

Abstracts

Wednesday, 8:30–10:00 Contexts
Chair: Nicole Grimes, University of California, Irvine

**The Afterlives of Brahms's Library: From the Viennese Courts to
UNESCO's "Memory of the World"**
Reuben Phillips, University of Oxford

Held in the archives of Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, the collection of books, manuscripts and printed music that belonged to the composer Johannes Brahms has a multi-faceted music-historical significance. Numerous scholars have acknowledged that the library offers insights into Brahms's cultural and musical world (Hofmann 1974, Hancock 1983, Brachmann 2009, Grimes 2019). The collection is also important for the documentary heritage of Western art music more generally: to be found here, in addition to Brahms's own works, are nineteenth-century collected editions and historical music treatises, as well as autograph manuscripts by earlier composers in the Austro-German canon. Since 2005 the library has featured as part of the Brahms Collection in UNESCO's "Memory of the World" register.

Drawing on archival materials, newspaper reports, and historical photographs, this paper considers ways in which Brahms's library has been brought into public view over the course of the twentieth century. These include early discussions of the collection as a site of encounter with the recently deceased Brahms, reports on the library in the Viennese press during the lengthy legal battles over the composer's estate, and the longstanding practice—started in 1933—of exhibiting individual items in glass cases for the benefit of a reverential general public. I reflect on continuities between these historical episodes and modern assessments of the library informed by the field of heritage studies, while also considering how such remnants of music's material culture from the nineteenth century are being recontextualized in today's digital environments.

The Influence of Post-Romantic Literature on Brahms and His Music
Marie Sumner Lott, Georgia State University

As previous scholars have noted, Brahms was an avid reader and collector of books and manuscripts. His youthful passion for Romantic literature influenced his early compositions and underpinned important friendships and artistic partnerships in the 1850s and 1860s. Few scholars, however, have discussed Brahms's interest in later literary trends and their impact on his compositional outlook and style. In the 1860s–80s, he embraced the German Poetic Realists who were his contemporaries, such as Gottfried Keller, Gustav Freytag, Theodore Fontane, and Paul Heyse. These post-Romantic literary figures have received little attention from scholars of Austro-German music in the later nineteenth century (a noteworthy exception is Loges, *Brahms and His Poets*). Consequently, studies of Brahms and his milieu continue to situate it primarily in the context of Romantic Idealism, of which post-Romantic authors were highly critical.

Utilizing the archival resources of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde and the published correspondence of Brahms and his literary friends, this paper shows that Brahms not only read and discussed post-Romantic works of the 1860s–80s—poetry, popular novels, literary criticism, and history—but he also incorporated attitudes from them into his musical works. A better understanding of Brahms's relationship to Realism and Materialism, for example, helps us to reevaluate the focus on pleasure, entertainment, and materiality in his mature compositions (such as his sensuous settings of Daumer, Platen, and Heyse) within post-Romantic culture. Examining the political and aesthetic philosophy of post-Romanticism also provides new insights into Brahms's later settings of early nineteenth-century authors such as Goethe and Ludwig Tieck. Situating Brahms in the context of his day and acknowledging the role that contemporaneous literature played in his evolving worldview during the 1870s–90s offers new perspectives on both the man and the music.

Reevaluating Brahms and Politics: A Perspective from Cultural Nationalism
Robert Anderson, University of North Texas

In recent years, scholarly interest in Brahms in politics has addressed the composer's personal views and the political implications of his music. Work by Notley, Beller-McKenna, Brodbeck, and Burford has painted a complex and sometimes conflicting picture of Brahms's political context: He and his music were associated with liberal institutions and values, but he also clung to tradition and occasionally expressed illiberal views. Brahms seemed to embrace a *Großdeutschland* but also supported Bismarck and German unification under Prussian leadership. Much of this scholarship seems to assume direct connections between identity, ideology, and partisan politics. John Hutchinson's concept of Cultural Nationalism adds nuance to existing research and may resolve some of the apparent contradictions. As Hutchinson conceives it, Cultural Nationalism is distinguished from Political Nationalism in that its primary goal is the creation of community rather than the establishment of a politically unified nation. It achieved this in three ways: first, by framing itself as a response to moments of crisis in the present, second, by seeking to recover the nation's past Golden Age by returning to the traditional values and culture of the *Volk*, and lastly, by promoting communal morality over individualism. This approach can be seen in nineteenth-century discourse about *Hausmusik*, which was seen as a representation of traditional German identity opposed to cosmopolitanism and modernity. Brahms was part of this discourse in that he promoted *Hausmusik* and its values and was himself the subject of much writing about the genre. In this paper I explore advocacy of *Hausmusik* as a form of Cultural Nationalism to demonstrate how focusing on values and identity (rather than parties or institutional affiliations) can enrich our understanding of Brahms's political milieu and challenge us to consider uncomfortable historical truths that complicate our notions of aesthetic, political, and social progress in Brahms studies.

Wednesday, 10:30–11:30 Dichotomies

Chair: Karen Leistra-Jones, Franklin and Marshall College

Modal Humans and Tonal Gods in Brahms's *Gesang der Parzen*
Tekla Babyak, Davis, CA

We encounter a portrayal of human helplessness in the face of divine power in Brahms's *Gesang der Parzen* (*Song of the Fates*), Op. 89 (completed in 1882). Based on a bleak poem from Goethe's *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, *Gesang der Parzen* enacts "an aesthetic of despondency" (Nicole Grimes 2019) through its tonal and formal trajectory. Moreover, its modal inflections suggest an archaic ritual of suffering (Margaret Notley 2012). Unremarked by scholars, however, is the intriguing unconventionality of these modal inflections. In many works by Brahms and other nineteenth-century composers, modality carries a religious connotation (Larry Todd 2018). In contrast to this trope, however, *Gesang der Parzen* seems to associate modality with humans and tonality with the gods.

Thus Stanza 4, which describes "the elysian world of the gods" (Grimes 2019), inhabits tonal keys such as F Major (bars 72–80) and C-sharp Minor/Major (bars 81–99). When the text returns to the sorrowful lot of humankind, however, the music takes on a Phrygian color (bar 100ff). The modal inflections in *Gesang der Parzen* can therefore be heard as representing human powerlessness. As unusual as this might seem, I suggest that it is not entirely without precedent. By way of context, I will draw attention to an underexamined strand of nineteenth-century theoretical writings which link the diatonic church modes to weakness and even disability. Adolph Bernhard Marx (1795–1866), for example, referred to the helpless dependency of the Phrygian mode (*The School of Musical Composition*, 1841) and the "weak, breathless affect" of the Lydian mode (*Ludwig van Beethoven: Life and Works*, 1859). I conclude that Brahms's *Gesang der Parzen* engages with this view of the modes as a signifier of incapacity (as is also the case in Brahms's mournful Dorian-tinged song *Vergangen ist mir Glück und Heil*, Op. 48, no. 6).

The Brahmsian Sublime
David Keep, Hope College

If the aesthetic distinction between the beautiful and the sublime has functional significance for Brahms's music, reception of the composer's works has centered primarily around discussions of beauty. Sublimity is rarely cited as an aspect of Brahms's music. This may be owing to the extent to which Brahms's music has been associated with the aesthetic positions of Hanslick's treatise *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*. In contrast, the works of Wagner and Bruckner are more commonly associated with the sublime. This musical-political divide rather inelegantly applies eighteenth-century distinctions made by Burke and Kant between the beautiful and the sublime to characterizations of late-nineteenth-century musical styles. Despite his legendary preoccupation with the symphony – a genre described by Reinhold Brinkmann as “always related to the aesthetics of the sublime” – Brahms did not discuss his music in terms of the sublime. However, as he saw himself as bearing Beethoven's legacy, Brahms could not avoid a confrontation with musical sublimity.

Rather than viewing Brahms's oeuvre as an outright rejection of the sublime, considering the choral works with orchestra opens a window on the composer's musical response to the sublime as encountered in poetic texts. In particular, the use of chromatic sequences may be interpreted as a musical representation of sublimity, as demonstrated in the sixth movement of *Ein deutsches Requiem*, op. 45 and the conclusion of *Gesang der Parzen*, op. 89. Harmonic sequences replicate familiar contrapuntal patterns to open unpredictable spans of time that momentarily suspend tonal stability. The resulting sensation of charged ambiguity, especially in examples such as these that ponder divine omnipotence and human frailty, resonates powerfully with the sublime's “terrifying” and “elevating” qualities. Though the terms “beautiful” and “sublime” are at times casually conflated in Brahms reception, there is every reason to think that Brahms made a purposeful, creative distinction between those aesthetic modes through contrasting musical means.

Wednesday, 1:30–3:00 Brahms's Hybrid Metric Dissonances (themed session)
Chair: Scott Murphy, University of Kansas
Convenor: Richard Cohn, Yale University

Scholars have long recognized Brahms's distinctive approach to musical time as among the richest and most subtle elements of his art. Musical meter has emerged as a particular focus for analytic music theory, and for music-perception studies, since the 1970's, furnishing researchers with concepts and models that are both analytically powerful and psychologically grounded. Of particular pertinence is Harald Krebs's distinction, advanced in a 1999 book on Robert Schumann, between two categories of metric dissonance: *grouping*, related to hemiola and polymeter, and *displacement*, related to syncopation and “turning the beat around.” A number of scholars, including Cohn, Murphy, Malin, and McClelland, have since productively applied both categories individually to music of Brahms, and they figure prominently in the 2018 volume of papers edited by Scott Murphy.

This session explores a third, hybrid category of metric dissonances that combines aspects of grouping and displacement. The category has been identified as pertinent to individual Brahms passages by Samarotto, Chung, and Popoff & Yust, but has not yet received the focus that it merits. As these citations have heretofore been limited to specialist literature, the session begins by introducing this hybrid category to the broader community of Brahms scholars, and showing its broad application across various periods of Brahms's development as a composer. It then seeks to advance the research stream, by introducing several methods for modeling the pertinent metric relations, and by exploring Brahms's deployment of these relations as articulators of musical form, and in the setting of poetic texts.

Introduction, and Hybrid Dissonances as Product Networks **Richard Cohn, Yale University**

The session convenor will define the topic in a de-technologized way, situate it with respect to recent Brahms research, and exemplify it with isolated passages from diverse stages of Brahms's career.

The introduction transitions into a 15-minute presentation of new research by the convenor, "Hybrid Dissonances as Product Networks." First, the ambitus of the topic will be expanded. Previous work has focused exclusively on superposition of meters (Krebs's *direct* dissonances), but it is shown that any model of these superpositions also applies to successions of juxtaposed meters (*indirect* dissonances), such as Ng's hemiolic cycles, and several complex metric passages studied in Frisch's 1990 paper. Brahms's indirect hybrid dissonances are situated within a universe of similar rhythmic structures, including the mensural syncopation of the *Ars Nova*, and the interpolation processes of dance-drumming in West Africa (Anku) and Brazil (Stoessel & Oliveiros). The final part of the presentation refines the claim that the status of this third category, in its broadened domain, is indeed *hybrid*, by formally establishing that it is a product of both individual categories (in the sense of a Lewinian product network), neither of which is prior in principle.

Hybrid Metric Dissonances and Formal Function in Brahms's Instrumental Music **Ryan McClelland, University of Toronto**

The idea that particular rhythmic figures have characteristic formal functions in certain styles is not new—one need only think of Baroque cadential hemiolas. In the case of Brahms's music, the use of metric displacement dissonances in the latter stages of sonata-form expositions has been noted (Frisch 1990). Much more often, however, studies of Brahms's music trace an evolution of metric dissonance across a piece, movement, or entire work, often ascribing a narrative-like effect to this large-scale metric process (e.g., Smith 2001 and 2006, McClelland 2006 and 2010, Murphy 2009). This presentation explores in Brahms's instrumental music the formal function of "hybrid" metric dissonances, that is, those combining grouping and displacement dissonances. Through a series of excerpts, the presentation reveals their association with continuation function in sentence designs and with dominant expansions, either preceding a cadential tonic harmony or subsequent to a half cadence. With continuation function, ascending sequence is typically present, and in the case of dominant expansions, parallel upper-voice motions. These pitch components aid in the projection of hybrid dissonances, and also work with them to generate directed motion towards a formal-tonal goal. The presentation suggests that, to a much greater degree than either grouping or displacement dissonances alone, hybrid metric dissonances are associated with particular formal functions in Brahms's instrumental music.

Multivalent Displaced Hemiolas in Brahms's Late Songs **Jason Yust, Boston University**

The third presentation focuses on songs composed after 1884, which are representative of the sophisticated use of metric manipulations that characterize his late music. Musical storytelling, interactions of voice and piano, and text declamation all relate to metric manipulations in different ways, making a rich aesthetic network to uncover through analysis. This paper presents a method of conceptualizing and illustrating displacement and hemiola based on recent metric theory, and applies it to three late songs, "Kein Haus, keine Heimat," Op. 94/5, "Mein Herz ist schwer," Op. 94/3, and "Auf dem See," Op. 106/2. In each, Brahms initially motivates displaced metric layers through basic features of texture or the setting of repetitive rhythms of the lyrical poetry. He then applies hemiola to these displaced layers to create multivalent metric networks that invite interpretation with respect to themes in the texts. The presentation proposes a method of graphing these networks, the "metric cyclone," which illustrates how the interaction of displacement and hemiola from one meter leads to connections to other possible meters.

Thursday, 8:30–10:00 Close Hearings
Chair: Peter Smith, University of Notre Dame

**Uncanny Modulation via Syntactic Dissonance in the Second Movement of
Brahms's First String Quintet**
Samuel Hollister, Peabody Conservatory/Johns Hopkins

While Tymoczko (2011), Harrison (1994), and Lewin (1987) have invoked Hugo Riemann's conceptualization of dualism to approach understanding Brahms's music, few have systematically addressed the asymmetrical nature of "dual" relationships in general and their perceptual implications. Dual, or inverse, Neo-Riemannian transformations—for instance, PL and LP—are perfectly symmetrical and mutually annihilatory in theory, but in practice, triads with this relationship, such as C# Major and A Major, rarely present with comparable stability within a piece's tonal framework.

In this paper, I investigate the final thirteen measures of the second movement of Brahms's first string quintet. This passage, exhibiting progressive tonality spanning the very two keys mentioned above, perfectly illustrates the "lopsidedness" of otherwise theoretically symmetrical Neo-Riemannian transformations. Invoking Douthett and Steinbach's "Cube Dance" (1998), I propose a triangular space of "class 2" transformations involving the Slide, PL/LP, and Nebenverwandt relationships. In Brahms's passage, it is this very collection of operations that governs triadic adjacency. The juxtaposition of self-dual transformational relationships within a triangular network allows the system to permute, or rotate—thus shifting the tonic—without needing to challenge or neutralize the gravitation that the original tonic once enjoyed.

Such an analysis handily accounts for the shift in tonal center, but not for the listener's invariably shocked reaction. To conclude my investigation, I tackle this disconnect head-on by addressing the role of Cohn's "syntactic interaction" (2012) between Neo-Riemannian relationships and tonal functions in allowing the listener to understand Brahms's progression of tonality, yet simultaneously marvel at its incongruity.

Feinting Repeats, Repeating Feints: The Developmental "Double Return"
in Brahms and Sonata Theory Typology
Benedict Taylor, University of Edinburgh

One of the most prominent characteristics of Johannes Brahms's approach to sonata form is the return to the tonic at the start of the second section (or "rotation") for a restatement of the exposition's primary theme. Well-known examples include the finales of the First and Third Symphonies, the opening movements of the G-minor Piano Quartet and Fourth Symphony, and the *Tragic Overture*. This common basic principle can nevertheless underpin a variety of formal typologies. Ostensibly a three-part sonata form with developmental double return would be most likely labelled a sonata rondo (type 4 in Hepokoski and Darcy's sonata theory), while a two-part design is so typical of Brahms's practice that it has become known as a "Brahmsian deformation" (expanded type 1). However, numerous cases exist in which neither reading above is permitted – most notably three-part sonata forms with developmental double return used as opening movements. In these cases sonata theory is left classifying these designs as a conventional type 3 sonata with an expositional repeat feint (as in Beethoven's quartet Op. 59, No. 1). There are some serious problems, however, with this interpretation. First is the sheer number of pieces in which this double return occurs: in fact after 1878, Brahms is more likely to "feign" a repeat than provide one. Second, the way in which the primary theme returns is hardly ever identical to its opening appearance, and can rarely be confused with an exposition repeat (the Op. 25 Quartet and Fourth Symphony are exceptions in this sense). Exploring these

works, I propose a new subtype of the type 3 sonata to classify Brahms's habitual mature practice, what I call the "type 3⁴." However, my findings may ultimately lead one to question the efficacy of such a classically oriented typology confronted with late nineteenth-century practice.

Metric Motives in Brahms Op. 111
Dani Zanuttini-Frank, Yale University

[1] establishes that groups construed as parallel receive parallel metrical structure. [2] observes that the recurrence of a "durational pattern" in association with widely differing melodic material is common in the music of Bach and Brahms. I argue that these "durational patterns," or rhythmic motives, induce meter through the parallelism described by [1], illustrated by two rhythmic motives (Figures 1 and 2) from the first movement of the Opus 111 String Quintet.

This movement is in 9/8, with a fast triple meter at the beat level and a slow triple meter at the measure level. Both are articulated by short-long rhythmic motives in 1:2 proportion: (q. h.) at the slow level, and (e q) at the fast. Initially the motive is anacrustic, and the longer note lands on the notated downbeat (Figure 3). At the modulation to dominant, the longer note shifts to beat 2, displacing the downbeat (Figure 4). Both themes in the dominant feature analogously displaced meters, the first at the fast level (Figure 5), the second at the slow level (Figure 6), both by a third of their values. Tonal and metric modulation coincide.

In the development, harmonic changes coinciding with the short element of the rhythmic motive establish it as the downbeat (Figure 7). An analogous reinterpretation occurs at the faster pulse-level in mm. 74–78 (Figure 8). These resolve the metric tension of the exposition: the motive is "re-metricized" to fit the secondary themes with the original meter.¹ The themes recapitulate in G major, indicating a concurrent tonal resolution.²

[3] observes that the (01) motive historically suggests "unequal-ness" in triple meter. I argue that this uneven rhythmic motive doesn't negate the even triple meter; rather, it induces it through parallelism.

References

- [2] Breslauer, P. (1988). "Diminutional Rhythm and Melodic Structure." *Journal of Music Theory* 32 (1), 1–21.
[3] Grant, R. M. (2014). *Beating Time & Measuring Music in the Early Modern Era*. New York: Oxford University Press.
[1] Lerdahl, F. and R. Jackendoff (1983). *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

[diagrams follow]

¹ This is analogous to a reharmonization of a melody rather than its transposition.

² I don't have the space to discuss the (0246) motive at length in the proposal, but Figure 9 briefly demonstrates how its different rotations shift the phase of the meter and the metric interpretation of the short-long (01) motive.

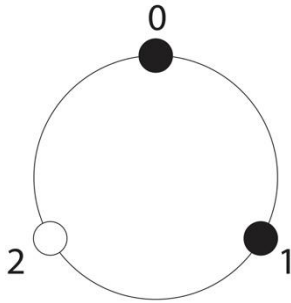


Figure 1: Beat-class set (01) in a three-element universe. At first, beat-class 1 is the deeper time-point.

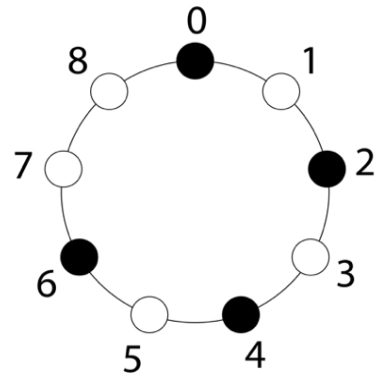


Figure 2: Beat-class set (0246) in a nine-element universe.

Figure 3: Opening cello melody, with harmonies written above, articulated beats denoted with filled in circles, and non-articulated beats denoted with empty circles. While harmonic changes articulate the motive of Figure 1, the recurrence of G major on each notated downbeat induces it as the slower pulse and makes the (01) motive anacrustic.

Figure 4: Transition area of exposition (mm. 21-2).

Figure 5: Second theme in exposition (mm. 26-7).

Figure 6: Third theme in exposition (mm. 38-39).

Figure 7: Opening of the development section (mm. 57-8). Annotated as above, with harmonies indicated. The placement of the harmonic changes establishes the short element as the downbeat, just as harmonic changes in the opening melody (Figure 3) established the long element as the downbeat.

Figure 8: Mm. 74-75 in the development section. As a result of the clear placement of the pulse in the other instruments, the motive is re-metricized. Here, the motive is at the eighth note level, so the short element carries the q pulse.

Figure 9: Two metric interpretations of mm. 19-21, showing how different metricizations of the (0246) motive result in different metricizations of the (01), or short-long, motive. If it is on the second q of the measure, the (01) motive is anacrustic. If the bar pulse is on the notated downbeat, the (01) motive is in its second metric context, as presented in Figure 7.

Thursday, 10:30–11:30 In Performance
Chair: Styra Avins, New York

Art Versus Profit: George and Lillian Henschel's Performances of Brahms's Lieder
Heather Platt, Ball State University

George Henschel has been praised for his advocacy of Brahms's compositions in England and America. Yet newly available digitized sources reveal his promotion of Brahms's lieder in America was not unequivocal, and even in London other singers also championed these works. During their initial recitals, in 1880–1881, both Henschels gave the US premieres of lieder by Brahms. But the reviews were uneven, and these songs were not immediately taken up by others. In contrast, the couple's US recitals from 1882–1901 did not highlight Brahms, rather they concentrated on more familiar songs. Nevertheless, the couple added some of Brahms's later works to their repertoire, with Lillian adding more than George.

During the same years, American singers gave increasing attention to Brahms's lieder, and by 1897 they were viewed as canonic. Moreover, Max Heinrich and David Bispham, the most popular US lieder recitalists, were also lauded for their performances of Brahms in England. While both knew Henschel, their interest in Brahms was sparked by their other London collaborators: the former by Lena Little, a native of New Orleans, who collaborated with a fellow Stockhausen student (Sophie Löwe) in highly praised performances of Brahms's songs; the latter by associates of Clara Schumann. In 1896–1897, when programming complete cycles was unusual, Bispham drew headlines for giving the first complete British and American performances of the *Magelone Romances* and *Vier ernste Gesänge*. In contrast, Henschel performed neither. The Henschels' uneven advocacy of Brahms, with George's programs being shaped by his audiences' preferences, and the way other musicians in London influenced Americans have only been revealed through the analysis of hundreds of digitized newspapers. These findings suggest that further reassessments of Brahms's colleagues and the dissemination of his compositions will be possible once more German newspapers are accessible via a single search engine.

"Becoming" Johannes Brahms, the Composer of Violin Concerto Op. 77
Katharina Uhde, Valparaiso University

The idea of "becoming" has recently seen an upsurge, as performers have been increasingly attracted to new meanings of performance, in order to rethink topics of *Werktreue*, Urtext, HIP, and various dogmas and ideologies surrounding Western art music performance practices.

This paper inquires into Brahms's Concerto by identifying subjectively grounded narratives. On the one hand, Brahms's subjective, lived experience, as far as it is known, creates an entry point for the performer's inquiry into the established historical threads of genesis and "shared" compositional process (Schwartz 1983; Musgrave, 1985; Leistra-Jones, 2013); on the other hand, there are additional subjectivities that can emerge in the process of engaging with Brahms's discourse through the performer's own subjectivities.

Rather than separating these discourses, and rather than relying on positivistic accounts regarding how the violin as an instrument and the violinist involved – Joachim – may have influenced the composer, I aim to initiate explorations that create a dialogue between the literatures on genesis and shared process and *embedded* knowledge types that offer a situated point of view by being grounded in the thoughts, body sensations, and feelings/affects that a particular performer, i.e. myself, experiences when playing particular passages of Op. 77; when comparing them with certain musical textures and patterns from Joachim's compositions known to Brahms at the time; when inquiring into possibly Joachimian bowings and fingerings; and by problematizing specific timbres, articulations, and dynamics in relation to the orchestral accompaniment.

Interacting with historical discourses from an auto-ethnographic and performative perspective including the emergent lived experiences and artistic identities affords new performative meanings, which throw light on violin-idiomatic and expressive issues, some of which, seemingly unrelated to Brahms's or Joachim's subjectivities, actually enmesh multiple subjectivities, thereby allowing for a new "Brahms" to emerge: the one who "became" Brahms in the process of engaging his Violin Concerto.