor Stravinsky immigrated to the United States five years later, eventually settling in Los Angeles. He met the conductor Robert Craft (1923--) in New York, later convincing him to come to Los Angeles, where he became Stravinsky’s close working associate. Craft occasionally conducted some of the Evenings on the Roof concerts in Los Angeles. Established in 1939 as a chamber music concert series, the “Roof” programs began with a concert of chamber music by Bartók. Later the concerts included the music of Stravinsky, Ives, Schoenberg and many of the contemporary composers who had immigrated to the United States. The series was consistently sold out to an “audience that was eager, broad-minded, and musically intelligent.176 Later known as the Monday Evening Concerts, performances were popular and attended by musicians from the recording industry, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and numerous émigrés from Europe, “giants of the music world,” including Klemperer, Busoni, Schoenberg, and especially Stravinsky, who was there, scores in hand for all performances. Dorothy Lamb Crawford quotes Peter Yates comments in an oral history, speaking of an all-Schoenberg program on 25 May 1948, which included the West Coast premiere of the String Trio, op. 34 (1946) and the wind quintet. The concert was held during the tenth season of the series:

I knew that we would draw a solidly German audience to hear this event, and that a great many of the audience would be solidly unwilling to give a friendly ear to Schoenberg, especially a program starting with the huge wind quintet, so I devised a stratagem: I asked Frances and three singers to perform. In order to celebrate the survival of the Roof to its tenth season - albeit with continuing worrisome poverty - and in order to shock a potentially resistant audience into gratitude for one of Schoenberg’s most difficult works, the twelve tone Wind Quintet, [I] inserted Erik Satie’s Mass of the Poor, a fragmentary work for piano and three singers, before the Schoenberg on this program. The effect of this on the strongly Germanic audience was most irritating and frustrating. They had no idea what it was all about, and it was French. They vented all their fury immediately on the little Satie Mass so that when we came on next with [Schoenberg’s] woodwind quintet they relaxed and realized that this, however difficult, was solid German music, and the evening was a great success.177

Peter Yates described the large audience for this concert as “very cosmopolitan, able to sit through 35 exhausting minutes of the Wind Quintet, which Mrs. Schoenberg agrees is the most difficult piece to hear ever written, without wriggling more than a little.”178 The regular performers on the Concerts on the Roof Series had formed enduring ensembles, which included The New Music Quintet that performed the Schoenberg that night. Somewhat later Robert Craft would publish an article on his work with the quintet.179 Schoenberg’s sarcastic response to the

177 Ibid. 194 ‘Yates, oral history’ fn 39. The concert was conducted by Robert Craft, who in Stravinsky: Chronicle of a Friendship (Vanderbilt University Press, Nashville, 1994), 92 writes that “I began to conduct regularly for the Evenings on the Roof, later the Monday evening Concerts in Los Angeles. Some of the music performed in our Schoenberg memorial series in the autumn (1952) had not been heard before in the United States, and though its effect on the status quo was insignificant, the effects on Stravinsky were powerful and permanent. He had completed his Cantata in July and the first two movements of his Septet by November 6 (the third in January 1953), which is to say that this first late-period venture into atonality begun during, and to some extent as a result of, those four Schoenberg concert in our homely little West Hollywood Auditorium).”

178 Crawford. Roof, 116. Peter Yates (1909-1976), with his wife the pianist Frances Mullen, co-founded the concert series Evenings on the Roof in Los Angeles in 1938-39. The first concerts were held in the top floor of their home in Los Angeles which had been renovated into a large performance area. The concerts were later moved to various Hollywood hotels

179 Robert Craft, “Performance Notes for Schoenberg’s Quintet,” Woodwind Magazine 4 (June 1952): 6–7, 15. The performers in The New Music Quintet were Archie Wade, flute; Gerald Caylor, clarinet; Lloyd Rathbun, oboe; Wendell Hoss, horn; and Adolph Weiss, (the composer) bassoon.” P 83 Crawford, Roof. In his memoirs Stravinsky: Chronicle of a Friendship, Craft writes “After conducting Schoenberg’s Quintet in the Los Angeles County
report of an enthusiastic reception given to one performance of the Wind Quintet was: “Then they didn’t understand it.”

Rehearsals for the Schoenberg quintet had been held at Stravinsky’s home in Los Angeles, and Don Christlieb relates the following: “Once when we were rehearsing the Schoenberg Quintet, and this was on the second day. Stravinsky asked me ‘Do you not think this is the finest work for this combination?’ The answer was ‘yes,’ but we were all in a state of shock because this was the first time we were aware that he openly showed intense interest in ‘12-tone.’” Christlieb writes further:

We were also aware of the ‘protective blanket’ that was thrown around both of these renowned composers by their well-meaning friends and colleagues. In the presence of Stravinsky, Craft, Morton, Stein and Yates and others, were nearly always embarrassingly mute if in the conversation, the name of Schoenberg arose and the same with Schoenberg if the reverse were true. To add further to our surprise, our clarinetist, Bill Ulyate, who was substituting for Hugo Raimondi on this particular day, and who had kind of a carefree jazz-oriented demure, asked, “Mr. Stravinsky, how come you only live a few miles from Mr. Schoenberg and we never see you together?” Stravinsky rose from the couch where he was sitting with my son Peter, put his hand on Bill’s shoulder, and said, “You know Bill, our mutual friends protect us from each other.”

But Craft’s familiarity with the quintet would have more import, when four years later he used it to demonstrate Schoenberg’s serial procedures to Stravinsky. The composer then

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182 Ibid., 53.
responded by using composing the Passacaglia movement of the Septet for clarinet, bassoon, horn, piano, violin, viola & cello.

Robert Craft provides this account:

The first movement of Stravinsky’s own Septet, begun on July 22, was completed on August 8, on which day he started to make a fair copy of the sketch score. The first notation for the second movement, the Passacaglia, is found on a sheet of eight-stave music paper, on one side of which is the series of Schoenberg’s wind Quintet, in the hand of the present writer, together with a demonstration of the way in which Schoenberg deployed the twelve pitches harmonically: on the other side, Stravinsky has drawn the series of his Passacaglia, clearly using the Schoenberg as a model. The Passacaglia was composed mid-August and November 6, 1952, during which period Stravinsky heard the present writer conduct four Schoenberg memorial concerts and their numerous rehearsals....

Don Christlieb was at a rehearsal for a reading of Stravinsky’s Septet after he completed it. Other musicians there were members of the Los Angeles Wind Quintet, the Philharmonic and movie studios. He writes that

Rehearsals for these momentous premieres, usually for proof reading before they were sent to the publishers, were also held at the homes of one of the performers. The 8 Orchestral Miniatures, dedicated to Lawrence Morton and first read through at Plummer Park, the Four Russian Peasant Songs at the West Hollywood Auditorium, the Three Songs from William Shakespeare at the home of Eunice Shapiro, .... and the Septet at my home. When we were proof-reading his Septet before sending it to the publishers he [Stravinsky] turned to Lawrence Morton in such an animated manner that we later asked “What was he saying?” Lawrence, quoting Stravinsky, said “This is fiercely tonal.” Obviously he had hoped his first “Row” (5 tone) would be more adventurous! At another rehearsal of his Octet, preparing for a Monday Evening Concert, we were at the home of Garson Kanin. Both Stravinsky and Balanchine were in attendance. At the close, Stravinsky said, “A rehearsal can be so gratifying that the performance will be anticlimactic.”

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184 Christlieb 1987, 52
Christlieb writes further of the respect the musicians had for Schoenberg’s wind quintet:

…. we did a performance of Schoenberg’s Woodwind Quintet and The Tale of a Soldier by Stravinsky, the parts of which we copied by hand because we were too poor to buy them. [Lawrence Morton] once asked me point blank, “Do you really enjoy that 12-tone work you’re doing?” I said, “Lawrence, I can’t give you a straight yes or no answer. All I can say is ‘Why do I return year after year to rehearse the Schoenberg Woodwind Quintet, the bible of 12-tone? There has to be something in it more than we have achieved so far!’” His reply was “Well ... I had to ask you know. I can’t trust performers. They are so involved in the work which they have invested so much time, it is like their child who can do no wrong.” .... Much later when I saw Lawrence pouring over a submitted serial work I confronted him with his previous statement and attitude and he said, “Well, a man can change can’t he?” I can say that we of the Los Angeles Woodwind Quintet did also. We spent a year laboring on the Schoenberg, cycling or repeating two or three bars at a time, then moving ahead a couple of bars and doing the same thing and then grouping bars to cycle. We all do this when we practice alone but to do it as a group was revealing indeed! As a result we began to know whom we were displacing and who displaced us. As a consequence, we improved our performance, convinced that it was indeed a marvelous work to be enjoyed. When you do that, the ‘message’ gets across and your listeners experience the same reaction.185

But Don Christlieb was not the only musician to proclaim the value of Schoenberg’s quintet.

Sam Baron, a flutist and conductor who was a founding member of the New York Woodwind Quintet and the director of the Bach Aria Group, writes “You have to prepare yourself for this! It is one of the few transcendent experiences in the world of wind chamber music!”186

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185 Ibid., 32-33. The New Wind Quintet, LAWQ made the first U.S. recording of the quintet.

CONCLUSION

“A long time must pass before it will be included in that great hit parade of the future ‘Album of 12-tone pieces the whole world loves.’”

Robert Craft

Schoenberg’s op. 26 is one of the most thoroughly demanding pieces ever written; not only is it a display of compositional virtuosity, but the difficulties of performing it are virtually unparalleled in the repertoire. It is a work of great precision and clarity; it is complex and logical; it is not brief, but it is concise. The classical forms outlining the quintet match Schoenberg’s classically conceived handling of the instruments. The composer’s power of logical thought demonstrates nothing more clearly than his consciousness to tradition, which heavily informs his way of thinking. Schoenberg did not materially alter the basic concept of wind scoring. He wrote for well-established and existing instruments in a way that required his players to expand and augment their conventional playing techniques, stamina, and instrumental interactions. He required the ultimate in technique and musicianship. In doing so, he magnified the conventional limits of early twentieth-century technique and facility, conscripting the winds into a continuous exploitation of instrumental virtuosity and feats of endurance. A landmark in modern music, his first major serial composition, it is a remarkable contribution to the quintet genre. With the introduction of new textures, and the expanded range of performance techniques, Schoenberg opened new horizons of orchestration for the quintet medium. In his final study, the orchestration scholar Gardner Read writes:
. . . and each section customarily includes a diverse number of dissimilar instruments with correspondingly individual ranges, technical procedures, dynamic limitations and above all else, widely varying tonal properties. To fuse these heterogeneous and disparate elements into an acoustically feasible and aurally acceptable entity requires an ear aware of tone color in all its infinite gradations as the painter’s eye is cognizant of and sensitive to the entire spectrum. . . .

With the exception of the words “widely varying tonal properties,” Read could have been writing about Schoenberg’s quintet. Schoenberg’s ear, indeed his whole musical consciousness, was specifically attuned to a universal musical spectrum, and his use of winds became a defining moment for the medium.

Though it is one of the most important works in the twentieth century, the quintet is the least performed in the quintet genre. The unrelieved and ongoing technical demands certainly debar it entirely from the amateur sphere, leaving performance to only the most committed professionals. But an intellectual high can be gained from a theoretical analysis on paper and, in like manner, performers of a successful reading discover that it transcends intellectual gratification and becomes an enlightening and rewarding musical experience. For the musicians, the tongue performs faster, embouchures gain stamina, the diaphragm has expanded, and the fingers acquire greater facility. An acknowledged performance before an audience with an “intellectual ear” can be a transformative experience for both musicians and listeners.

Schoenberg’s wind quintet occupies a special place in the history of wind quintets; its erstwhile status as practically unplayable has changed with time due to expanded techniques and improvements to the instruments. The work remains a great challenge, but one that is met with

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correspondingly great rewards. As a dual tribute, Schoenberg’s brave new musical world, in theory and in performance, anticipates techniques for the remainder of the twentieth century, while it provides material for the twenty-first. Schoenberg’s quintet for winds remains a work to aspire and challenge; one does not have to look deeply to discover beyond the mechanistic, beyond the complexity, to see the fundamental elegance, animation, and beauty of the music.
CONCLUSION

The contemporaneous wind quintets of Carl Nielsen, Paul Hindemith, and Arnold Schoenberg, written during the stylistic diversity of the early twentieth century, inaugurated the renaissance of the genre. Each composer was among the most imposing and influential of that time, and each quintet set a precedent that can be traced throughout the century in succeeding works. Based on completely different aesthetic concepts, the three quintets represent a confluence of independent historical tendencies. Bound by the traditional formal designs, and by the commonality of musical resource, the venerable genre experienced revitalization and became re-established as a colorful, versatile, and dynamic medium. The conditions that fostered the renaissance of this medium included not only a reaction against the primarily homogeneous orchestral sound of the later nineteenth century, but also an acceptance of the broadening use of smaller ensembles with enlivened timbres. Often featuring uncommon instrumentation, these ensembles were given the opportunity to experiment, and by their size afforded greater ease of performance. New musical languages and thematic principles offered changes in harmony, rhythm, and above all else, transformation in the use of timbre, texture, and color. Composers saw the wind quintet as a means of expression and recognized the opportunity for experimentation afforded by the reanimated medium. Each composer handled his combination of instrumental colorings with the sureness that is the mark of a thorough-going and meticulous musician. Each composer knew the musicians for whom he was composing but had a different conception of the individual instruments, their capabilities, and certainly a preconceived notion of the sound he wanted from the quintet. Allied by historical proximity, and defined by the
musical and social circumstances under which each was written, the *Kvintet*, the *Kleine Kammermusik*, and Schoenberg’s op. 26 are landmarks in modern chamber music.

The three works discussed in this study represent specific features of one particular area of musical style, beginning with Carl Nielsen’s chromatic neo-romanticism, continuing with Paul Hindemith negotiating the new objectivity and neo-classicism, and ending with Schoenberg’s serialism. Nielsen’s *Kvintet* and Schoenberg’s op. 26 are couched in traditional sonata forms, while Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik* is laid out as in a divertimento, traditional in the wind chamber music genre. The *Kvintet*, a product of Nielsen’s maturity, was written during his fifty-seventh year, as a promise to friends. The composition of *Kleine Kammermusik* took place when the composer was twenty-seven, near the end of a period of eclectic experimentation in his most productive year, and in recompense for an earlier performance of his music. Schoenberg’s Op. 26, begun in one of the composer’s most difficult years, was completed in one of his happiest, just prior to his fiftieth birthday. A didactic work, it presented his theory of serialism. The time during which the quintets were produced was one of deprivation during the interwar period. Although Denmark is known to have suffered less than Germany or Austria, each composer was affected by the lack of material prosperity, and by the political, social, and cultural conditions common to all during this period. Nielsen bemoaned that due to the war he had “a whole pile of works” that he could not get published, but Hindemith was eagerly published by B. Schott’s Söhne of Mainz after 1922, and Schoenberg took advantage of both Wilhelm Hansen in Copenhagen and Universal-Edition of Vienna.
None of the composers scored for wind instruments through his creative career. For each, the quintet is *sui generis*, representing but a small aspect of his total output, yet each is one of the monuments of the genre. In the case of Nielsen, one hears in his music balance, proportion, and color, with the occasional dissonance, maintained by a unity of sonority. Nielsen contributed to the development of the quintet with his emphasis on the distinct and idiomatic sound of individual instruments. In applying anthropomorphic characteristics he opened a new world of color and expressive articulation. The richness and diversity of his writing is evident in his transparent textures. Nielsen’s consciousness to sound is revealed in the large surfaces of tone color and in the explicit expression of his narrative and temporal programs. The *Praeludium* in the *Kvintet* is a model of reflection and yearning, in parts atonal, which can be viewed as a morose and accidental precursor for the atonal sounds of Schoenberg’s Op. 26. While Nielsen articulates his ideas through choice of instruments, his ability to bring out the tonal character of each instrument in his romantic scoring brings a fresh, modern clarity to wind writing.

Invoking the spirit of outdoor wind divertimentos and serenades of the eighteenth century, Hindemith’s *Kleine Kammermusik* has a cerebral quality with political and social affiliations. A stylistic middle ground between the *Kvintet* and Schoenberg’s Op. 26, the work demonstrates a fusion of expressionistic chromaticism and neo-classic writing. The *Kleine Kammermusik* reveals yet additional virtuosic capabilities of the quintet, which when combined with dense contrapuntal textures, an elastic dynamic range, and rhythmic ostinatos, adds organic cohesion and continuity to an already existing high plane of thought. In his urge to create a democratically textured playing field, Hindemith transforms his textural writing beginning with soloist and accompaniment to an egalitarian illustration of instrumental balance. The quintet
reflects five distinct musical personalities and varied instrumental colors aiming not for individuality—as with the Kvintet—but for collective and democratic melodic and textural teamwork. Amazing for its emotional range from humor to seriousness, the work introduces elegant new textural combinations, with instrumental virtuosity based on a strong motoric movement. The quality of Hindemith’s invention, the richness of the contrapuntal writing, supported by his pungent, dissonant colors, imparts vigor and direction to the quintet repertoire of the early twenties. The wind quintet became the quintessential exponent for Hindemith’s linear counterpoint, as it prefigured serial polyphony, the focus of design for Schoenberg’s op. 26.

Schoenberg recognized the opportunity for experimentation when he chose the quintet as a laboratory for his twelve-tone technique and as the presentation piece for his new theoretical system. Schoenberg’s ardent choice of the quintet was propitious. He needed robust and distinctive timbres to carry the polyphonic outline of the series. The inherent inability to blend, which in earlier times had disqualified the wind quintet from decades of repertoire, became a virtue in the early twentieth century, a feature critical to Schoenberg’s concept. With Schoenberg, each instrument developed an independent linear sound, which he then integrated into the texture of his musical fabric. Schoenberg’s sentience to the sound of the wind quintet is expressed through the non-harmonic aspect of his scoring, and through specific tone qualities in distinct registers which are supported by dynamic indications. Schoenberg’s approach to the quintet is more aggressive in comparison to the kinetic impetus behind the Kleine Kammermusik, or to Nielsen’s largely easy-going romantic approach. The unrelieved and ongoing polyphony, with its display of compositional virtuosity, debars it from the amateur sphere, leaving
performance to only the most committed musicians. Although all three composers wrote for well-established and existing instruments in a way that required their players to expand and augment conventional playing techniques, the rhythmic complexity of op. 26, with its formidable technical demands, requires extreme stamina and arduous instrumental interactions. Schoenberg required the ultimate in technique and musicianship from his performers, and by doing so, magnified the conventional limits of early twentieth-century technique and facility, anticipating and telegraphing a new instrumental virtuosity for the future.

The three quintets were musical vehicles for progressive ideas, and by virtue of their composition the wind quintet sonority became one of the great sounds of the twentieth century. The initiation of fresh sounds to the medium, the introduction to higher level of instrumental virtuosity, the creation of novel textural combinations, and the development of an instrumental equilibrium among the five instruments established the early twentieth-century quintet. In the following decades there was a surge in the composition of quintets. Many composers followed the lead of Nielsen, with the composition of well-known quintets including the following: Erno Lendvai (Wind Quintet, op. 23, 1922), Heitor Villa Lobos (Quintette en form de Chôros, 1928), Pavel Haas (Wind Quintet, op. 10, 1929), Jacques Ibert (Trois pieces brèves, 1930), Darius Milhaud (La cheminée du roi René, op. 205, 1939), Eugène Bozza (Variations sur un thème libre, 1943, and Scherzo for Woodwind Quintet, op. 48, 1944), Jean Françaix (Wind Quintet no 2, 1987), and Samuel Barber (Summer Music, op. 31, 1955).

In the serial vein one finds the quintets of Hanns Eisler (Divertimento für Bläserquintett, op. 4, 1923), Roberto Gerhard (Wind Quintet, op. 5, 1947), Ernst Křenek (Pentagram, 1951 rev. 1957), Geörgy Ligeti (Six Bagatelles, after Musica Ricercarta, 1953), Leo Kraft (Partita no.3 for
Wind Quintet), and George Perle (Wind Quintet no. 4). The latter, written in 1986, won the Pulitzer Prize for music that year.

Many quintets follow Hindemith’s lead, including those by Luciano Berio (Opus No. Zoo, 1951, revised in 1970), Elliott Carter (Woodwind Quintet, 1948), Geörgy Ligeti (Ten Pieces for Wind Quintet, 1953), Irving Fine (Partita, 1948), Gunther Schuller (Wind Quintet, 1958), and Jean Françaix (Wind Quintet no. 1, 1948). John Harbison’s Wind Quintet (1979) was commissioned by the Naumberg Foundation a year after he won the Pulitzer Prize for music. George Perle wrote four wind quintets, in 1959, 1960, 1967, and the fourth in 1984, mentioned above. By the year 2000, more quintets had been composed in the United States alone than in Europe in the previous 150 years. And in 2009, the venerable composer Elliott Carter composed a second wind quintet “Nine by Five,” a commission from the Juilliard School, one of his final compositions. The uniqueness and value of each quintet comes from the expressive gamut circumscribed around the five instruments by the individual composers. Each recognized the opportunity for experimentation that wind chamber music offered, and what followed during the act of creation for each composer was the quintessence of musical thought, expression, and artistic personality.

The wind quintet arose from aristocratic and venerable predecessors composed specifically for professional musicians with musically cultivated and devoted audiences. This is still the case. Contributing to the establishment of the quintet has been the close collaboration between composer and musician, beginning with Rosetti and Cambini with the establishment of Harmonie at various courts in the 1780s. From Anton Reicha and Franz Danzi, and later Claude-Paul Taffanel, the collaboration continued in this manner with the soloists of the Paris
Conservatoire, and the Société de musique de chambre pour instruments à vent. In the modern period, Carl Nielsen wrote for the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, Paul Hindemith for the Frankfurter Bläser-Kammermusikvereinigung, and Schoenberg for the members of the Vienna Philharmonic. The enduring and intimate collaboration between composer and performer has underwritten the major contributions to the literature of wind chamber music. Often valued as the cultural vehicle of the elite, chamber music is considered by some to be the highest category in which many musicians rate music. “Chamber music has become the medium through which composers of the twentieth-century have developed their new conceptions of music - those new conceptions that have changed the course of music, musical performance, musical aesthetics, all parameters of music, in the twentieth century.”¹ This is most evident for the quintet, the only wind genre to survive from the classical, throughout the romantic era, and into the modern period, where it has become a privileged medium. One can find an effective cohesion of sound in the wind quintet, rising from the intimacy established between a composer and members of the unit of five musicians. This inward harmony gives rise to an outward harmony, providing a unique status to the medium, that of equality among composer, musicians, and often, audience. A medium in which musical style and instrumental color live in close symbiosis, the wind quintet has a varied and superb twentieth-century repertoire. Unlike companion chamber music genres, the string quartet or the brass quintet—which has seen growth mainly through

¹ John Baron’s review of James McCalla’s Twentieth-Century Chamber Music (New York: Schirmer, 1996) in John Baron, Chamber Music: A Research and Information Guide (New York: Routledge, 2003), 56. But this is also true of earlier periods, as noted by Walter Siegmund-Schultze, in his article “Die Individualisierung der instrumentalen Kammermusik im 18. Jahrhundert” Zur Entwicklung der instrumentalen Kammermusik in der 1. Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts, in Studien zur Aufführungspraxis und Interpretation von Instrumentalmusik des Jahrhunderts, I. Blankenburg/Harz 1983, 11-17. The burden of Siegmund-Schultze’s article is that indeed, often composers do write their most important works in chamber music form, as they did in the eighteenth century, and that frequently the smallest chamber works are more important that major works because the composer experimented more or expressed himself more.
arrangement of previous material—the wind quintet repertoire has been continuously developed, constantly augmenting the foundations created by Nielsen, Hindemith, and Schoenberg. The answer to Berlioz’s question, “O quintetto de Reicha, que me veux tu?” can be found in the many quintets, from neo-classical to avant-garde, with their vivid colors, instrumental dexterity, and virtuosic demands, of the twentieth-century repertoire. The three composers whose works at the beginning of the twentieth century contributed to defining what is now recognized as one of the most important developments in the history of twentieth-century wind music—the renaissance of the wind quintet—raised and ennobled the genre, ensuring its continuation into the twenty-first century.
Coming home for a break during my studies in Paris in the early spring of 1921, I felt that I should put to use all my knowledge here at home as my teacher was the world famous Louis Bleuzet. (1871-194) professor of oboe at the Conservatory of Music in Paris; he succeeded Georges Gillet (1854- 1934) as Professor of Oboe at the Paris Conservatory). It does not happen so often that yesterday’s dream comes true the next day and you find yourself among the people you have had the strongest desire to be with. But it happened to me. Only a few days after my return to Denmark the phone rang and it was Aage Oxenvad, who asked if I would like to come and play with him and his friends in “Den gamle Kammermusikforening” (The old Chamber music association). It was the beginning of one of the happiest periods of my life as a musician. He became my best friend, who was destined to leave this world too early. He showed much faith in me, which made me try to live up to his very high expectations. He was a strict father figure at the same time as a true friend on an equal basis. Whenever we talk about “de gamleblaesere” (the old wind players), I have to briefly describe his rich personality. He was born in Jutland, which he showed from jest to earnest. His human qualities as well as his artistic mind were indisputable. If he really had a great talent for his instrument has never been totally clear to me. But he became one with his clarinet through much hard work, a diligence and struggle that probably wore him out. What crowned his life’s work as an instrumentalist and artist was Carl Nielsen’s Clarinet concerto, which we will come back to later.

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I still remember this, my baptism of fire in April 1921, when we together played Ludwig Thuille’s sextet for five winds and piano. The pianist was Christian Christiansen, with whom I also had a wonderful human and working relationship until his death. The flute was at that occasion played by Poul Hagemann, the bassoon by old Knud Lassen and the horn by Hans Sørensen. Christiansen could sometimes come across as somewhat cold and inaccessible as a person and musician. But when he performed with us, he let loose and I can still see him in my mind, making small jumps on his seat, showing a happiness playing his instrument and imitating as well as inviting phrases by us winds. We played alternately with him and Agnes Adler, the female pontiff of the Chamber Music.

Knud Lassen was one with his bassoon. If Oxenvad and I had temperament and nerves, each of us in different ways, then Knud was steadfast and calm. He always presented his phrases in an unexceptionably distinguished manner. If Hans Sørensen had an entirely childlike and unbridled temperament, then Knud expressed the sophisticated humor, known in many bassoon passages in Mozart’s scores.

Poul Hagemann was a business man but had with deep respect devoted himself to the study of the flute and was a very active chamber music player for many years. Such was the quintet, that played that April evening, including a new oboist (the author). We enjoyed playing together and simply being together. And we got things done! We were not a family with mutual admiration. Believe me! We disciplined each other during our practices. Oxenvad could really scold us in his good-hearted way! And when I, the youngster, did not have my technique in order, he would give me a real lecture. My diligence was not, in his opinion, at the same level as
my talent. But if he scolded us, he was hard on himself too. You could sometimes find him in his basement with his clarinet, performing “self-discipline”. This is how we lived and played and this is how Carl Nielsen found us one evening at Christiansen’s house. Carl Nielsen loved Mozart. And he was a good wind player. When he heard Mozart’s Koncertantes Quartet, he was very much taken by it. He said he would write a cadenza. Many times he said he had written the cadenza, it was on the table at his home in Damgaarden. However, it has never been found. Yet later he came up with something else. We were sitting there, four of us (no flute) and practicing Mozart. Carl Nielsen called and asked: “What do I hear in the background?” Christiansen answered: “That is Mozart.” “Then I will come over”, said Carl Nielsen. And so he did. He knew us all individually and also as a group, especially in connection with Mozart. That is no secret that he loved Mozart and you do not have to leaf through his scores for long to discover his intimate knowledge of each wind instrument’s specific character and mode of expression. We played Mozart’s Koncertantes Quartet, where the final movement is an incomparable series of variations. He became immensely happy.

We drank some tea (or was it beer?) He talked and talked about Mozart, wind players etc. But then he suddenly became quite. So he gave us all a kind look. He looked at us with his loving, ‘fynske’ (he comes from fyn island) eyes and promised us to write music for us, a wind quintet if we were going to perform it, of course. He confided to us, that he was very captivated by the way we played our instruments. He referred to the combination of our different personalities and the characteristics of our instruments. He said that the quintet would contain variations, where he would do his best to reflect every personality. The result of his efforts
showed that he meant what he said. The first part of the quintet is played by the bassoon. It was simply Knud Lassen personified as we knew him. Calm and collected – a distinguished phrase! We followed his work closely and we started rehearsing as soon the ink dried on the corrections. For instance, in the parallel theme in recapitulation where you have two parts for the horn and bassoon, we tried it again and again until he decided who was going to have the upper part.

Another day he told us that there was something not clear at the variation theme of the ‘Preludium. He was at the time conductor of “Musikforeningen” and I played in the orchestra. We performed “Symphonie fantastique” and I played the English horn solo in the pastoral. Late the same night my phone rang. It was Carl Nielsen: “Hi Felumb, I still have that sound of the English horn in my ear. Could you switch over to English horn? It is exactly the sound I was looking for in the prelude.” I was young and brave and said “yes”. It caused some difficulties, but it was worth it. It is probably one of the most characteristic parts of the quintet. It was once referred to as “All nature’s mystic voice” (if words can explain the combination of composition and instrumentation And then a few words about the variations. Carl Nielsen had an idea for each variation, based as much on us musicians as on the instruments we played. I remember especially two solo-variations. Knud Lassen “found” his variation intuitively and Carl Nielsen was very pleased and taken by it. It was different with the horn variation by Hans Sørensen. He performed it with dazzling virtuosity, but Carl Nielsen thought Lassen’s performance was lacking the tranquility, so he said: “Dear Sørensen, just think about a wonderful Danish summer day. You are standing on a hill, blowing your horn over the beautiful scenery. It is not 1.2.3.4. - No, give yourself some time and do not start the next phrase until all echoes become silent.” And
then there was the variation for clarinet and bassoon. Carl Nielsen knew that Oxenvad could sometimes cause a little problem. He therefore advised that they should play as a married couple in the middle of an argument and where the husband (the bassoon) finally calms down. I could give you many more details from our work and from the numerous performances we later gave. Carl Nielsen’s quintet for winds was first performed at “Ny Musik” in October 1922 and became (together with Serenata invano) his most popular chamber music work. These performances strengthened the bond between us as a group. I was the youngest member of the group and as such the most (or maybe the only) ambitious one. I wanted so badly to go abroad with the quintet and achieve international fame. But not one of my friends shared my dream, least of all old Knud. Small domestic trips, performing matinees were o.k. He was, however persuaded to participate in a trip to Berlin in the spring of 1923, where we played Carl Nielsen’s quintet and also had the honor to perform the premiere of Paul Hindemith’s “Kleine Kammermusik”. It went very well and we could have started an international career.

But we enjoyed playing in Denmark for a small but faithful circle of chamber music lovers. We started our Saturday matinees (each earning less than fifty crowns per concert). We enjoyed playing, especially if the program contained Mozart or Carl Nielsen. Holger Gilbert-Jespersen replaced Hagemann on flute after a few years. We were invited by His Master’s Voice to record Carl Nielsen’s quintet (for a princely fee of 150 crowns each). This was long before today’s technique and the record has its faults, but its soul is living. I remember this period as a wonderful time, during which Carl Nielsen as a central personality had direct influence on each one of us. His love to the instruments was not limited to this piece of music. Gilbert was given
his flute concerto and Oxenvad his clarinet concert, a marvelous piece of music. “De gamleblaesere” became one with Carl Nielsen. We were all five of us paying respect to our dear master when we played the chorale from his quintet at his funeral.”
Although it is not the focus of this article, the actual muse for Nielsen’s quintet has been questioned. Christiansen’s reply to Nielsen’s query about whose music he was hearing in the background being practices by the Copenhagen Quintet was “Det var Mozart.”¹ In his biography of Carl Nielsen, Torbin Meyer refers to the work being played as a concerto: “… saden Aften I Efteraaret 1921 hos Chr. Christiansen I dennes Hjem, Nybrogade 26, og prøvede Mozarts Koncert for fire Blæsereog Orkester, da telefonen rigede ...”² […] one evening in the autumn of 1921 at the house of Carl Christiansen, at 26 Nybrogade, at a rehearsal of Mozart’s Concerto Four Winds, the telephone rang …]. But in her background discussion of the quintet Elly Bruunschus Petersen suggests differently: “The piece was probably W.A. Mozart, Quintet for piano, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and French horn, K. 452.”³ The Carl Nielsen scholar Jan Maegaard writes in “Den sene Carl Nielsen [The mature Carl Nielsen]⁴ and suggests that “Nielsen’s exposure to the Mozart Concerto for Four Wind Instruments was important to his conception in the Wind Quintet of specific instrumental relationships and instrumental characterization.” And

¹ Felumb, 1958, 36.
² Torben Meyer and Frede Schandorf Petersen, Carl Nielsen: Kunstnerenog Mennesket, en biografi [Carl Nielsen, the artist and man, a biography], Gennemgang of Værkerne: Bind II (Kjobenhavn: Nyt Nordisk Forlag, 1948), 214.
⁴ Dansk musiktidsskrift 28 no. 4 (1953), 76.
finally, one writer notes that Nielsen was “inspired by Mozart’s Harmoniemusik, the three-
movement Quintet, with its idiomatic writing for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon …”  

In his reminiscence, Felumb relates that there are four players that night, “no flute,” and that they played the “Koncertantes Quartet, where the final movement is an incomparable series of variations.” Two pieces by Mozart fit the instrumental criteria for a work with piano, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and horn. The first is the Quintet for piano, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and French horn, K. 452, which concludes with a Rondo; the second is a piano reduction of the Sinfonia concertante, K. 279b. While K. 452 does not have a set of variations, the final movement of K. 279b is an Andantino con Variazioni. Breitkopf & Härtels published a piano reduction of the Sinfonia concertante with four solo winds in 1890, in an arrangement by Ludwig Stark, identified in that publisher’s catalog as Kammermusikbibliothek, No. 893. There is little doubt that this edition is what Christiansen and four members of quintet were rehearsing that night.

In a personal email from Knud Ketting, Chairman and President of the Carl Nielsen Society, the following is noted:

“I continued my research today and actually found a relevant performance of the piano version of the Sinfonia concertante by our friends. It took place on 6 April 1922 at the semi-private Copenhagen Chamber Music Society which had weekly chamber music concerts done by the leading players of that period (still has, actually). The Chamber Music Society was often used as the possibility of either a dress rehearsal or an extra performance in connection with a public performance, But I take this, at least as proof of the fact that we are now talking about that piano reduction of the Sinfonia concertante and not of the [K452] Quintet.”

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5 Frederick Key Smith, Nordic Art Music from the Middle Ages to the Third Millennium (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 62.
Finally, to further complicate this discussion, one must note that the authenticity of K. 279b is in question, and has now been assigned as spurious.\textsuperscript{6}

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