

Cellists' Corner

Brief Career Details of Important Cellists

prepared by David Johnstone from public information

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SPECIAL FEATURE on JACQUES E. RENSBURG

1846 - 1910

Holland

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Important Activity:

Principal cello Orchestra of the Gurzenich Concerts (Cologne). Professor at the Rhenish School of Music at Cologne. Principal cello in the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra.

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Notes:

* Firstly he studied with Giese, Daniel de Lange, and Emil Hegar. He then went to study with Schmitt (in Cologne), but his teacher was ill, and Rensburg immediately was made his substitute! When Schmitt died, he was given permanently the two posts.

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What became of him? Well, unrelenting practice brought on a nervous condition which led him into early private retirement. At the end of 1874, due to his too demanding life as a performing artist, he had a nervous breakdown. He gave up his positions at Cologne and went back to his birth place Rotterdam, taking up his work at his father's bank again, in which he became a firmant. In 1878, the bank was granted suspension of payment, which ended in 1880. Jacques Rensburg then became a partner in the coffee-roasting firm A. Zuntz sel. Wwe. Consequently, he moved with his family to Bonn.

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Many people visited his house in Bonn for making, listening to or talking about music. Among these visitors and friends we find Joseph Joachim, Pablo de Sarasate, Johannes Brahms, Max Bruch, Elly Ney and Elise Polko. Though at a slower pace, he began giving concerts again. Around 1885, he founded, with the violinist Leonhard Wolff and the pianist Max Pauer, the 'populären Kammermusik Soireen' in Bonn. In 1888 he became the violoncellist in the Heckmann Quartet and, a little later, in the Gürzenich Quartet under Gustav Hollaender. At the opening of the Beethoven Haus in 1893, Rensburg played with Carl Reinecke and Joseph Joachim.

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In 1894 he was assigned the title professor der Musik.

In the beginning of 1895 he made a trip to Italy. His concerts there must have been his last concerts. A chronic inflammation in his arm finally forced him to end his career as a violoncellist. He enjoyed a retirement of some fifteen years!..

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Music/Publications:

very little is known of his compositions, but we do have references to -

- * Recitativ, Adagio und Allegro moderato in Formes eines Concertstückes für Violoncell mit Begleitung des Orchesters, Op.1 (Leipzig, Breitkopf und Härtel).
- * Drei Stücke (Junge Liebe, Bangen, Beruhigung) für Violoncello mit Klavierbegleitung, Op.2. (Gustav Cohen, Bonn).
- * Concert für Violoncell mit Orchesterbegleitung, Op.3 (Berlin, Ries & Erler).
- * Am Meeresstrande. Drei Characterstücke für Cello, Violine und Viola mit Orchesterbegleitung, Op.4.
- * Ballade für Violoncello und Orchester, Op.5 (Breitkopf und Härtel).

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Works dedicated to Jacques Rensburg included:

- * Max Bruch - Adagio nach Keltischen Melodien für Violoncell mit Begleitung des Orchesters, op. 56 (N. Simrock in Berlin).
- * Friedrich Gernsheim: Elohenu.
- * Gustav Jensen: Zweite Sonate für PianoForte und Violoncell, op. 26 (Augener, London).
- * Richard von Perger: Trio op. 12 für Violine, Cello und Bratsche.



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