

THE UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

THE PIANIST AND THE BRAHMS SONATA FOR PIANO AND VIOLIN,
OPUS 108 IN D MINOR

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF MUSIC
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by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis deals in particular with the pianist's approach to the Brahms Sonata for Piano and Violin in D Minor, Opus 108. There are two chapters, the first of which takes the form of a bibliography in which different theoretical aspects for consideration in the learning of the work are presented.

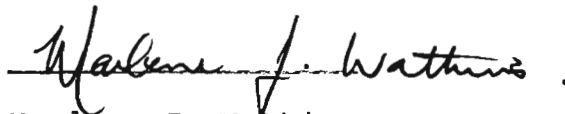
One of the sections in the first chapter which is entitled The Pianist, should prove helpful to a prospective piano teacher, as well as a student of the Brahms Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108. In this section sources presenting different solutions to technical problems which the pianist is likely to encounter both generally, and specifically with regard to this Sonata, are listed.

The other sections in this chapter include a discography and comments concerning recordings of the Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108, which a student of this work and its composer may consult.

The second chapter of the thesis deals with specific issues involved in the interpretation based on my performance of the Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108, for the

practical examination. Three other possible interpretations by well-known pianists are briefly evaluated. Attached to the thesis is a cassette tape on which recommendations for the practising of certain passages may be heard.

I declare that the following work is my own unless
otherwise indicated.



Marlene J. Watkins

15 January, 1989.

During the writing of this thesis, I had the unflinching support of my family. For this, I thank them, and Professor Beverly Parker, whose positive approach has proved to be a light at the end of the tunnel.

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Introduction

Since the study of a new instrumental work requires far more than simply learning how to play the notes, and since piano students often do not possess research skills, this thesis aims to provide the pianist with an introduction to the Brahms Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108.

The thesis takes the form of an annotated bibliography which is followed by a chapter on the factors which a pianist would need to consider when approaching the work for the first time. Thus the first chapter helps the student to locate sources where he or she can find out about Brahms, his life and compositional styles, and the period in which he lived. A list of editions of the work, recordings and summarised reviews of these recordings are also part of this chapter. The second chapter should prove helpful to the student who is embarking on a career as a pianist or piano teacher since it includes recommendations for interpreting the work effectively.

Thus, the thesis should be of use to any pianist approaching the work for the first time.

CHAPTER ONE

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Pianist

It is useful from time to time to reconsider, review and consolidate ideas with regard to technique and interpretation. In this section, various books on different aspects of piano playing are presented.

Bacon, Ernest. Notes on the Piano. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981.

"The greatest freedom in playing results from the most disciplined preparation."(p 108) As a prelude to this preparation, Bacon discusses a number of factors. He describes the principal movements of the hands and explains these using the terms weight and relaxation synonymously. This chapter may be useful in the interpretation of particularly the opening measures of Movements One (measures 1 - 24) and Two (measures 1 - 14) of the D Minor Sonata, Opus 108, where weight is required. For instance,

Bacon believes that the piano has an innately percussive tone which is heightened when used in combination with stringed instruments; thus it creates a contrast with the strings. The disparity between the violin and piano, as in the D Minor Sonata, grows with the size of concert hall, according to Bacon, due to the resonance and power of the piano. This may be remedied through careful use of the pedal, because the accumulation of piano tone can mar this type of performance. "One pedals for the listener rather than the player". (p 52) Bacon mentions that stringed instruments need to make adjustments to the tempered system of the piano. He says that he does not believe that the inclusion of the piano is generally welcomed by the ensemble, one of the reasons being that since the pianist is the only performer with the complete score, he is in a commanding position. He suggests a few changes which a pianist can make when playing with others. For example, the upper melody in the piano may be subdued if it duplicates the violinist's part. Basically, Bacon's book is a "book to be nibbled"(p 1); the information may give the pianist many useful insights and suggestions.

Barnett, David. The Performance of Music. London:

Barrie Jenkins, 1972.

Barnett discusses performance from the view of the composer, the performer and the listener, and he inquires "into the intricate relationships among the three modes of participating in musical experience." (p. 2) He investigates the function of notation and looks at the performer as co-author of the composition. He discusses the aesthetics of, and the physiological factors involved in performance. In an attempt to describe the process of achieving a performance, Barnett states that no one method is the 'only one'. Therefore, he discusses the methods of three teachers, namely, Matthey (1858 - 1945), who specialised in muscular training, Cortot (1877 - 1963), whose main emphasis concerned the context of performance, and Schenker (1868 - 1935) who believed that the basic harmonic pattern of the music must govern the performance. As Heinrich Schenker said, "The performance of musical art-work can be based only on an organically-evolved coherence." (p 42) Heinrich Schenker's first compositions were recommended for publication by Brahms, whose Ballade in D Minor, Opus 10, No 1 is used by Barnett as an example of the use of orchestration in a reduced form. This concept of piano-writing as reduced

orchestration can also be applied to the 'Finale' of the Opus 108, measures 1 - 4. Barnett attempts to define musical talent and in all of this, the performer's role according to Barnett, is brought into perspective.

Bolton, Hetty. How to Practise: A Handbook for Pianoforte Students. London: Elkin & Co. Ltd., n.d.

Although this book consists of only thirty-six pages, it has several useful suggestions on how to practise effectively. The chapter "On thinking clearly", advocates a thorough arm-chair study of the lay-out of a piece. This is most useful as in the study of music away from the instrument the mind can absorb the movements more clearly before putting them into practice. During this process the mind can concentrate on the score without having to also direct commands to the fingertips; passages can be 'thought' through in detail. By concentrating on fingering, direction, and the notes themselves, the execution becomes simpler when moved to the keyboard. This kind of practising is used by many professional musicians who travel extensively between destinations. It must be stressed, however, that strict concentration is necessary for this type

of study to be of any consequence. At times, it helps to practise the difficult passages at a table or in the air. Other chapters include "On listening", which is also important, and "On method practising", another chapter to be recommended. The ideas which Bolton advocates are sound, and will certainly lead the pianist to alternative ways of approaching an entire work, or even a passage of music.

Three appendices clearly set out specimen time-tables, and periods for practising efficiently. In the preface, E. Markham Lee, M.A., D. Mus., states " I know of no other book which codifies method in practising as does this one; a real need here is met." (P. 3)

Bowen, York. The Simplicity of Piano Technique. London: Augener, n.d.

This concise book describes different types of piano touch, and the control of these types. The approach, as the title implies is simply stated, but the work's sound advice could be of use to even the advanced pianist. The author has fifty-five years of teaching experience behind him, and this practical knowledge enables him to describe

movements explicitly. Among the topics he discusses are arm weight, finger technique, and forearm touch all of which are described in terminology which is easy to understand, and all of which need to be considered for a performance of the Opus 108 to be successful.

Brendel, Alfred. Musical Thoughts and Afterthoughts. Hungary: Robson Books, 1976.

This book is worthy of mention in a thesis of this type if only for the section entitled "Coping with pianos". Here, the author refers to the instrument, and to the individual character of different pianos and different concert halls. He then offers some general guidelines for the evaluation of a piano. As the pianist will know, each piano has a quality all its own which is one of the reasons why Busoni actually took his piano along with him when on tour. (Moore, G. Am I Too Loud., p 219) The book has five main sections, covering Beethoven, Schubert, Liszt, Busoni, and Edwin Fischer. The text includes mention of Brahms with regard to his Hungarian Dances and his relationship with Liszt.

Briggs, G. A. Pianos, Pianists and Sonics. London:
Wharfedale Wireless Works, 1951.

Apart from a history of the piano, its action and tone, Briggs describes and supports by way of diagrams and photographs, the various means by which sound is produced on the piano. The chapter on the step-by-step construction of the piano provides information which is seldom published. All of the facts concerning the piano and how sound is produced should prove most beneficial. After all, orchestral musicians are closely involved with their instruments and with their handling and tuning, whilst the pianist generally performs on an instrument which has previously been prepared or tuned. The information on choice and care of a good piano may prove to be invaluable to the uninitiated. The chapter on 'Room Acoustics' deals with aspects such as sound absorption and reflection, resonance, location of the piano and various items for consideration. The choice of the positioning of the piano and violin for a performance of the Opus 108 is important, and is dependant on the acoustics of the room. The drawings provided are clear, and easy to understand. He elevates the status of the accompanist in his argument in favour of the

importance of this role.

Cooper, Peter. Style in Piano Playing. London: John Calder, 1975.

Cooper writes from his own individual view of playing style which he explains, has three sub-divisions: the composer's style, the country's style, and the style of the piece, the instrument, and period in which the composer lived. He states that Brahms's playing style was massive: "People trembled when he sat down at the piano, such was his reputation for power." (p 134) The book describes the development of the piano and its predecessors beginning with Cristofori's piano of 1720. Numerous photographs illustrate the discussion. In a chapter entitled "Style in Ensemble Playing", Cooper correctly states that it is difficult to reconcile the two different timbres of the piano and violin. In his opinion struck strings and the consequent overtones of a piano cannot match the sound of vibrating stretched strings set into motion by a violin's bow. In the first movement of the Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108, measures 74 - 81, and 127 - 128 the pianist must be especially sensitive in this regard in order to create a smooth transition from the violin to the piano.

Example 1: First Movement, measures 74 - 75.

The image shows a musical score for measures 74 and 75. It consists of three staves: a treble clef staff at the top, a bass clef staff in the middle, and a grand staff (bass clef) at the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'p' (piano). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings. There are handwritten annotations: '74' in the left margin, 'p' in the first two staves, and fingerings '3 2 1' and '1 3 2' written below the bottom staff. The notation is complex, with many beamed notes and slurs.

Cooper draws a parallel between the piano of Schumann's day and the contemporary piano which is the more powerful. He believes that a pianist is born with a gift to communicate, and that research and theorising will not make a pianist of him or her. It is the conception which enables the work to become a different rendition through the pianist's interpretation of it. He does say that chamber music playing is very good for the solo pianist because "it keeps his musical faculties at their keenest." (p. 174) The book is particularly useful to the pianist who is to play in a chamber group, or who is to perform with a violinist for the first time, and is also in consolidating ideas on performance with other instruments.

Dale, Kathleen. Nineteenth-Century Piano Music: A Handbook for Pianists. New York: Da Capo Press, 1972.

Although this book is described as one which is intended as a companion to the pianist who makes music for his or her own pleasure, the information is quite detailed, and is certainly aimed not only at the musician who is not intending to become professional. Forms such as the sonata, variation, etude, and dance forms are examined. Dale's opening chapter describes the origin of the piano and the advent of Romanticism.

The chapter on the sonata includes references to the sonatas of Brahms which may be applied to the Sonata, Opus 108. For example, Dale points out that "the relationship between the movements of each sonata is integral; the form of the individual movements, which far from being rigid, is clearly defined and purposeful." (p. 85) Brahms's Opus 108, for example, is linked in the movements by the interval of a fourth which appears throughout in various guises.

Example 2: (a) First Movement, measures 1 - 2,

Allegro

Violine

p sotto voce ma espressivo

Pianoforte

p sotto voce

(b) Second Movement, measures 1 - 2

Adagio

espress.

p legato

(c) Third Movement, measures 75 - 76

(d) Fourth Movement, measures 1 - 2.



The form of the first movement, for example, is clearly in sonata form, yet the use of the dominant pedal throughout the development section shows that within the framework of the form there is still a certain amount of flexibility.

Ferguson, Howard. Keyboard Interpretation. London: Oxford University Press, 1975.

The author investigates the use of Brahmsian fingering particularly with regard to arpeggios. Although Brahms seldom included fingering other than in arrangements and exercises, he was known for the individual way in which he fingered wide-ranging arpeggios.

Example 3 : First movement, measure 81



As a result of this method of fingering, careful pedalling is needed. The reader is referred to Brahms's Capriccio in C, Opus 76, No 8, where the author explains his recommendations. Ferguson provides a 'rough guidance' to the use of rubato, which may prove useful in the study of the Opus 108 as the work requires a considerable amount of rubato.

The chapter on 'Editors' Problems' provides much insight, and a few points on how to recognise a good or bad edition. (The reader is referred to Hutcheson's book, Literature of the Piano, which is discussed on page 21.)

Ferguson, Howard, ed. Style and Interpretation: An Anthology of 16th - 19th Century Keyboard Music. 4 volumes. Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1964. Vol. Four: Romantic Piano Music.

The preface includes views on musical notation, whilst the long introductory section deals with points such as the instrument and its dynamics, tempo, metronome marks, pedalling, fingering, ornamentation, and editions.

Brahms's Capriccio in C, Opus 76, No. 8 is discussed, and certain similarities are present between this work and Opus 108 in D Minor. For example, the crescendo and diminuendo marking on a single note is used in both works, as well as the extensive use of arpeggios, and the indication of forte on the fourth quaver of a 2/2 bar. His discussion of pedalling for the music of Brahms is also useful. The book enables the student to gain insight into the music of Brahms's time by means of a concise and easily understood discussion.

Fuller-Maitland, John Alexander. "Concerted Chamber Music" in The Consort of Music: A Study of Interpretation and Ensemble. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1915, pp. 32 - 106. Reprint, Freeport, New Jersey: Books for Libraries Press, 1973.

The book reminds the ensemble members that each member contributes to the overall performance, and thus shares the responsibility for its success. He concentrates on Brahms's Violin Sonata, opus 78 in G Major, which he uses as one of the examples to describe his views; he also discusses Brahms's Clarinet quintet and some chamber works by other notable composers of ensemble works such as Franck and Schubert.

Although the work is dated, the discussions on ornaments, articulation, balance, pedalling have proved valuable enough to warrant reprinting of the work.

Gat, Joseph. The Technique of Piano Playing. London and Wellingborough: Collets (Publishers) Limited, 1965.

Through the medium of x-ray photos and numerous other photos of pianist's hands, Gat demonstrates to the pianist what he believes is physiologically

speaking the best way for the pianist to use his or her playing apparatus. He states that the mechanism of the piano has not undergone any major changes since the time of Beethoven, and neither has that of the human organism. Therefore, a new method of playing the piano is unnecessary, but that what is needed is good piano playing. He reinforces his views with photographs, musical examples, and in fact, cites, in example 11, eight bars from Schubert's Impromptu in E flat Major (measures 85 - 90) which is supported by 90 photographs showing a pianist playing these bars. This example is carefully described by the author, and the movement of the hands and arms are explained in detail. The speed at which the hands move causes one to realise just how important slow practise is. In this way, superfluous movements may be avoided, which is most important in the playing of the Finale of the Opus 108.

Gerig, Reginald. Famous Pianists and their Technique.

New York: Robert B. Luce Inc., 1974.

Gerig relates several episodes from Brahms's life. He very briefly sketches the beginning of the composer-pianist's career, and quotes incidents as told by Marxsen, Joachim and other friends. One of

his students, Florence May, tells of her lessons with Brahms, whilst Eugenie Schumann, describes his playing. May claims that Brahms advised daily practice for the passing-under of the thumb. Exercises are cited demonstrating the type which Brahms would possibly have recommended to facilitate the playing of the following measures from the Adagio movement of Opus 108.

Example 4: Second movement, measures 59 - 61.

The account of Brahms's technical approach as written by Eugenie Schumann gives insight into the composer's teaching, playing and compositional technique. "To hear Brahms play his own works was, if not always satisfying, at any rate in the highest degree interesting. He brought out the themes very emphatically, with a tendency, which was characteristic of his own playing, towards slightly irregular accentuation."(p 221) This may be seen in

Brahms's own marking indicated in the example below

Example 5: First movement, measure 48



Giesecking, Walter, and Leimer, Karl. Piano Technique.

New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1972.

This volume consists of two books: The Shortest Way to Pianistic Performance, which was originally published in 1930, and Rhythmics, Dynamics, Pedal and Other Problems of Piano Playing, which is intended for the education of the concert pianist and contains instructions for the teacher of this advanced level student. Subjects such as Posture, and Variety of Touch are useful, and the chapter on pedalling may be applied to the Opus 108, which has a few tricky sections for the foot to control, as in the First movement: measures 5/6, and measures 218/219.

The foundation of this method is the training of the ear. Gieseeking writes that Leimer, his teacher, built his method of instruction on ear training, and that it is this training to which the title of the first work, The Shortest Way to Pianistic Performance, refers.

Harrison, S., The Young Person's Guide to Playing the Piano. London: Faber & Faber, 1982.

Harrison discusses the conflict that a pianist must face in playing works with another instrument. This conflict arises because the pianist is expected by the audience and by many instrumental soloists to play a subservient role. "I gave up accompanying in public because audiences will not accept an accompanist as soloist. The public is sometimes mistaken about this and sometimes a soloist is not bold enough to be a soloist." (p. 63)

The text on singers and on chamber music is written in a lighter vein, but the statements made ring true, nonetheless.

mHutcheson, Ernest. Literature of the Piano. Second edition, revised by Rudolph Gantz. London: Hutchinson & Co. (Publishers), 1969.

Brahms's style and features of his composition for piano are discussed. These include for example the doubling of a melody in two and three octaves, with an example from Sonata Opus 1 (Scherzo), and also one from the Opus 108, Last Movement: measures 1 - 4.

Example 6: Last Movement, measures 1 - 4

Presto agitato

The musical score shows the first four measures of the Last Movement of Opus 108. It is written in 6/8 time and marked 'Presto agitato'. The score consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The music is highly rhythmic and technical. There are asterisks (*) under the first and fourth measures of the grand staff. A circled number '4' is at the end of the fourth measure of the grand staff.

Hutcheson also discusses editions of Brahms's works in a thorough manner. The early ones were issued by Breitkopf and Härtel, and later by Simrock. The Universal edition followed these, until Peters took over after the copyright on the works expired. The works were edited by Emil Sauer (a disciple of Liszt). In these "typical Brahms fingerings are Chopinized and ossia's are indicated to facilitate solving of technical problems which do not exist."

(P. 269) In the Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108, there is only one passage which indicates Brahms's recommended fingering, namely the First Movement, measures 248 - 249.

Example 7: First Movement, measures 248 - 249.

248

Modern editions that Hutcheson recommends are Schirmer's three volumes, edited by Mandyczewski, and also the unedited two-volume publication by the International Music Company. (Some available editions are listed on page 61 of this thesis.)

Kochevitsky, George. The Art of Piano Playing: a Scientific Approach. Illinois: Summy-Birchard Company, 1967.

In the foreword Sumner Goldenthal, a medical doctor, states that the scientific approach used by

reflexologists coincides with the views of the Russian and Pavlovian schools. The author claims that practising at the keyboard is really just practising the Central Nervous System. He applies science to the playing of works from different historical periods starting with the last quarter of the eighteenth century. He discusses the ways in which the styles of approach, the touch and pedalling have changed over the past century as an illustration of the different ways there are of achieving a certain quality of sound. Kochevitsky says that the mastery of an instrument depends on technique. Basically this is the correct use of the muscles and their control. His view seems to be a rather superficial way of looking at the interpretation of a work, since technique is not the only variable that makes one interpretation differ from another. The book does provide a clearly expressed unique point of view, although it is one that may not be acceptable to all pianists.

Merrick, Frank. Practising the Piano. London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1978.

Chapter 17, "Preparing of hand positions", contains advice on attempting wide skips in which Merrick recommends "flinging your hands on to the next chord

as if they had been hurled out of a catapult" (p. 77). Merrick suggests that the piano student "stop just short of the skip" (p. 78), in order to prepare the hand position for the chord. In the Sonata in D Minor the leaps in measures 155 - 178, Third Movement may be practised in this way.

Example 8: Third Movement, measures 155 - 156

The musical score for Example 8, Third Movement, measures 155-156, is presented in three staves. The top staff (Treble clef) is marked *tranquillo* and *p dolce*. The middle staff (Bass clef) is marked *p dolce* and *tranquillo*. The bottom staff (Pedal clef) is marked *p dolce* and *m.s.*. The score shows a sequence of notes with a large leap in the middle staff. Pedal markings 'Ped.' and asterisks are present below the bottom staff.

According to Merrick, pain may be part of 'athletic form', which is necessary for demanding works, and the pianist needs to build up stamina. He writes that the 'powers of endurance' increase with practise, but that if the pain does not lessen as daily practices increase then an alternate method of approach is required.

Moore, Gerald. Am I Too Loud? London: Hamish Hamilton, 1962.

Gerald Moore's light-hearted approach to his many interesting points of view, and ideas about accompanying can lead a student to new thoughts about the accompanist, and the art of chamber music. He reinforces the view held by Harrison, namely that the accompanist be continually self-sacrificing, when he says that "the accompanist must endeavour to get a fair idea of the functioning of the minds of the working partners since his art is, to a great extent, an unselfish one; his life is spent listening to and considering the other fellow. Your solo pianist, on the contrary, is the complete individual." (p. 209) According to Moore, the pianist who must play a subservient role in the performance and must be willing to adapt.

Moore, Gerald. Singer and accompanist. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1953.

Moore reminisces about his career, and the people he has worked with, for example, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Kathleen Ferrier and others. Although this book concerns the singer, many of the ideas are also applicable to instrumental works. The author suggests several alternatives to the accompanist in

rehearsal with a soloist. The book is not scientific, but a generalised approach and geared specifically to the accompanist. It is interesting to read something written from the accompanist's viewpoint as every good accompanist needs to be a skilled pianist, yet a good pianist is not necessarily a good accompanist. Moore discusses the personality of the soloist in a duo ensemble and the fact that the first rehearsal provides for an assessment of his or her partner's technique, standard of musicianship, and to some extent, personality - all of which have a bearing on the rapport between the performers, and on the performance itself. He states that the onus generally falls on the pianist to adapt to the soloist.

Newman, William S. The Pianist's Problems. Third expanded edition. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974.

The author examines piano study from its inception and he explains and supports his beliefs by including sketches and diagrams. The major part of the book is concerned with the difficulties which the pianist encounters, problems such as the correct use of the fingers and of the pedals. His

description of syncopated pedalling may be applied to Opus 108 for the changes of harmony as demonstrated below.

Example 9: First Movement, measures 44 - 45

The references to Brahms are very brief. Newman states that the three Sonatas for Piano and Violin are definitely each intended as a two-instrument work, and are not accompanied solo works.

Riefling, Reimar. Piano Pedalling. (Translated by Kathleen Dale), London: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Riefling states that Brahms seldom indicated pedalling, but relates that Brahms in his old age displayed 'some rather careless blurred pedalling'. (p.6) Although Opus 108 is not mentioned specifically, the author deals with pedalling in the

Ballade in G Minor and the Intermezzo in A, Opus 118, and these discussions are particularly applicable to the first and second movements of Opus 108. The closing section, 'The influence of the pedal on musical notation' draws the readers attention to the effect of the pedal on the music. Although the advanced student should be experienced in the correct use of the pedal, this short chapter may be of use to him. In any event he should always allow his ear to guide his use of the pedal.

Ripin, Edwin et al. Piano. The New Grove Musical Instruments Series. Ed. Stanley Sadie. London: MacMillan London Ltd., 1988.

The book is divided into four main chapters, each with sub-sections. In Chapter One, "History of the Piano", various contributors trace the origin of the piano through 1750 to the present. There are a number of illustrations showing the mechanism with/without escapement in both the upright and the grand piano which enables the student to understand the action more easily.

The second chapter, "Piano Playing", written by Robert Winter (sections 1 - 3) and Bradford Robinson (section 4), style and the different approaches of

the pianist to his or her craft in different style periods is discussed. Brahms's works frequently feature large leaps with sudden extensions and contractions, and the passing of the fifth finger over the thumb. This fingering is one of the few fingerings indicated by Brahms in the First movement, Opus 108, measures 248 - 249. (see example 7, on page 22) Instruments of the time had "markedly greater resistance than that of the present-day grands." (p 81) The Viennese pianos preferred by Brahms had lesser leverage available. He favoured cross rhythms and shifts in metre in his keyboard music, as in the finale of Opus 108.

Chapter 3 is more specifically about famous pianists. The pianists mentioned include Liszt, Leschetizsky, Rubinstein and the Slavonic school, Artur Schnabel and the German school and others. Robert Winter believes that the forms favoured by Brahms in the Paganini Variations, and the Variations on a Theme of Handel, Opus 24, "injected new life into a genre virtually moribund".(p 132) "He remains one of the few composers in the Western tradition for whom nostalgia for a bygone era provided a fresh and original impulse." (p 133)

'Piano music through the different ages' includes the age of virtuosity and ends with a few paragraphs on newer stylistic procedures, for example half-pedalling. The appendix with a glossary of terms, and index of piano makers is particularly useful to the pianist, whilst the chapter on more recent works and stylistic procedures may offer a few alternative views and approaches.

Sandor, Gyorgy. On Piano Playing. New York : Schirmer Books, 1981.

As the title implies, the author approaches technique in a basic way. The control of weight and use of muscles in the production of tone is discussed.

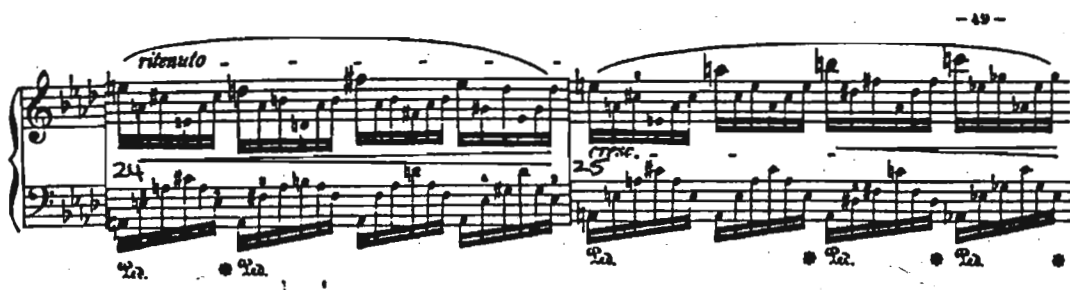
Sandor, himself a world-renowned pianist, explains touch, beginning with the action before the note is actually depressed on the keyboard. "It is correct to assume that a hard sound results from a hard equipment (or from fixed joints of the performer), while a soft, singing sound is produced by a soft mechanism (that is, resilient joints)." (p. 179) Sandor discusses what he considers to be the best way to obtain the kind of sound which does credit to

both the pianist, and the work to be played. The book is most useful not only in gaining new insight into tone production, but also in the consolidation of ideas for the pianist.

Silverman, Robert Joseph. "Jorge Bolet". Piano Quarterly. 34 (Spring 1986):133.

In this interview, the pianist Jorge Bolet says that many people seem to think that the goal of the pianist is to play the music of a composer as close to the way it is written as possible. However, he points out that Chopin, for example, after hearing Liszt in a performance of his Etude, Opus 25, No. 1, as in the following example, was enthralled when Liszt altered the crescendo for effect. It was, no doubt, Liszt's choice after careful study and understanding of his own interpretation of the score. Liszt was able to receive a critical appraisal of the work at first hand. Later editions of this piece have been published as per Liszt's reading.

Example 10: Chopin, Etude Opus 25, No. 1, measures
24 - 25

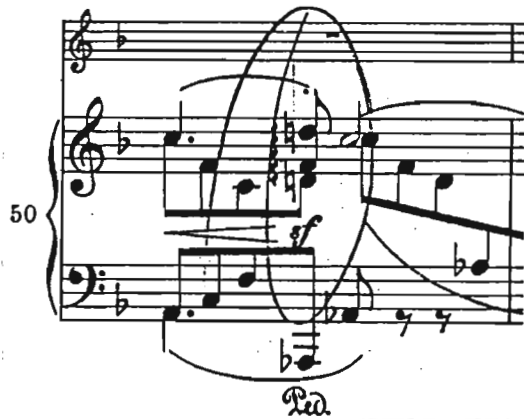


Breitkopf and Härtel's Complete works of Chopin.

The study of the text is of the utmost importance, for a performance is an interpretation based on the musical score. However sometimes the composer is undecided about the final work. In several instances Brahms revised editions of his work. The First Symphony in C Minor, Opus 68, exemplifies this, for he requested a revision three times on 23 November, 1877, December 1877, and on 19 December, 1878.¹ Brahms also indicated in a letter to Simrock that he was undecided about the rhythmic effect of measures 48 - 52 of the First Movement of Opus 108. This is discussed on page 47 of this thesis.

¹Johannes Brahms Briefwechsel X: Briefe an P. J. Simrock und Fritz Simrock ed. Max Kalbeck (Berlin 1917) quoted in Robert Pascall (ed.), Brahms (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 73.

Example 11: First Movement, measure 50.



The musician who has studied the composer and his compositional style extensively, is at liberty to give his own interpretation of a work.

Sumner, W. L. The Pianoforte. London: MacDonald, 1966.

The piano and its size and quality in Brahms's day is discussed. At that time the compass of the piano terminated at C, a minor third above the present lowest note, and did not have "the turgid thickness of sound which is evident in some modern instruments". (p. 174) The pedals are discussed, as are the case, the mechanism and the origin. Photographs showing the piano in various stages of development provide visual interest. Sumner believes that Brahms's early experiences with

Remenyi and Joachim were invaluable because he was able to achieve a perfect blend between the sounds created by the piano and violin, a blend which had hardly been attained previously. There is a brief comment on Brahms's work in general.

Taylor, Harold. The Pianist's Talent. New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., Inc., 1982.

Taylor lays the foundation of his book by enquiring into the nature of talent. He uses the work of F. Matthias Alexander and Raymond Thiberge to describe the kind of physical condition which the student should try to attain.

The author investigates the methods of Professor Thiberge, who, as a blind teacher researched playing technique largely through experiencing the physical reactions in pianists through the medium of touch. He was therefore not impeded by what he saw. His findings were passed on to his students, one of whom was Taylor.

The chapters on 'Expansion versus Contraction' and 'Co-ordination' may be useful to the student who encounters physical problems in the playing of the piano. "The real problem of piano technique,

therefore, lies not in breaking down the resistance of the keyboard, but in eliminating the causes of interference which lie within oneself." (p 39)

The work of F. Matthias Alexander was also largely concerned with the 'self', and an awareness of the condition within the body. Physical discomfort is "one manifestation of muscular tensions stemming from postural deficiency, of which the inevitable consequence is a reduction in one's capacity for co-ordination." (p 23) He realised a person only became aware of discomfort once it had already been established. He blamed bad posture and lack of co-ordination for the 'maldistribution of muscular tensions'. (p 23) The pianist may benefit from this book as the explanations are very sensible. The Opus 108 challenges muscular condition, and is not conducive to a state of 'relaxation' or controlled tension.

The book concludes with discussions on practising, repertoire, interpretation and performance. Taylor states that awareness and experience lead to successful interpretation.

Historical, General

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 6th edition. S.v. "Brahms," by Heinz Becker.

This article deals with Brahms, his life and music under different headings, for example, piano music and chamber music. Brahms's interest in earlier music is also discussed as he was intrigued with the music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The complete edition of Bach's music which began to appear in the 1850's was extremely important in Brahms's career. His intense study of these works and also the works of diLasso, Palestrina and Schütz profoundly influenced his writing. His many contrapuntal exercises, which he exchanged with Joachim for revision are evidence of his interest in the old masters. Brahms preferred to use the forms with which he was familiar, rather than to explore new idioms. The sonatas tend to be written in conventional forms, although the inner material is treated quite differently. The first movement of the Opus 108 is a case in point. Becker concludes the article with a list of Brahms's works and a bibliography.

Ewen, D. (editor) Complete Book of Classical Music.

Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.,
1965.

The fact that some writers consider Brahms a Romantic does not deter Ewen, who believes that Brahms tried to come to terms with the past. Brahms did not want to venture from the material with which he was familiar, but he also wanted to be true to his own creative possibilities.

Brahms was unable to ignore the work of composers who he admired and so assimilated all he could and worked on creating an idiom of his own. "He combined a partiality for traditional and absolute music with a heart and spirit that belonged to the Romantic years. He succeeded in creating a fusion between past formal procedures and the released emotions and exalted poetic speech of his own times. In Brahms, classicism and romanticism meet and become one." (p. 674)

The pro-Wagnerian faction promoted the 'art of the future', whilst Brahms seemed to live in the past. The widely differing views of these two composers influenced the musical world and created a split at the time. But Brahms remained loyal to his belief that he was a continuation in a line of composers, and consequently was merely carrying on a musical

tradition.

Ewen believes that the third and last Violin Sonata, Opus 108 is in D Minor because Brahms reserved this tonality for the most deeply felt and passionate of moods. He describes the feelings aroused in himself by the feverish unrest of the First Movement and the sensual, Gypsy-like violin section of the second movement, which uses the double stops, in the second movement. The dramatic chords of the Finale 's introduction lead to the pensive song in the violin part until the passion intensifies leading to an outburst at the close of the movement.

Grout, Donald, J. A History of Western Music. London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1962.

Grout has included an example of Themes and Motives from the Piano Quintet in F minor, Opus 34A (p.528). The pattern of motivic development highlighted by this example is similar to that followed in the Brahms Opus 108. In Frisch's book, (see page 54 of this thesis) this aspect is one of the developments to which he refers.

The overview of Brahms's chamber music gives other interesting ideas. In a paragraph on Sonatas with

single instrument and piano, Grout states that the Opus 108 is on a more Symphonic scale than the other two sonatas for piano and violin, Opus 78, and Opus 100.

Kirby, F. E. A Short History of Keyboard Music. New York: The Free Press, 1966.

In a brief comparison between Brahms and Liszt, Kirby discusses the differences between the two composers. Liszt was the flamboyant extrovert, whilst Brahms was a retiring, quiet personality. Although both shared an interest in Bach's music, their interests were developed in widely diverging ways. Brahms, for example, wrote a passacaglia for the last movement of his Fourth Symphony, and a Fugue for the Handel Variations. The main body of work written on Brahms deals with his piano sonatas, and many similarities exist between these and the Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108. For instance, the characteristic features of Brahms's piano style recur in not only the piano sonatas but also the D Minor Sonata. "Most common is Brahms' well-known density of texture through the constant use of full chords with many doublings." (p. 325) Kirby also discusses the rhythmic complexities, of which he believes the most common to be the hemiola, an

example of which may be seen in the last movement measures 142 - 171, from which measures 150 - 155 are taken for the example below.

Example 12: Last Movement, measures 150 - 155.

The image shows a musical score for three staves, numbered 150, 151, and 154. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The score is attributed to J. B. 37.

The entire chapter, "Liszt and Brahms and Their Age" is to be recommended because Brahms's basic compositional style in many of the works for piano corresponds with his style in the chamber work in question. Kirby supports his statements with relevant musical examples thus the chapter is useful as an aid to the understanding of the work.

Leichtentritt, Hugo. Music, History and Ideas.
Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press,
1964.

Leichtentritt investigates the differences between

the classical and romantic tendencies through studying the use of colour and sound in music. In the study he includes discussions on rhythm, which he associates with movement "with bodily activity, with gesture and elementary vitality.."(p. 219) The rhythms which Brahms used became a language, one which was pliable in the sense that it was absorbed fully into his musical thought. He expanded on his rhythmic ideas, using motives against the basic metre and grouping phrases irregularly for effect. The opening measures of the finale of Opus 108 demonstrate the activity via the "agitato" accompanying material. The theme has several suspended notes followed by a flurry of activity on the weaker beats.

Example 13: Fourth Movement, (a) measures 5 - 7,



(b) measures 84 - 86.

The image shows a musical score for measures 84-86. It consists of three staves: a treble clef staff at the top, a middle staff with a treble clef, and a bass clef staff at the bottom. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 7/7 time signature. The tempo marking 'Steady' is written in cursive across the middle staff. Measure numbers 84 and 86 are indicated at the beginning and end of the section respectively. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Suspensions and syncopations are used frequently, which causes stress to fall on the weak beats. The beats arranged diagonally between the hands in measures 238 - 244 (last movement), create a strong rhythmic feel in three separate lines. Brahms felt no real need to alter structures, but sought to integrate his ideas into these and to develop his motives and inner material more fully.

Rosentiel, Leonie (general editor). Schirmer History of Music. New York: Schirmer Books, 1982.

Performance is treated as the reconstruction of a work in an historically accurate style by this author. In chapter twenty-four "The Nature of Nineteenth-century Music", the opening melody from Opus 108, measures 1 - 24 is mentioned as an example of a long "unending melody" because of its use throughout the movement. Harmony and tonality, rhythm and structure are all discussed, but the

chapters are not signed individually.

Biographical

Geiringer, Karl. Brahms: His Life and Work. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1968.

The well-known author of this standard biography was privileged to gain access to over a thousand letters written to Brahms, and by him. He considered the information included in these letters sufficient in itself to justify the writing of another biography of the composer. The book is divided into three sections, namely: "His life", "His work", "The man and the artist." In the second section, an entire chapter is devoted to Brahms's chamber music. The book closes with a chapter on correspondence, much of which was written to Simrock, and Breitkopf and Härtel, the earliest publishers of Brahms's work. Other letters include those written to Joachim who Brahms met through Remenyi, a Hungarian political refugee, and violinist. Joachim became one of Brahms's closest friends, and taught Brahms much about the violin, and how to use it to maximum

advantage. A page from Brahms's Double Concerto for Violin and Violincello is reproduced on which pencil corrections by Joachim appear. It was through him that Brahms learnt how to separate a single line of music for the violin by using more than one string. In so doing, a different sound quality for each note may be created, which is indicated by the direction of the stems as shown below.

Example 14: First Movement, measures 84 - 85.

The image shows a musical score for measures 84 and 85. At the top, there is a handwritten note 'd. 76.' with a downward-pointing stem. Below this, the violin part is written on a single staff with stems pointing upwards. The tempo and dynamics are marked as 'molto p e sotto voce sempre'. The cello part is written on two staves (treble and bass clefs) with stems pointing downwards. The measure number '84' is written to the left of the cello part, and the dynamic 'pp' is written in the first measure of the cello part.

Joachim introduced Brahms to the Schumanns, who were to play a large role in his personal and musical development.

In chapter XII, the author sets the scene for the writing of the Opus 108 which took place in Thun and there are a few pictures showing Brahms near this village. The Sonata in D Minor is discussed as a whole on page 241, and there are comments on individual movements.

James, Burnett. Brahms: A Critical Study. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1972.

This book is neither purely biographical, nor a textbook concerning Brahms's works, but an attempt to understand Brahms, the man, as seen from a twentieth century viewpoint. The composer's relationship with the Schumanns and others, naturally form part of the book. The author disclaims any idea that the book was "intended as an existential biography" of Brahms, but rather looks at the composer from how history and occurrences of the time could have affected his life. There are various photographs of Brahms, and friends, and musical examples from his works of which some are discussed in the light of current events. The book's novel approach to Brahms's life-story warrants the attention of any pianist studying his works.

Latham, Peter. Brahms. London: J M Dent & Sons Ltd., 1948.

Peter Latham tells the story of Brahms's life and highlights his relationships with the Schumanns, Joachim, Liszt and Hans von Bulow (to whom Brahms

dedicated the Sonata in D Minor, op. 108), among others.

A section on his Three Violin Sonatas, Opus numbers 78, 100, and 108 includes the opinion that "Brahms has written nothing more gracious than these three sonatas" (p. 127). The author briefly discusses all four movements of Opus 108. Appendix A consists of an interesting calendar of his life in which important events are chronologically tabulated. Appendix B lists the complete catalogue of his works, whilst that of Appendix C sets out the names of important people Brahms knew in his lifetime.

Musgrave, Michael (editor). Brahms 2: Biographical, Documentary and Analytical studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

A collection of essays forms the basis of this book which is written by different writers. Michael Musgrave's chapter entitled "Brahms and England" relates that the Opus 108 was first introduced to that country by Agnes Zimmerman, a German pianist who had settled in England, and Ludwig Straus. Brahms's links with German Renaissance music are investigated by Virginia Hanock, whilst posthumous compositions and the editing of these is considered by George S. Bozarth. Among the editors discussed in this chapter is Mandyczewski, whose work is also

criticised in Hutcheson's book, The Literature of the Piano mentioned on page 21.

Pascall, Robert (editor). Brahms. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

This book is also a series of essays written by various authors and focussing on different topics. Michael Musgrave, for example, writes a biographical study and Pascall, a documentary, whilst others are analytical studies.

The essay entitled "Brahms and the Definitive Text" by Pascall cites examples from the Sonata in D Minor, opus 108, and discusses the work. The author states that all the works which Brahms had wanted published with the exception of opus 122 and the Violin Sonata in A Minor, were published in Brahms's lifetime, when Brahms himself was able to supervise the publication. Pascall holds the opinion that his essay is a challenge to the unequivocal acceptance of musical texts for Brahms's works. He believes that these are not definitely established. Illustrations showing emendations to texts, as in the example below, corrections of printers errors and so on, appear.

Example 15: First Movement, measures 48 - 52

(a) as printed by Simrock

(b) as altered in the personal copy.

The image displays a musical score for measures 48-52 of the first movement. It is presented in two systems, (a) and (b). System (a) is the original printed version, and system (b) shows alterations. The score is written for two staves, likely piano and cello/bass. The top staff of (a) is marked 'espress. f' and contains a complex melodic line with many slurs and ties. The bottom staff of (a) contains a bass line with some rests. System (b) shows a simplified bass line with fewer notes and rests, and some changes in the melodic line indicated by arrows pointing from the original notes in (a) to the altered notes in (b). The alterations in (b) appear to be a reduction in complexity and a change in the rhythmic and melodic contour of the original passage.

James Webster's essay "Brahms's Tragic Overture" refers to the First Movement of the opus 108, which he believes comes close to having a separate section in the development (over the dominant pedal point; First Movement: measures 84 - 129). "The cultural world of Brahms", by Michael Musgrave refers to friendships, literary interests, and the influence of Wagner among others.

Slonimsky, Nicholas. Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians. 7th edition. New York: Schirmer Books, A Division of MacMillan Inc., 1984.

In a comprehensive biography, Brahms is treated as a true classicist. His chamber music is said to possess symphonic qualities, so much so that Schoenberg was able to simply expand the sonorities, and enhance the instrumental tone colours of the piano quartet in order to arrange it for orchestra. A full list of Brahms's works, their dates of composition, and first performances follows the biographical data. The D Minor Sonata, Opus 108 was composed during 1886 - 1888 in Thun, and first performed in Budapest on 22 December, 1888.

Chamber Music

Becker, Warren and Gleason, Harold. Chamber music from Haydn to Bartok. Second edition. Indiana: Frangipani Press TIS Publications, 1980.

A short outline of Brahms's life and catalogue of his chamber music is followed by a resume in which the use of germ motives and harmony based on the devices of the period, namely seventh chords, triads and augmented sixths, are mentioned. Rhythmic devices

such as off beat accents, favourite rhythms, dactylic(-○○) and anapestic (○○-) rhythms are given attention. The Sonata in D Minor is very briefly mentioned in a section entitled the Mature period, 1865 - 1890.

Cobbett, Walter Wilson (editor). Cyclopedic survey of chamber music, with supplementary material edited by C. Mason. London: Oxford University Press, 1963.

This standard work for chamber music includes reflections of personal experiences with Brahms which the editor was privileged to have enjoyed. In later discussions, the editor was able to gauge Brahms's ideas for the performance of the D Minor Sonata from Joachim, the gentleman with whom Brahms introduced the work to the Viennese public. The work was initially performed in Budapest, on December 22, 1888, by Brahms and the Hungarian Jenő Hubay. Cobbett learnt that Brahms made a decided 'animato' at the first 'forte', measure 60, which implies that the tempo is broad and flowing at the start. Cobbett advises the violinist on the playing in the development section, and points out that the dominant pedal of the first movement is reproduced as the tonic pedal in the coda of the First movement, from measure 236 of the Sonata Opus 108.

Example 16: First Movement, measures 84 and 236

The image displays two musical excerpts. The left excerpt, labeled 'd:v', consists of three staves of music in D minor. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The middle and bottom staves have bass clefs and a key signature of one flat. The instruction 'molto legato e sott' is written below the middle staff. The right excerpt, labeled 'd:I', consists of three staves of music in D major. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The middle and bottom staves have bass clefs and a key signature of two sharps. The instruction 'sotto voce' is written above the top staff, and 'tranquillo' is written above the middle staff. Another 'sotto voce' instruction is written below the middle staff.

The slow movement is a cavatina (that is a single melody spaced over the entire movement without being partitioned). The third movement, without an enclosed middle section, ranges from F# minor to F major, keys which are very distant. The symphonic dimension of the powerful sonata-rondo has a grandly tragic climax states Cobbett. The discussions on how the instrumentalists should approach particularly tricky sections are most helpful.

Colles, Henry Cope. The Chamber Music of Brahms. London: Humphrey Millford for Oxford University Press, 1933.

The book consists of programme notes written for a series of performances given at the centenary concerts held in celebration of Brahms's birth. The notes were later revised and a few musical quotations added. All of this was bound into a

volume which covers the composer's work in chronological order. A short introductory paragraph on Opus 108 sketches the historical background of the work and each movement is discussed individually (p. 53). The analyses cover the sociology of chamber music, including its emotional effect on people. Nationalistic chamber music is covered as well as the influences on Brahms of Beethoven and Schumann, for example. There are a few notated examples of themes.

Drinker, Henry Sandwith. The Chamber Music of Johannes Brahms. Philadelphia: Elkan-Vogel, 1932.

Drinker features the programme notes which he wrote for performances of all Brahms's chamber works in 1933 in Philadelphia. Additional sections include historical data on the man, his works, non-technical summaries of emotional events of the movements, rhythmic peculiarities and style.

Ferguson, Donald. Image and Structure in Chamber Music. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1964.

Ferguson's book provides the reader with a fairly broad spectrum of chamber music as written by important composers in that milieu.

Ferguson uses the word 'Image' to encompass mental attitude and experiences which are created by music, and 'Structure' to explain the "parts of speech" used by composers to build their works. Ferguson considers the influence of chamber music on people and discusses the relation of expression to design, which in his opinion is equivalent to the relation between Romanticism and Classicism.

He sketches Brahms's musical education and gives a background for each of the chamber works. The duet sonata, Opus 108 was started together with the Opus 100, Violin Sonata in A Major in Thun, Switzerland in 1886, but only finished two years later. "It is in a very different vein - hardly tragic, perhaps pessimistic, but with much warmth beneath its austere surface." (p 179) His description of the sonata deals with his conception of image. For example, in broadly discussing the structure, he refers to the responses aroused in the listener. In the first movement, Ferguson states "The impression is grim but compelling, and the sudden release of energy (24) comes as no surprize." (p 179) The 'analysis' is original and enlightening, providing a unique view of the sonata as a whole. The performer, after all, communicates his own vision of the work to the listener. Thus sharing the experience with a colleague can provide a deeper

insight and understanding of the work, and Ferguson's description constitutes such a sharing of experience.

Foss, Hubert. "The instrumental music of Frederick Delius" in Tempo 26 (Winter 1952 - 1953), pp. 30 - 37.

Delius is compared to Brahms, and the three sonatas for piano and violin are used as a starting point. Foss believes that the content of Brahms's work is more interesting with regard to rhythm particularly, but that while Brahms uses notes at times in order to lengthen his work, Delius does not succumb to this temptation.

Frisch, Walter. Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

The author, a former pupil of Schönberg, bases his analyses on Schönberg's concept of 'developing variation', a technique by which a piece grows out of the constant reshaping of a theme or melody. Frisch states that the analyses are "frustratingly brief, normally covering only a few bars of music: they provide flashes of insight rather than sustained illumination"(p. xiii). He considers the developing

variation to be one of Brahms's major compositional techniques and discusses Opus 108 briefly along with the Violin Sonata in A, opus 100, and the Piano Trio in C Minor, Opus 101, in a chapter entitled "The Late Style, 1886 - 1896". The opening theme in the third movement of Opus 108 is developed fully to become the entire movement. In Frisch's view, each of Brahms's Late chamber works "...probes in its own way ... flexible procedures of developing variation." (p. 147) The opening theme of the first movement appears in various forms, and is used in the accompanying material too.

Fry, J. "Brahms' conception of the Scherzo in Chamber Music", in The Musical Times lxxxiv (1943), pp. 105 - 107.

The article covers the scherzo, its mood and tempo. The Opus 108 is the only one of the three violin sonatas which has four movements and which includes a scherzo. Brahms distinguished between two types of Scherzos, and Fry discusses these in relation to Brahms's recommendations. He advised against too scherzando an effect in the Opus 108, which is marked 'sentimento'. Brahms wanted a lightness, in contrast with the heavier more vigorous type needed for the two sextets, Opus 18 and Opus 36, and the piano chamber music, Opus 34.

Hinson, Maurice. The Piano in Chamber Ensemble: An Annotated Guide. Great Britain: Harvester Press Ltd. 1978.

All the chamber works by Brahms for the piano with other instruments are listed. Hinson makes the statement that in the titles of sonatas for piano and violin, the term "piano" is placed before "violin" by Brahms himself. Among the features he discusses from the Opus 108, are the unusual rhythmic features found in the last movement, and the pedal point used over the dominant in development section of the first movement.

Newman, William S. The Sonata Since Beethoven. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1969.

Brahms's Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108, the only one of the three sonatas for piano and violin which has four movements, is also the only one which bears a dedication. It is dedicated to Hans von Bulow who had become one of the composer's closest friends, and who was a musician and conductor in his own right. Newman points out that the Opus 108 took two years to complete, "probably because it raised weightier creative problems."(p 344) Newman notes that Elizabeth von Herzogenberg suggested the

pizzicato for the double stops of the violin part in the third movement, measures 119 - 133, which Brahms did follow. Newman discusses comments by Clara Schumann and Elizabeth von Herzogenberg which indicate that Brahms was not a conceited man and that he was quite open to constructive criticism, to the point that he utilised information which he thought would benefit his work.

Robertson, Alec (editor). Chamber Music. London: Whitefriars Press Ltd., Penguin Books, 1970.

A collection of essays by different authors are sub-divided into discussions on the works of specific composers (Haydn through Brahms to Bartók), duet sonatas without/with winds after 1700, and national schools of chamber music. The book is aimed at a readership which understands basic music definitions. The chapter written by Denis Stevens includes references to Opus 108, while a separate chapter on Brahms covers his chamber music in general. Brief outlines are given of five works and parallels and contrasts are drawn between Brahms and Schubert, as well as Brahms and Beethoven.

Samson, Jim. Music in Transition. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1977.

In this book concerning music of the early twentieth century, Samson states that Brahms's development of thematicism influenced Schönberg. An example of this in Opus 108 is the tendency for the accompanying voices to share both thematic and harmonic functions, as may be seen from the First Movement, measures 197 - 198.

Example 17: First Movement, measures 197 - 198.



Samson traces the influence of Brahms on composers such as Schönberg, Berg, Szymanowski and Reger, and in emphasizing Brahms's innovations, he encourages one to look at Brahms in a different light. Most books discuss Brahms's work in the context of Classicism/Romanticism but do not emphasize him as an innovative composer. However, Samson states that attitudes toward thematicism changed as a result of Brahms's work. According to Samson, his melodies contain forms of later motivic development, as may be seen in the chapters on the

above-mentioned composers. He further developed the technique which is found in much of Mozart's work, namely, irregular phrase lengths, rhythmic contraction and expansion of motives against the basic metre.

Example 18: Third Movement, measures 94 - 97

The image shows a musical score for three staves, likely a piano trio. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle in treble clef, and the bottom in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is marked with measure numbers 94, 94, and 94. It features complex phrasing with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings such as *sf* (sforzando) and *p* (piano). There are also triplets indicated by the number '3' over groups of notes.

Brahms's rhythmic language became more pliable as his experience of writing increased, until it was fully absorbed into his musical thought.

Scott, Cyril. "Chamber Music: its Past and Future" in The Musical Quarterly, VII (1921), pp. 8 - 19.

Scott's discussion of true chamber music is amusing and light-hearted. He does not discuss the D Minor sonata in particular, but rather chamber music in general. His views are interesting, and enlightening as he adds humour to a genre which is generally regarded very seriously. Selected

composers are discussed, but he tends to favour the Russian composers. Scott concludes the essay with a statement declaring that Ravel is the best composer!

Ulrich, Homer. Chamber Music, second edition. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1948.

The book has a number of chapters which cover the background to chamber music before Haydn. The first seven chapters introduce principal music events and works in the two centuries before 1750. They are followed by a discussion of the important chamber music literature by major contributors since 1750. Brahms was influenced by the early composers, so a study of the music of this period may be an aid to the understanding of his compositional style.

In a chapter headed "Brahms and the Decline of Romanticism", the composer's life is outlined, as well as the lives of Franck, Saint-Saens and the Russian composers. Then his chamber music is discussed. The seven sonatas for piano and one instrument are compared and discussed together, and a separate section covers style characteristics. The Sonata Opus 108 in D minor is mentioned several times in comparison with the other works.

Editions

Breitkopf and Härtel (ed.), Johannes Brahms, Sämtliche Werke Neuauflage (new edition). Wiesbaden, 1966.

Edwards, J. W., (ed.) The Complete Works of Johannes Brahms. Ann Arbor, 1949.

Hiekel, Hans Otto (ed.), Brahms, Sonaten für Klavier und Violine. Munchen-Duisburg: G. Henle Verlag. n.d.

Mandyczewski, Eusebius (ed.), Sämtliche Werke, Johannes Brahms. Leipzig: Breitkopf und Hartel, 1926 - 1927.

Schnabel, Arthur, and Flesch, Carl (ed.), Johannes Brahms, Sonaten für Klavier und Violine. Edition Peters, Frankfurt, London, New York. n.d.

Recordings and Reviews

1. Brahms: Three Violin Sonatas, Trio for horn, violin and piano. Stoika Milanova (violin), Dora Milanova (piano), Vladimir Grigorov (horn), Harmonica Mundi.

Homfray's review in the journal is extremely favourable. He declares "There are endless highlights on these remarkable records and no low points...matchless playing of matchless music." (p. 68)

Records and Recordings 23 (August 1980), 11:68.

2. Brahms: Three Sonatas for Violin and Piano. Jenny Abel (Violin), and Leonard Hokanson (Piano), Harmonica Mundi.

Homfray finds this recording most disappointing. The performers' use of rubato "is so overdone as to become a parody of musicality" (p. 83), and Homfray is of the opinion that it is inconceivable that the players have given of their best.

Records and Recordings 23 (May 1980), 8:83.

3. Brahms: Violin Sonatas. Pinchas Zukerman (violin),

and Daniel Barenb hm (piano). Two LP format, and Compact Disc.

Chissell declares that the sound is good on this recording, with excellent balance between the violin and the piano. The players are experienced and emphasize the relaxed, lyrical Brahms. The tempos favoured are leisurely but Chissell feels that there is a certain lack of intensity in the characterisation and that the music needs a stronger, more continuously sustained sense of direction. "I'm bound to add that of the two artists, it is always Barenbohm who comes across as the more potently and personally involved Brahmsian". (p. 401)
Gramophone 64 (September 1986):760.

4. Brahms: Violin Sonatas. Henryk Szeryng (violin), and Arthur Rubinstein (piano), RCA Victor.

In January 1963, Roger Fiske declared this recording as the finest available although he found the sonatas too closely balanced. The sound was obviously tuned to the extent that some of the spontaneity and warmth is lost. Any normal body movement by the violinist which could change the tone slightly, is compensated for by the sound engineer. Robert Layton believes, though, that the more recent recording

by Josef Suk and Julius Katchen is more truthful in timbre.

Robert Layton, Gramophone 52 (October 1974):617.

5. Brahms: The Chamber Music, Complete edition. Deutsche Grammophon. Opus 108 performed by Christian Ferras (violin) and Pierre Barbizet (piano).
Heinitz reviews the collection as a whole and believes that all the performances are first class. The edition is highly recommended.
Records and Recordings 18 (August 1975), 11:46.
6. Brahms: Violin Sonata Number Three, and Grieg Violin Sonata Number Three in C Minor, Opus 45. Vanya Milanova (violin): Einar Henning Smetye (piano). Simax/ Gamut PS 1015, 1981.
7. Brahms: Violin Sonatas No. 1 in G Major, Opus 78, No. 2 in A Major, Opus 10, No. Three in D minor Opus 108. Itzhak Perlman (violin) Vladimir Ashkenazy (pianoforte). EMI Compact Disc.
Methuen-Campbell is most complimentary to Perlman, but does not consider Ashkenazy's

playing to be of the best. He also says that Perlman is placed too close to the microphone, and the balance therefore, is not as desirable as it could be. "Both artists play with a depth of identification with the idiom that makes the performances both distinctive and authoritative." (p. 1144)

Gramophone 64 (February, 1987):765.

8. Brahms: Violin Sonatas, Numbers One, Two and Three. Nell Gotkovsky (Violin), Ivar Gotkovsky (Piano). Pyramid/Impetus Compact Disc.

This compact disc is reviewed by James Methuen-Campbell, but does not receive a favourable report, especially with regard to the pianist's performance. The sound is not as good as that of the violin, and he therefore recommends the disc to those who prefer the violin to the piano.

Gramophone 64 (April 1987):767.

9. Brahms: Violin Sonatas. Ruben Varga (violin) and George Bennette (piano), Musical Heritage Society.

10. Brahms: Violin Sonatas. Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano).

Thomas Heinitz states that Stern plays strongly as opposed to the playing of Zakin, who though musicianly and fluent, does not project the music strongly enough. "These sonatas really demand equal partners." (p 78)

Records and Recordings 20 (December 1976), 3:78.

11. Brahms: Violin Sonatas, Numbers One, Two, Three. Josef Suk (violin) and Julius Katchen (Piano), Decca Records.

This recording is strongly recommended by Robert Layton, as mentioned in review 4.

12. Brahms: Violin Sonatas. David Oistrach (violin), Frieda Bauer (piano), Sonata One. David Oistrach (violin) and Svjatoslav Richter (piano), Sonatas Two and Three.

These recordings were made at a public recital given in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire on 28 December, 1968. There is audience noise, and a spontaneous performance. Markson endorses the recording as he feels that a studio recording can inhibit the musician. Technical perfection may be achieved with

editing, and the balance may be electronically controlled, but he believes that a performer wants to communicate, and is deprived of this in a studio environment.

Records and Recordings 14 (May 1971), 8:164.

CHAPTER 2

THE PIANIST AND THE BRAHMS SONATA IN D MINOR, OPUS 108

Apart from the difficulties which may be encountered, considered and alleviated by studying the bibliography in the previous chapter, this author's technique was challenged in several sections of the Sonata in D Minor. The following suggestions are made as a result of the experience gained in mastering these sections in the hope that they will be of use to a student of the work.

Some General Factors for Consideration

Illustrative Tape

The following discussion makes reference to the accompanying tape recording on which the examples are played by the author. For ease of reference, the following list of the taped examples is provided:

Example A: First Movement, measures 7 - 8.

Example B: First Movement, measures 38 - 40.

Example C: Second Movement, measures 37 - 38.

Example D: Third Movement, measures 1 - 3, and 14 - 16.

Example E: Third Movement, measures 97 - 98.

Example F: Fourth Movement, measures 37 - 54.

Example G: First Movement, measures 30 - 31.

Example H: First Movement, measures 30 - 31.

Example I: First Movement, measures 124 - 127.

Relaxation

When playing the piano, the pianist tries to achieve as much of a state of relaxation as is possible. In the Sonata, Opus 108, this is challenged, for the work demands a fair degree of power. The pianist must be aware of this, or else the problem of stiff wrists and arms will become acute by the onset of the finale, which is a most exacting movement to perform.

Broken chords

Difficult broken chord passages may be converted to block chords before attempting to play the notes individually and up to tempo. Fingering may be arranged according to that used in the chord.

Fingering

In the following text, several examples demonstrating fingerings used in passages have been provided as a guide. Although the suggested fingerings may be selected it is important to decide on particular

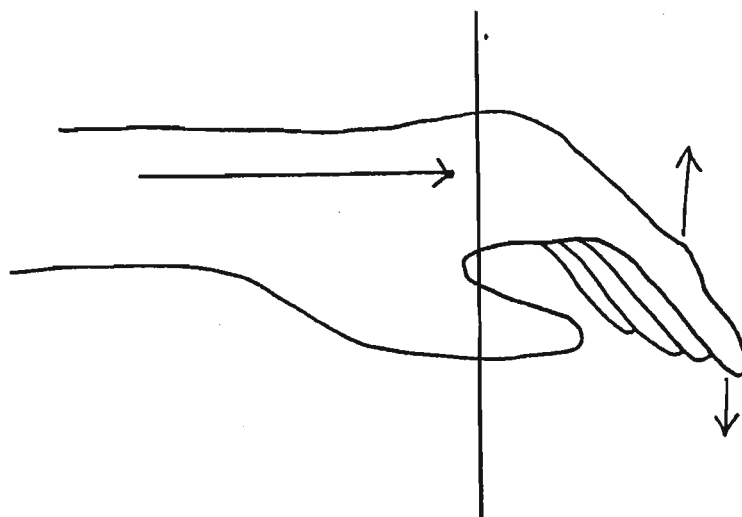
fingerings and to use them consistently, because memory is important to fingering.

Specific movements

First Movement: Allegro

The opening 'sotto voce' section requires control in order to achieve a very even, unaccented line. It is necessary for the ear to be particularly critical when assessing the sound produced. The aim in this instance is to achieve a legato line, therefore the hand should be kept with the fingertips close to the key. In this way uneven rhythm and unwanted accents can be avoided. The action of the finger depressing the note from a shorter height will reduce the force of the striking hammer on the string. The fingers are thus most active in creating the sound.

Figure One



If the pedal is used it need be only half pedalling. At measure five, because both fifth and first fingers are occupied, the fourth and fifth fingers are interchanged to play legato octaves. Some pedal will be necessary.

Example 19: First Movement, measure 5.



The focus that Brahms directs in measure nine (and which he also uses again a number of times) is a 'preview' of the violin's falling motive within the same bar. Here he uses not only the crescendo marking, but also the higher pitched notes to centre on this characteristic. In attempting to achieve a smooth line, the hands must be very controlled for this leap covers the interval of a ninth, from a white to a black key. The musical idea guides the direction of the notes.

Example 20: First Movement, measure 9.



Up to this point the wrists have been held quiet, but relaxed. Resilient wrist movement should be more pronounced at measures 11 to 12 where the portamento staccato chords naturally shorten the duration of the notes. The flexible wrists facilitate a better quality tone and act as natural shock-absorbers. When used correctly, they decrease the possibility of creating harsh tones and in these measures can be used to bring about the portamento staccato quite comfortably. The pace of the music, up to the point of measure 24 has been somewhat slow-moving within the 'Allegro', but a change of mood now occurs. The opening theme is repeated by the piano with the staccato being introduced thus changing the mood from from a more lethargic tendency to a more vibrant tone. (Refer to example A on cassette) The rolled chord of the left hand in measure 27 disturbs the even momentum of a four beat feel to the bar. The simultaneous arrival of both hands on the second octave must be strictly monitored.

The leaps of sixths and fifths can easily be converted to block chords as suggested previously, and also practised with demarcated notes as in Example B on cassette, before attempting the more difficult broken chord descent.

Example 21: First movement, measures 38 - 39

The musical score for Example 21 consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line with slurs and fingerings: 2, 4, 1, 5, 2, 4, 5, 2, 3, 1. The bass clef staff contains a broken chord descent with slurs and fingerings: 1, 4, 2, 6, 1, 4, 2, 5, 2, 5, 5, 1, 2. To the right of the main score, a separate diagram for measure 38 shows a block chord with fingerings: 4, 3, 2, 1, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

The connecting line of the legato octaves of measures 44 etc., can be maintained so long as a finger remains on one of the keys. The second and third fingers are simplest to use although the fourth finger may also be applied at measure 45 as indicated.

Example 22: First Movement, measures 44 - 46.

The musical score for Example 22 consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line with slurs and fingerings: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. The bass clef staff contains a broken chord descent with slurs and fingerings: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

From measure 48, the piano introduces the lyrical second subject. The pianist will find it an added bonus to sing in accompaniment to the piano part, because when the voice is involved, the pianist is obliged to 'breathe'. This helps to create a cantabile line. Although the piano is not capable of producing as beautiful a sustained tone as the violin, it is given the opportunity to demonstrate its potential for legato tone.

From measures 74 to the end of the exposition, it is helpful to divide the work more fully between both hands. In the example below, suggested fingering is indicated. The first fingers should be well controlled for the flow to be effective, for, as stated by Cooper in Style in Piano Playing which is referred to on page 9, it is difficult to reconcile the sound of the struck string with that of the stretched string of the violin. This is an important factor to bear in mind because a sudden unwanted accented note will detract from the line.

Example 23: First movement, measure 74 - 75.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for measures 74 and 75. It consists of three staves: a top staff in treble clef, a middle staff in bass clef, and a bottom staff in bass clef. The music is in a minor key, indicated by a flat sign on the key signature. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs. Handwritten annotations in black ink provide suggested fingering for the notes. In the bottom staff, there are two sets of fingering diagrams: one for measure 74 showing a sequence of notes with fingerings (3), 2, 1, and another for measure 75 showing fingerings 3, 2, 1. The number '74' is written below the first diagram. The dynamic marking 'p' (piano) is present in both the top and middle staves. The text 'RH' and 'LH' are written near the right and left hands respectively in the middle staff.

From measure 248 to 253, the right hand plays intervals of sixths with occasional fifths. The flexible wrist is very important in this section and practice at a table ensures that the muscular activity is rehearsed. As it is not an easy part to play cleanly, it should initially be practised slowly - perhaps even after it has been mastered. This passage is the only one in which Brahms's recommended fingering appears.

Example 24: First movement, measures 248 - 249

The image shows a musical score for measures 248 and 249. The right hand part consists of two staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The left hand part consists of two staves, both with bass clefs and a key signature of one flat. The score includes fingerings for the right hand: 5 4 2 4 and 5 4 2 1. The left hand part shows a steady bass line with notes on the first and second staves.

The second finger is used as a pivotal point to ensure a legato line.

Second movement: Adagio

It is in the slow movement that the true technical ability of the pianist is tested because the ear is allowed more time to measure and deliberate on the importance of the tone. The quicker movements require

technical skill and flexibility, but because of the tempo the odd unmeasured tone is lost on the ear.

In the piano, unlike the violin, any variation in the kind of touch changes the line, and once the note has been struck, the sound cannot be altered. The violinist can maintain a legato line without a problem as long as the bow and string remain in contact. This sustained line is the despair and envy of many a pianist!

The left hand in measures 37 - 38 continues the pattern of fourths which was introduced at the start of the movement. There needs to be a substitution of the fifth finger for the thumb, as indicated in Example 25, in order to retain the legato bass line below the staccato triplets, as demonstrated on cassette, example C.

Example 25: Second Movement, measures 37 - 38.

Skill is required in the second movement, measures 57 -

58 to synchronise with the violinist who has triplets phrased in groups of fours to play. This section may initially cause a problem if the pianist is not suitably prepared.

Example 26: Second movement, measures 57 - 58.

(71) 15

In the review, *Three Recordings: A Comparison*, on page 87, it is noted that that the pianist in the Oistrach/Richter ensemble experiences difficulty in keeping the line flowing onwards beneath the violinist's melody.

The arpeggio section from measures 59 - 61 requires nimble work by the thumb. By initially demarcating certain notes at which to concentrate attention the correct execution of the intervening notes is facilitated.

Example 27: Second Movement, measures 59 - 61

The image shows a musical score for measures 59-61 of the second movement. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a melodic line with a long slur over measures 59 and 60, and a 'dim.' marking at the end of measure 61. The middle and bottom staves are for the piano, with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The piano part features octaves in the right hand and chords in the left hand. Fingering numbers are written above the piano part: '5 4 2 1' above the first octave, '1 2 4 5' above the second, and '2 4 1 2 4 2 1 3' above the third. A dynamic marking 'f' is present at the beginning of measure 59.

Third Movement: Un poco presto e con sentimento

This movement requires a delicate feeling throughout. According to Fry's article discussed on page 55 of this thesis, Brahms wanted a light scherzo, but not a 'playful' type.

A careful study of the opening octaves of the third movement will reveal a distinction between the different types of octaves notated. The first two of measure one are identical except that the first beat naturally receives a stronger emphasis. The following three octaves indicate a slight accent on the first octave. The fact that the hands share these octaves also means that the sound produced is slightly different from the slurred octaves of measures 14 - 16 for instance because of the increase of weight. This may be heard in Example D of the Appendix.

Example 28: Third Movement, measures 1 - 3; 14 - 16.

Un poco presto e con sentimento



In measures 97 - 98, the left hand may be used along with the pedal to keep the differing intervals even and clean. This is demonstrated in Example E, and the fingering shown below.

Example 29: Third Movement, measures 97 - 98.



The tranquillo coda section of the movement, relies heavily on a precise sense of timing. It is advisable for the pianist to mentally play the first semi-quaver with the violinist in order to synchronise. A possible

solution to the technical problems encountered here is mentioned in Practising the Piano, discussed on page 23.

Example 30: Third Movement, measures 155 - 156.

The image shows a musical score for Example 30, measures 155-156. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of three staves: Treble, Alto, and Bass. The tempo is 'tranquillo' and the dynamics are 'p dolce'. The score shows a complex passage with many beamed notes and slurs. Measure 155 is marked with '155' and 'p dolce'. Measure 156 is marked with 'm. s.'. Below the staves, there are four asterisks and the word 'Ped.' under the first and third asterisks.

This section needs careful, slow practice and a keen sense of preparation in order to reach the notes which are leapt upon as the hands cross over. As mentioned earlier, it often helps to study the music away from the piano, even once the notes have been practised. It is also useful to reach the high note and not actually play it, but rather to 'place' the note. This may be done mentally, too in which case the note is anticipated in the mind's eye and ear before it is executed at the keyboard. These exercises help to establish extra control. The weaving of the two lines is an interesting feature of the coda. Brahms duplicates the prominent notes of the violin part in the piano, and the change occurs gradually as an increasing number of notes are

added.

Example 31: Third Movement, measures 163 - 164.

The musical score for Example 31, Third Movement, measures 163-164, is presented in three staves. The top staff is in Treble clef, the middle in Alto clef, and the bottom in Bass clef. The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with slurs and accents. A fermata is placed over the final note of the Treble staff. Pedal markings are indicated at the bottom of the Bass staff: 'Ped.' followed by an asterisk, then 'Ped.' followed by an asterisk, then 'Ped.' followed by an asterisk, and finally an asterisk. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings like 'm. s.' and accents.

Fourth Movement: Presto Agitato

In the Finale, it is particularly important to use the full playing apparatus (shoulder, forearm, wrist) in a controlled manner without obstructing one's energy. The pianist must concentrate on relaxing the arms, and on keeping the elbows loose, the arm should feel 'light'. This author prefers a heavier touch which adds to the under-current of tension in this movement.

Brahms makes use of the tempo, 'presto agitato' to add to the constant build up of tension. The clever use of rests adds to the tension as they are not generally used to bring respite in this finale. The listener anticipates a climax and therefore is in suspense, which is increased by the addition of an unexpected rest. The

stormy introductory measures come to an abrupt stop at measure 4 allowing the audience and performers to gather their breath before Brahms starts the 'passionato' from measure 5.

The warm espressivo from measure 39 is created by the piano part. The depth of expression required for the chorale type melody may be achieved with weight which is created by using a relaxed hand. Imagery which may be used is that of an octopus moving sideways across the keyboard. The wrist supports the hand but is considered a heavy partner. The smooth legato effect may be created by changing fingers on the notes as indicated.

Example 32: Fourth Movement, measures 47 - 48

The image shows two measures of music, 47 and 48. Measure 47 features a piano part in the bass clef and a violin part in the treble clef. The piano part has a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) followed by a quarter note (C5), with fingerings 3, 2, 7, 3, 2, 1 indicated. The violin part has a half note (G4) followed by a dotted half note (A4), with a fingering of 5 indicated. Measure 48 features a piano part in the bass clef and a violin part in the treble clef. The piano part has a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) followed by a quarter note (C5), with fingerings 4, 2, 4, 3, 1 indicated. The violin part has a half note (G4) followed by a dotted half note (A4), with a fingering of 4 indicated.

In measure 73, after keeping strictly to a two-beat bar, the piano part announces the music beginning on a weak beat. It is advisable to avoid accentuating the octaves by feeling the stronger beats on the first and fourth quaver of the bar to maintain the correct rhythmic

balance.

The movement toward the climax of the phrase, starting at measures 108 - 113, 189 - 193, 252 - 256, should be practised slowly. The interspersed octaves require a ready stretch and then relaxation to the climax. The downward line may be fingered according to the block chords as suggested previously. Practice, with accents on various notes can prove most beneficial. The accent is regarded as the point of arrival and of rest and relaxation before gathering the energy to move forward once more.

Example 33: Fourth Movement, measures 75 - 76

The leaps of tenths in the left hand from measure 85 demand a large extension of the hand which will require slow practice and study away from the keyboard. Non-legato is recommended for the leap in combination with the pedal.

The expressive section from measure 134 relies on a keen sense of timing from the pianist. A four-beat bar is suggested by the violin at first until syncopated beats interrupt the meter from measure 140. The violin, the treble and bass of the piano part each have a different rhythmic pattern which becomes increasingly difficult as the passage continues. The bass predominates from measure 150.

Example 34: Fourth Movement, measures 150- 154.



The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is the violin part, the middle staff is the piano treble part, and the bottom staff is the piano bass part. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. A circled '150' is at the beginning of the bass staff. An asterisk is placed below the first measure of the bass staff. The score is labeled 'J. B. 37' at the bottom.

Brahms utilises the left hand to enrich and deepen the tone of this section which leads into the difficult passage starting at measure 176.

Example 35: Fourth Movement, measures 171 - 174

Musical score for Example 35, measures 171-174. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Bass, and Cello/Double Bass. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music features complex textures with multiple voices in each hand. Dynamic markings include *ff* (fortissimo) and *f* (forte). The number 174 is written at the end of the third staff.

The wrists need to be very flexible, and the pianist should guard against the tightening of the muscles of the fore and upper arms, particularly when the single line is doubled in measures 187 - 188.

Example 36: Fourth Movement, measures 187 - 188

Musical score for Example 36, measures 187-188. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Bass, and Cello/Double Bass. The key signature has two sharps (F-sharp and C-sharp). The music features complex textures with multiple voices in each hand. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present. The number 188 is written at the end of the third staff.

A rotation movement would seem to offer the best solution for the octave leaps from measure 202, as this enables the pianist to build the crescendo with the left hand.

Example 37: Fourth Movement, measures 204 - 206.

The image shows a musical score for three staves, likely piano, violin, and cello. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle in treble clef, and the bottom in bass clef. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes with various articulations like slurs and accents. A dynamic marking 'f' is present in the middle staff. The number '206' is written at the end of the third staff.

The rests just before the final 'a tempo', in measures 330 - 331 are made more effective by the slightest delay by the pianist. The loss of momentum is recaptured in the acceleration which occurs as the movement draws to a close.

Three Recordings: A Comparison.

The author has studied the following three recordings, two of which are reviewed on pages 64 and 66, and has attempted a critical appraisal. Only the pianist's name will be used in references to the recordings.

George Bennette (piano) and Ruben Varga (violin)

Julius Katchen (piano) and Josef Suk (violin)

Svjatoslav Richter (piano) and David Oistrach (violin)

The recording by Katchen is the only one taped before an audience. This influences the performance, as mistakes cannot be corrected and the audience also has an effect on the artist. In the performances of Bennette and Richter, the sound engineer is able to set the balance and re-record until the desired effect is achieved. As a result, the Richter performance is very clear. However, one is able to judge the blend as it has been achieved by the engineer. In the case of Bennette's recording, some of the original sound is retained. For example, the distinctive sound of the violinist's bow as it touches the string is heard. This adds to the feeling of spontaneity in the performance. This recording has not been balanced to the extent that the Katchen recording has, as may be heard in the passage of First Movement, measures 74 - 81 in which Bennette's reply to the violin part is much softer than Katchen's. The first two measures from this passage are included below.

Example 38: First Movement, measures 74 - 75.

The image shows a musical score for measures 74 and 75. It consists of three staves: a treble clef staff at the top, a bass clef staff in the middle, and a grand staff (bass clef) at the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. There are several handwritten annotations: a large 'R' with a flourish in the treble staff of measure 74; a '7' in the middle staff of measure 74; a '12' in the grand staff of measure 74; and various fingerings like '3 2 1' and '1 3 2' written below the grand staff in both measures. The number '74' is written at the beginning of the first staff, and '75' is written at the end of the third staff.

Suk's intake of breath in the finale is cleverly not deleted by the sound engineer, and adds impetus to the strength of the movement. It remains a personal preference as to which type of recording the listener prefers. All three ensembles are good in the opinion of this author, but there are a few differences which the student of this work might choose to consider as an option for his or her own interpretation.

Bennette's touch on the whole tends to be heavier than that used by the other two ensembles, and his playing of the opening measures presents the crotchets in very measured, fairly heavy tones, in contrast with the quieter 'sotto voce' as presented by the other two ensembles. The choice of tempo differs in each of the interpretations, with the Richter ensemble preferring a quicker tempo.

The effective use of the bass notes in measures 18 - 20 of the First Movement give a rich contrast to the violin part as played by both Richter and Katchen, whilst the decrescendo as offered by Bennette in measures 21 - 24 creates a prelude to the re-entry of the opening in the faster tempo from measure 24.

The Bennette ensemble tends to focus attention on each new musical development by retarding the end of each phrase. For example, the opening four measures are balanced by the next four, which Bennette points out to the listener. Although a certain amount of rubato is within the boundaries of the period, this author finds these clearly defined statements distracting, even though the understanding of the work may be simplified for a listener who is unfamiliar with the work. However, little is left to the listener's imagination.

The effect achieved by Bennette, who depresses the pedal with the lowest A of measures 30 - 33, First Movement, is mellower than that created by the detached notes as presented by the other two recordings. Both alternatives are played by this author on cassette Example G and H respectively.

Example 39: First Movement, measures 30 - 31.

The image shows a musical score for measures 30 and 31. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef. The bottom two staves are a piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 30 features a complex piano accompaniment with many beamed notes and slurs. Measure 31 shows a continuation of the piano part with some notes marked with 'V' (accents) and a final chord in the bass clef. The number '31' is written at the end of the piano part.

In measures 48 - 52, First Movement, Katchen selects the alterations made by Brahms on his personal score, as discussed on page 47 of this thesis.

Richter's choice of accentuating the third and first notes of the triplets in measures 124 - 127 of the First Movement (demonstrated in Example I), not only creates an interesting highlighting of the irregular rhythm, but also gives the piano part an interesting melody.

The emphasis on the ascending bass line from measure 250 of the First Movement, creates a contrast with the descending line in the violin part. It is pleasing to hear the use made by all three pianists of the deep register throughout. Richter's final top 'D' in measure 264 is the only clear one of the three.

In the Second Movement, Bennette does not retain the

staccato pattern throughout measures 37 - 47, which makes the re-entry of this type of pattern, from measure 46 more noticeable especially since there is less movement in both instrumental parts.

Bennette's choice of tempo is very slow, for the Second Movement, and it would seem that Richter also prefers the slower tempo, because he and Oistrach are not always synchronised. There are discrepancies in measure 6, for example and again in measure 9 in the latter recording. In measures 57 - 58 the two performers lose each other, and Richter actually waits for the violinist to arrive at measure 59.

Richter seems to favour a slower tempo for the Third Movement, too, as the listener is aware of him trying to slow the violin part. All three renditions of this movement are light.

This author believes that the rests in the Fourth Movement can be utilised to heighten the tension, and add to the urgency of the music. Richter tends to hurry through the movement, although the rests are adhered to. This movement in particular, can benefit from use of carefully planned rubato. A slight break between measures 306 and 307, for example, as demonstrated by both Bennette and Katchen, helps to build an expectation

of an exciting ending.

This author must agree with Robert Layton's statement though, that the Katchen recording is the best. The ensemble functions as a unit while retaining the individual character of each instrumental part and is a most worthwhile recording to enjoy.

Conclusion

In performance, a pianist must use all the knowledge available to him. This involves not only the physiological aspects of playing but also the aesthetics of performance, which include a knowledge of the composer's life, his music, and his place in history. It is important that the pianist understands the work through study as well as through practice, and that all of his knowledge serves his performance so that he creates a valid interpretation of the score. By presenting the student with bibliographic references, with suggestions concerning technique, with a discography and comments concerning recordings of the work, this thesis attempts to aid the student in obtaining knowledge about the Brahms Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108 and in increasing his understanding of the work.

Brahms created works which demand a high calibre of performance. The player needs to have a maturity and an understanding which reaches beyond the mere playing of notes in order to draw from his or her inner resources. This is a demanding learning process, but one which

reaps many rewards. It is hoped that this thesis will make this process easier for the student, so that his experience of working with another musician to produce an interpretation of the Sonata in D Minor, Opus 108, will be less frustrating and more rewarding.