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Brahms and the Vienna Philharmonic

As institutions go, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the music of Brahms are two solid and enduring ones—*dauerhaft*, as Brahms himself would have said. Both have shown staying power since their origins in the mid-nineteenth century. In an important sense, the Vienna Philharmonic and the music of Brahms were made for each other. The Philharmonic was founded to preserve the symphonic masterworks of the past, especially the symphonies of Beethoven. As Hans Weigel put it in his study of the orchestra, “The Vienna Philharmonic came into being to fulfill Beethoven’s symphonic legacy.”¹ According to Desmond Mark, who has provided very thorough statistics on the orchestra, from its founding in 1842 until 1850, the works of Beethoven formed 60% of the repertory.² This was hardly an orchestra that sought out many *Novitäten*. As late as 1900, Beethoven’s symphonies still formed over a quarter of the orchestra’s repertory, and thereafter seem to have settled in at about 12%.

Brahms came of age as a composer just as the Philharmonic and other similar institutions were being formed in Europe and the United States. He was certainly aware of their ideological bases, and he came to share them. Robert Schumann had strongly urged Brahms and other younger composers to write in the traditional symphonic forms. At some point early in Brahms’s career, most likely in the later 1850s after Schumann’s death, he seems to have made a conscious decision to create what Peter Burkholder has called “museum pieces.” This does not, of course, mean academic, epigonic works, but rather music designed to take its place alongside Beethoven in the repertory of institutions like the Vienna Philharmonic.

When Brahms’s mature orchestral works began to appear in the 1870s and 1880s, they quickly found a berth in the repertory of the Vienna Philharmonic. Brahms’s works have formed anywhere from 9 to 14% of the orchestra’s repertory since 1895. Brahms was, of course, more of an adopted son—a north German who settled in Vienna in his thirties. Yet he developed strong personal ties with the Vienna Philharmonic. These began shortly after his first



Willi von Beckerath, Brahms conducting, 1894

visit to Vienna in 1862 and continued until just before his death in 1897.

The initial relationship was not a smooth or happy one. Brahms’s A-major Serenade, Op. 16, was programmed by the Philharmonic under Otto Dessoff for 8 March 1863. During the rehearsals, the members of the orchestra complained of the difficulty of many passages and threatened mutiny. At the general rehearsal, the principal clarinetist

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(Brahms and the Vienna Philharmonic, *continued*)

told Dessoff the players would not proceed. Dessoff, furious, lay down his baton and announced his resignation; the concertmaster Joseph Hellmesberger followed suit, as did the first flutist. The players eventually relented; the performance took place and was a considerable success.

Brahms's last contact with the Philharmonic took place under very different circumstances almost exactly thirty-four years later. Mortally ill, he heard a performance of his Fourth Symphony on March 7, 1897. A cellist in the orchestra, Joseph Sulzer, who played with the Philharmonic from 1873 until 1907, recalled in his memoirs:

The master, already very sick, attended this performance in the director's box and had to come forward after each movement in order to acknowledge the enthusiastic ovations. Horribly emaciated, his white hair hanging down in a disheveled way, his face dark yellow, almost brown, the expressive blue eyes extinguished and tinged with death—that is how Johannes Brahms appeared, such devastation had the vicious disease wrought upon the master once so bursting with power!³

This was the last concert of any kind Brahms heard, indeed the last time he left his apartment. He died on April 3.

Brahms conducted the Vienna Philharmonic a total of seven times, in performances that spanned the years between 1864 and 1879. He played as piano soloist three times with the orchestra between 1871 and 1881, twice in the D-minor Piano Concerto and once in the B-flat-major Concerto. The Philharmonic gave the premieres of four of Brahms's major works: the Haydn Variations on 2 November 1873, the Second Symphony on 30 December 1877, the Tragic Overture on 26 December 1880, and the Third Symphony on 2 December 1883.

Sulzer, the cellist who reported on Brahms's last appearance, also left an eyewitness account of Brahms conducting the Haydn Variations in 1873:

Brahms was at that time in his 40th year and wore his blond hair parted simply; his face, with its strongly spiritual quality, was at that time not covered with a beard. I might compare his conducting with the manner and style of his piano playing. That is, he never aimed at effects for their own sake; he allowed the work to make its effect on its own. At the rehearsals, Brahms interrupted only seldom, and his interpretive wishes were for the most part easy to follow. Only in Variations 5 and 7 was there a lot of work to do: in the fifth, this was because of its rhythmic difficulties, and in the seventh we had to work in rendering to the complete satisfaction of the composer the splendid build-up, with its true Brahmsian warmth, and the deep clarinet sonority at the end.⁴

Descriptions like these—and there are a handful of them of Brahms on the podium or at the keyboard—are very suggestive, though obviously of limited use in helping establish any performance style deriving from the composer. Can we ever recover what Brahms's works might have sounded like under his baton or at least as performed by an orchestra he knew and admired?

Although he lived into the dawn of the recording era, Brahms left no recordings of his own works except for that scratchy Edison cylinder on which he plays a segment of a Hungarian Dance on the piano. None of the conductors most closely associated with Brahms left recordings; that

Philharmonische Concerte.

Sonntag den 2. Dezember 1883,

Mittags präzise halb 1 Uhr,

im grossen Saale der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde:

2^{tes} Abonnement-Concert

veranstaltet von den

Mitgliedern des k. k. Hofopern-Orchesters

unter der Leitung des Herrn

HANS RICHTER,

k. k. Hofopern-Kapellmeister.

PROGRAMM:

F. Mendelssohn . . . Overture zu „Die Hebriden“.

F. Dvořák Violin-Concert (NEU) vorgetragen von
Herrn F. ONDRÍČEK.

J. Brahms Symphonie Nr. 3, F-dur (1. Aufführung).

Streichinstrumente: Lomböck. — Programme unentgeltlich.

Das 3. Philharmonische Concert findet am 16. Dezember statt.

The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra's program
for the premiere of the Third Symphony

would include Otto Dessoff, Hermann Levi, Hans Richter, Hans von Bülow, and Fritz Steinbach.

But we might ask, if only as a kind of thought experiment, whether something of the performance practices that Brahms advocated might survive in the earliest generation of recordings from the Vienna Philharmonic, an orchestra so intimately connected with his music. Recently, a number of scholars, myself included, have been advocating the use of sound recordings, not as documents of incontrovertible authenticity but as witnesses to traditions that can lead us closer to the composer's preferences than many written sources, including occasionally the score itself.

Brahms's Third Symphony had its premiere at the Vienna Philharmonic in 1883 (see facsimile of the program). The orchestra played it an additional three times in Brahms's lifetime, and it has had a firm place in the orchestra's repertory ever since. The Third was also the first symphony of Brahms recorded by the Vienna Philharmonic. The sessions took place in January and March of 1930. The conductor was Clemens Krauss, who had just taken over the

(Brahms and the Vienna Philharmonic, *continued*)

volume. He provides very little ritardando on the last beat.

We can never know just how Brahms would have wanted to hear his Third Symphony. Brahms admired a number of conductors with reportedly very different styles, from the mannered Bülow to the more straightforward Felix Weingartner. He also worked happily with orchestras of varying sizes and sonorities, from the lean-and-mean, 49-member orchestras of Karlsruhe and Meiningen, to the opulent 100-strong Vienna Philharmonic.

But we may still find enough sonic evidence in Krauss's elegant and expressive Brahms Third with the Vienna Philharmonic to claim at least that this is a performance Brahms would have recognized and warmly appreciated. It is quite different from what we can encounter in a modern recording from the same orchestra led by a distinguished conductor.

I do not mean to imply that one is good, the other bad. Ultimately I prefer the Krauss on musical grounds rather than for its possible authenticity. But younger conductors approaching the Brahms Third today might learn something from studying the Krauss/Philharmonic recording. They might discover and adapt approaches to tempo, balance, phrasing, and articulation that would sound fresh yet would at the same time bring us closer to the sound world of Brahms and one of his favorite orchestras.

Walter Frisch

¹ *Das Buch der Wiener Philharmoniker* (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag, 1967), 49.

² *Wem gehört der Konzertsaal? Das Wiener Orchesterrepertoire im internationalen Vergleich: zur Frage des musikalischen Geschmacks bei John H. Mueller* (Vienna: Guthmann-Peterson, 1998), 89.

³ *Ernstes und heiteres aus den Erinnerungen eines Wiener Philharmonikers* (Vienna and Leipzig: J. Eistenstein & Co., 1910), 84.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵ *Brahms in der Meininger Tradition: Seine Sinfonien und Haydn-Variationen in der Bezeichnung von Fritz Steinbach* (Stuttgart: Ernst Surkamp), 61.

Thirteenth Annual Geiringer Scholarship Awarded

The American Brahms Society is pleased to announce that the Karl Geiringer Scholarship for the year 2002 has been awarded to Ryan Minor, who is completing a doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago entitled *National Memory, Public Music: Commemoration and Consecration in Nineteenth-Century German Choral Works*. Mr. Minor has received a stipend of \$1500 to assist him in his final year of dissertation writing.

Minor examines a range of works written across the nineteenth century, including Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*, Liszt's cantatas on Beethoven, and Wagner's *Parsifal*. Two of his chapters focus on Brahms—one on the *Triumphlied*, Op. 55, one on the *Fest- und Gedenksprüche*, Op. 109.

Minor places the *Triumphlied* within the context not only of Brahms's own larger works for chorus and orchestra, but

also that of other patriotic and commemorative choral compositions from the period immediately after the Franco-Prussian War, including the *Bismarckhymne* of Brahms's friend Carl Reinthaler and Cyrill Kistler's *Bismarck-Kantate*. Minor argues that the polemics of the debate around the New German School concerned how the new German nation would be represented within musical works.

The final chapter examines how Brahms's Op. 109 Motets both summarize and move beyond the tradition of the commemorative choral work. Minor treats contemporary discussion of monuments, analyzes the music and text of the motets, and suggests that they be viewed not as occasional work, but as "monuments to memory itself."

Minor's is a well-argued, well-research study that takes account of both the technical-compositional aspects of the music he discusses and the wider historical and cultural forces that impinge upon them.

Walter Frisch

Competition for Fourteenth Annual Geiringer Scholarship

The American Brahms Society is seeking applicants for its Karl Geiringer Scholarship in Brahms Studies, which is awarded annually, as meritorious candidates present themselves. The competition is open to students in the final stages of preparing a doctoral dissertation at a university in North America. Work relating to Brahms should form a significant thread within the dissertation, but it need not be the only one. The Selection Committee welcomes applications from students whose research might be concentrated instead on music by members of the Brahms circle, questions concerning musical life in later 19th-century Vienna, and so forth. Only projects that demonstrate significant original thought and research will be deemed competitive. The decision to award the scholarship rests with the Board of Directors; the winner will be announced in November 2003, following the regular annual meeting of the Board.

Completed applications will consist of 1) a cover letter, including the applicant's address, phone number, e-mail address, and institutional affiliation; 2) a concise description of the project (no more than 500 words), in which the applicant's methods and conclusions are stated clearly; and 3) a brief account (no more than 250 words) detailing the aspect of the project to be completed with assistance from the Karl Geiringer Scholarship, including travel plans, if appropriate. These materials should be submitted, in triplicate, to Professor Walter Frisch, Chair, Geiringer Scholarship Committee, Department of Music, Columbia University, MC 1820, 2960 Broadway, New York, NY 10027, and must be postmarked no later than 1 May 2003. The application must be supported by two confidential letters of recommendation, including one from the dissertation advisor; these should be sent directly to the Chair of the Geiringer Scholarship Committee and must also be postmarked by 1 May. Finalists in the competition will be notified by 15 May and asked to submit a sample chapter from their dissertation.

Harald Krebs on Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Schumann and Brahms

Brahms's musical voice is in some significant sense a result of his idiosyncratic approach to the projection and working out of metric conflicts. Yet we've lacked sophisticated ways of talking about these conflicts, and hence of exploring them with the depth that they merit. The identification of local instances, and their characterization via an informal and shallow taxonomy of "devices" (syncopation, hemiola, polyrhythm), provides some preliminary first approximations, but is far from adequate for distinguishing Brahms from dozens of predecessors and contemporaries.

A 1983 paper of Walter Frisch suggests some ways that Brahms's metric displacements implicate such analytical criteria as syntax, progression, and form, and ventures some preliminary conjectures about how such strategies furnish a handle for tracing Brahms's stylistic evolution.¹ The characteristics evoked by Frisch are exemplified by David Lewin's analysis of the opening period of the Capriccio, Op. 76 No. 8.² Lewin notes that the Capriccio alternates between three different metric designs. One of these designs is phenomenologically central, in the manner of a "tonic meter." The other two designs perturb this central meter, and are conceptually disposed on opposite sides of the "tonic" in the manner of a "dominant" and "subdominant" meter. The analogous model in the harmonic realm has sustained two centuries of syntactic interpretations, sometimes across a large compositional scale. Could such a model lead to an understanding of how metric perturbations are compositionally deployed to complex strategic ends?

Harald Krebs's *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann* (Oxford University Press, 1999) pursues the analogy between meter and harmony as a key to unlocking the form-building potential of meter. The appropriation of pitch concepts into the realm of rhythm has a long legacy from antiquity (Aristoxenus) and the Middle Ages (e.g., metric modes and perfections). Krebs traces the metric consonance/dissonance binary back to Berlioz, and forward through Cowell, Seeger, and Schillinger. Like earlier writers, Krebs considers metric dissonance to be present either when conflicting divisions of a single span sound simultaneously (as in 3 against 2), or when distinct beat-classes (e.g., the first and third beats in 3/4 meter) compete for accentual primacy across a sufficiently extended durational span. In a crucial move, Krebs generalizes metric dissonance so that it applies to conflicts involving successive as well as simultaneous metric states (e.g., in a Handelian pre-cadential hemiola, where a triple division of a measure, or a two-bar hypermeasure, temporarily displaces a duple division of the same durational span). In such cases, although the 3:2 divisions do not sound simultaneously, there is nonetheless a sense of disruption to the ongoing flow, a disruption that is set right (or "resolved") once the duple division is restored. Krebs notes that such "indirect metric dissonances" have a parallel in the tonal

realm: following Riemann, a tonicized dominant triad is conceived as consonant in itself, but contextually "dissonant" in the sense that it requires the restoration of the global tonic. In this context, the Op. 76 Capriccio's journey from and back toward its contextually stable 6/2 hypermeter enacts a consonance/dissonance/consonance paradigm whose phenomenological impact is similar to that of a fundamental progression away from and back toward a tonic chord.

With a single exception (to be discussed below), Krebs's book does not concern the music of Brahms. Yet it merits the close attention of scholars, performers, and listeners who recognize the crucial role of metric perturbation in Brahms's art. It merits this attention, certainly, by virtue of Schumann's outsized influence on Brahms's apprenticeship, but above all for the methodological tools and concepts that Krebs makes available to the analyst. The following sketch of the contents of *Fantasy Pieces* aims to suggest the nature of those tools and concepts, and their uses for readers of this newsletter.

Before embarking on this program, it would be remiss not to begin by taking note of *Fantasy Pieces*' unusual form and tone (already suggested in the title). One hardly expects the following first sentence in a book by a Yale theory Ph.D. vintage 1980: "Having already shown his guests Florestan and Eusebius many of the wonders of Euphonia, Hector led them, with an air of having something particularly amazing up his sleeve, toward an area of the town which, he informed them, was called the Rhythmic Quarter." In the initial chapter, Florestan and Eusebius enjoy conversations about rhythm with Berlioz, Francois-Joseph Fétis, and a five-year-old Hugo Riemann. Upon taking their leave of Euphonia, a Prophet-Bird brings them an austere treatise on rhythm written by a late 20th-century theorist. The second chapter find F. and E. in a coffee-house, the first of a series of venues—first in Dusseldorf, ultimately in Endenich—for *viva voce* readings of the treatise, punctuated periodically by alternately enthusiastic and skeptical commentary by the various characters who populate Schumann's essays and his life. The final pages at Endenich, which chart Schumann's gruesome decline into fractured hallucinations, are not merely of voyeuristic value: a significant theme of *Fantasy Pieces* (following Dieter Schnebel) is the window that metric instability opens onto psychological conflicts both personal and universal. While never losing sight of his analytical, theoretical, and ultimately critical agenda, Krebs captures Schumann's voice, making readers laugh and ultimately breaking their hearts. A rare feat for a serious work of musical scholarship; on this basis alone, *Fantasy Pieces* is an extraordinary achievement.

The heart of the book consists of three theoretical chapters. Chapter 2 lays forth the central definitions and concepts, illustrated copiously with small-scale examples from Schumann's music. These include the crucial distinctions between grouping and displacement, and between direct, indirect, and subliminal dissonance. Krebs inventories the accentual types that reinforce or perturb a metric framework. He creates instruments for comparing dissonances at

(continued on next page)

various levels of the metric hierarchy, gauging their relative intensity, grouping them into families, and assessing degrees of proximity among them. In essence, he is creating a multi-dimensional field or map against which given instances can be charted, and patterns observed and interpreted. Although in places Krebs implies that antimetric events are special cases, more frequently he cultivates the attitude that these elements are perpetually present, if only in small measure, in all music. Like the constant ripples of the ocean's surface, antimetric events bubble along, and occasionally coalesce into waves of greater or lesser intensity. Rather than "apply" metric "devices" like lipstick or sticky labels, the skilled composer rides these perpetual ripples and harnesses them to an immense variety of structural and affective goals.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the syntactical functions of metric dissonance. Krebs introduces the concept of "metrical progressions," which chart a variety of basic successions of consonant and dissonant metric states. Particularly compelling is the notion of "dissonance preparation," whereby Schumann introduces a single counter-accent in a relatively unobtrusive context, and subsequently allows a parallel event to blossom into a full-blown pulse that conflicts with, and perhaps ultimately displaces, the primary meter. (One is reminded of the Schubertian protocol of introducing an innocent chromatic passing tone that subsequently spawns a "purple" tonal area of some duration.) Also of interest is the distinction between "neighboring dissonances"—spans of metric conflict that are "resolved" via restoration of the immediately prior meter—and "passing dissonances"—spans of conflict that lead to the ultimate displacement of the original metric state by a rival. Krebs's metaphor here falls short in the respect that a passing motion in pitch-space leads to a goal that is consonant with the origin; there is no such constraint for metric passing motions. For this reason, I prefer to think of Krebs's "neighboring" events in terms of "applied dominants" and his "passing" events in terms of "metric modulations" (a term familiar from Elliott Carter), according to whether or not the metric perturbation ultimately subverts the underlying metric "center."

Pitch doesn't, of course, act only as a metaphorical source that supplies a language for charting metric phenomena and processes. Pitch plays out its own narrative of tension and resolution simultaneously with the drama that Krebs charts in the metric realm. The two processes thus form a type of abstract counterpoint, as metric tension/resolution curves fall in and out of phase with similar curves in the domain of pitch proper. These phasings, in and out, can be viewed in terms of higher-level rhythms of tension and release, and thus can be considered to have an impact on our perception of a composition's larger-scale form. At this higher level, strategies of metric consonance and dissonance fall into abstract counterpoint with the more familiar methods of charting form, methods that rely not only on large-scale tonal succession but also on rhetorical norms and on thematic circulation and transformation. The pos-

sibilities boggle the mind at first, but once they percolate into the realm of the familiar, one realizes that they form a well-defined apparatus for exploring and articulating just those aspects of Schumann's music that are most characteristic, and most riveting. It is these matters that are preliminarily exposed in the first part of Chapter 6. Its second half takes up the question of how Schumann deploys metric dissonance in his vocal music, and how that deployment reflects and reacts to the poetry that is being set. Schumann's poetry-setting habits in turn illuminate interpretive matters in the instrumental music, and ultimately questions of psychological affect as they reflect Schumann's own inner struggles.

Interspersed with these core theoretical chapters is a set of studies that shoot off of the central exposition, addressing matters of particular concern to music historians and performers. Chapter 3 positions Schumann stylistically at the end of a succession of metric dissonators, most prominently Beethoven, Schubert, and Paganini, with a supporting role for the virtuoso pianist/composers whom Schumann encountered during the 1820s. Chapter 5, the product of a year spent in mostly German archives, interprets the philological evidence concerning Schumann's recomposition of various passages that involve metric dissonance. Chapter 7, the product of many years of exquisitely sensitive music-making at the piano, is a more speculative account of and response to the challenges that metric dissonance poses for performers, as channeled through the voice of Clara Schumann.

While the title of the final chapter, "carnaval des analyses," cleverly intertwines Schumann with Saint-Saens, its content intersperses discussions of Schumann's music with that of a series of contemporaries and successors, including Berlioz, Chopin, Clara Schumann, Ives, and Schoenberg. It is here, under the characteristic subheading "Kreisler Jun.," that we encounter Brahms for a singular sustained moment, in the form of a five-page analysis of the first movement of the F-minor Piano Sonata, Op. 5. The stormy opening of this movement displaces the accent onto the third beat of each 3/4 measure; by the first cadence at measure 6, Brahms has strongly hinted at a quarter-note pulse that cuts against the dotted-quarter pulse of the notated meter. Krebs shows that this disruptive quarter-note pulse appears frequently, but always for very brief spans, throughout the exposition. This same pulse resurfaces in the opening and closing of the development, in the latter instance across a full four-bar span. Brahms rewrites the recapitulation to suppress many of the metric conflicts that were present in the exposition, only to revive the quarter-note pulse at an apotheosizing moment of the coda (mm. 209–213; see example). The process of eviscerating this final perturbation begins at the arrival of the F-major cadence at m. 214, and is concluded by the arrival of the final cadence at m. 217.

We can take Krebs's observations one step farther. The perturbing quarter-pulse that Krebs notes at m. 209 is already present at m. 201, at the movement's first F-major cadence. This serves as the movement's "structural" cadence from the tonal standpoint; the remaining cadences at mm. 214 and 217 merely confirm. These extra cadences

Brahms, Sonata No. 3 in F minor, movement 1, mm. 193–222

exist not only for their rhetorical impact; they are mandatory, in order to align the tonal resolution with one in the metric realm. The annotated score-fragment (see the musical example) seeks to track the interaction of the “tonic” dotted-quarter pulse (marked “6”; we are counting eighth-notes as the unit) and the perturbing quarter pulse (marked “4”). The annotations also track the normative four-bar hypermeasures, marked “24.” As we approach the structural cadence (stage 1) all is in order metrically and hypermetrically. At the moment of tonal resolution, the tonic meter is perturbed (stage 2). Meter returns to the tonic “6” at stage 3, but the accent is displaced to the second beat of each measure—a kind of “deceptive cadence” in the metric realm. (Here, also, the hypermeter is disrupted). At stage 4, the perturbing quarter-pulse returns, as at stage 2. At the second F-major cadence (stage 5), Brahms triggers a metric “modulation” back to the tonic pulse. This resolution, along with the restored four-bar hypermeter, is confirmed at stage 6, the third and final F-major cadence. Only at this point do the tonal and metric “tonics” become synchronized in a convincing way.

Even in this circumscribed synopsis, one begins to get a sense of the strategic and form-building value of metric conflict for Brahms. This analysis also has implications

regarding stylistic development. Frisch has suggested that it is only in the 1860s that Brahms begins to use metric conflicts in a systematic rather than sporadic way, and indeed that this feature helps to define the middle period. Op. 5 problematizes this notion, or at least lays down a challenge for further refinement. Although the teleological progression from “new path” to “first maturity” to “summit” appears to have been universally accepted since Tovey, the case of Op. 5 suggests that such periodization judgments are easier to establish on the grounds of genre, biography, and reception than those of compositional technique per se.

In any case, potential applications of Krebs’s methodology to Brahms do not end with Op. 5. His book has helped to stimulate several recent studies of Brahmsian meter, including a recent paper of Peter Smith (in vol. 3 of *Brahms Studies*, 2001) and several items reported in the “Recent Publications” column of this issue of the Newsletter.

Richard Cohn

1 “The Shifting Bar Line: Metrical Displacement in Brahms,” in George Bozarth, ed., *Brahms Studies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 139–163.

2 “On Harmony and Meter in Brahms’s Op. 76, No. 8,” *19th-Century Music* 4 (1981): 261–265.

The ABS at Twenty

As the American Brahms Society turns twenty this coming spring, it can look back on two decades of solid accomplishments under the leadership of four presidents—Walter Frisch (1983–94), David Brodbeck (1995–97), John Daverio (1998–01), and Daniel Beller-McKenna (2001–present)—and its Executive Director, George Bozarth. Founded during the International Brahms Conference at the Library of Congress in the spring of 1983, on the occasion of the sesquicentenary of the birth of Johannes Brahms, this non-profit, learned organization has fostered the dissemination of research on the life, music, and historical position of Brahms through its Newsletter, series of *Brahms Studies*, Geiringer Scholarship, and Brahms Archive. The membership of the ABS has grown to include not only scholars, performing musicians, and music teachers, but also scientists, doctors, lawyers, businessmen, and other lovers of the music of Brahms in North America, Europe, and Japan.

Looking back, it is hard to believe that we have published forty issues of our biannual Newsletter, carrying essays on Brahms and his music, reports on the activities of the ABS and the research efforts of Brahms scholars in North America and abroad, and listings and reviews of books and recordings of special interest. Under the editorship first of Virginia Hancock (1983–96), then of Margaret Notley (1997–2002), and now of William Horne, this publication has been welcome by members of the ABS worldwide, numerous graduate programs in American and European universities, and over seventy research libraries.

During these same years the ABS has seen into print four well-received volumes of research papers in its series of *Brahms Studies*, the first edited by George Bozarth with the Oxford University Press (1990) and the remaining three edited by David Brodbeck with the University of Nebraska Press (1994, 1998, and 2001). This series continues under the joint editorship of Daniel Beller-McKenna, Margaret Notley, and Peter Smith.

The Society's Karl Geiringer Scholarship in Brahms Studies was established in 1989 in memory of a founding member and friend whose research laid the basis for much work to follow in our field. With an endowment created by donations from members of our society and friends of Karl Geiringer (with the significant assistance of the late Bernice Geiringer), this scholarship has been awarded over the years to seven young scholars engaged in the final stages of preparing doctoral dissertations on Brahms at universities in North America whose projects have showed special promise. Three Geiringer scholars—Heather Platt (1991: "Text-Music Relationships in the Lieder of Johannes Brahms"), Margaret Notley (1992: "Brahms's Chamber-Music Summer of 1886"), and Daniel Beller-McKenna (1993: "Brahms, the Bible, and Post-Romanticism")—now serve on the ABS's Board of Directors. The other prize winners were Dillon Parmer (1994: "Brahms the Programmatic"), Antonius Bittmann (1997: "Brahms, Wagner, and Competing Modernisms: Max Reger's Tortuous Path"), Kevin Karnes (2000: "Heinrich Schenker and Musical Thought in Late Nine-

teenth-Century Vienna"), and Ryan Minor (2002: "National Memory, Public Music: Commemoration and Consecration in Nineteenth-Century German Choral Works"). In 1998 a special award was made to Thomas Quigley for his book *Johannes Brahms: An Annotated Bibliography of the Literature from 1982 to 1996*.

The Society's Brahms Archive and Research Center at the University of Washington (Seattle) houses on microfilm and in photographic copy many of the extant primary musical and documentary sources for Brahms, especially early editions, as well as a nearly complete collection of the published correspondence, a large amount of the secondary literature, and a collection of pre-1950 performances of Brahms's music on CDs. The Archive's staff assists with the queries of research scholars and other individuals.

In the past year, with the guiding hand of Daniel Beller-McKenna, the ABS has begun to focus on the opportunities for increased communications that its website can offer. Among other things, we now wish to post on this site notices of all Brahms research-in-progress. Information about projects, including the working title and a brief abstract, should be e-mailed to Professor Beller-McKenna (dbmck@attbi.com).

As it begins its third decade, the American Brahms Society encourages its members and other readers of this Newsletter to help us spread the word about our organization and its activities. Our organization is hearty, but small, with only about 250 members in any given year. The ABS, which is supported entirely by its members' dues, wishes to expand its activities to include regular regional conferences. To this end, it is our goal to increase our membership by 10% a year over the next five years, to a membership of 450 by 2008, when our society will celebrate its 25th anniversary.

We cordially invite all who love the music of Brahms and support the Society's goals and projects to join its ranks. If you would like to have sample copies of our Newsletter sent to your friends and colleagues or for distribution at a "Brahms event" in which you are involved, please let us know at our Seattle office (brahms@u.washington.edu).

George S. Bozarth

Editor's Notes

The Editor would like to thank the contributors to this issue. Walter Frisch's article is an abbreviated form of a talk given at a Yale conference, "A Sense of Place," in December 2001. His interest in recorded traditions of Brahms's symphonies is reflected in his essay "In Search of Brahms's First Symphony: Steinbach, the Meiningen Tradition, and the Recordings of Hermann Abendroth" in the forthcoming *Performing Brahms*, edited by Michael Musgrave and Bernard Sherman (Cambridge University Press). Frisch's book *Brahms: The Four Symphonies* (1996) is being reissued in 2003 by Yale University Press.

The music theorist Richard Cohn is Professor of Music at the University of Chicago. He has published articles on metric dissonance in the music of Beethoven, Mozart, Dvorak, Brahms, and Steve Reich.

The F-minor Piano Quintet in the Neue Brahms Ausgabe

The work that eventually became Brahms's Piano Quintet in F minor (Op. 34) had a famously long and difficult gestation. In this it resembles the C-minor Symphony (Op. 68), the piece chosen for the inaugural volume of *Johannes Brahms: Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke* (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1996). The appearance, finally, of a critical edition of the Piano Quintet, the second volume to be published in the new collected works (1999), is most welcome. Carmen Debryn and Michael Struck, the editors, have gathered and organized a wealth of information concerning all stages of composition and dissemination from documents that include the various extant manuscripts and early editions, as well as correspondence and reviews from journals and newspapers. Sources for the Piano Quintet do not present as many difficulties as do those for the C-minor Symphony. But the chamber work does have that tortuous, fascinating history, which Debryn and Struck have illuminated in the substantial ancillary sections of the present volume.

Brahms had mastered most aspects of compositional craft in his first published works. Writing for instrumental ensembles, however, posed problems that he did not solve for some time. While compositions for solo piano, voice and piano, and chorus from the early years already sound accomplished, the first version of the B-major Piano Trio (Op. 8) strikes many listeners as immature. A number of passages sound flawed because of Brahms's scoring. That he continued to struggle with questions of scoring is obvious because of the complicated histories of several other instrumental compositions that date back to the 1850s and 1860s. With the C-minor Symphony and the Piano Quintet, this group includes the works that evolved into the D-minor Piano Concerto (Op. 15), the D-major Serenade (Op. 11), and the C-minor String Quartet (Op. 51, No. 1).

As is well known, Brahms originally conceived the Piano Quintet as a string quintet (with two cellos)—the autograph of which he probably destroyed—only to rewrite it as the Sonata for Two Pianos, which survives as Op. 34b, before deciding to combine strings and piano. Brahms was very fortunate in having Joseph Joachim and Clara Schumann as friends who, as letters cited in the introduction to the new edition make clear, did not hesitate to express their dissatisfaction with his scoring in one or the other of the early versions. Some less-than-ideal writing did survive into the final version of the work, the Piano Quintet. Questionable passages include the meager parts for the upper strings at the beginning of the second movement, which recall similar writing for the violin in the opening of the B-major Piano Trio. And the pedal point given to the pianist's left hand in the coda of the first movement (mm. 261–70) would have worked much better if played on the two cellos for which it was no doubt originally intended.

For scholars, much of the value of the new edition will lie in the detailed account of the work's genesis and above all in the critical report. In addition to a list of variants in the sources and of corrections made by the editors, the critical

report offers a meticulous account of revised passages in Brahms's autograph score, which served as the engraver's copy. Several of the more extensive revisions involved recomposing or redistributing the notes of the string parts. Thus in mm. 33–42 of the second movement in Brahms's manuscript, the beginning of the central E-major section, the editors have discerned several layers of revisions. At one point Brahms considered having the second violinist and violist double the pianist's right hand in mm. 33–34. He also tried giving the primary melodic line in mm. 35–36, which ultimately went to the second violinist and violist, to the cellist. But the conductor Hermann Levi warned him in a letter quoted by the editors that the writing was awkward on the cello, and Brahms took his advice. The critical report provides transcriptions of the reconstructed early versions of the passage, along with explanatory remarks (pp. 114–15) and a beautifully reproduced facsimile (p. 113)—one of many—of the relevant pages from the autograph.

In rewriting the problematic work for piano quintet, Brahms apparently referred to the autograph of the Sonata for Two Pianos, possibly also to that of the string-quintet version. The critical report describes several passages in the autograph of the Piano Quintet scored directly from the two-piano work, but then rewritten to diverge significantly from it. One example appears in the first movement toward the end of the exposition. Brahms originally composed a six-measure version of mm. 81–85 with consistent antiphonal effects between the two pianos: a lower version of a subphrase for Piano II answered by a version an octave or so above in Piano I. The third answer, the climax of the passage, led to the final cadence of the exposition. In the Piano Quintet Brahms gave the lower statements to the piano, answered by the strings in the higher register. But in a pasted-over revision of the passage, he left out the third low subphrase, which allowed the strings' second high answer to drive more urgently into the climax (m. 85 in the revised version), scored now for piano. (A facsimile of the autograph and a transcription are given on p. 72.) Similar revisions occur in the analogous place in the recapitulation and in the slow introduction to the final movement.

For performers, the attractions of this edition will probably center on the clarity and spaciousness of print that always makes Henle scores a pleasure to read, but also on the reinstated subtleties of Brahms's own dynamics, which will suggest fresh ways of shaping certain phrases. The edition, for example, restores a series of "hairpin" crescendos and decrescendos for a rising sequence toward the end of the development section in the first movement (mm. 154–59) as he notated them in the autograph. Because of what the editors call "engraving errors," the carefully calibrated distinctions between the pairs of hairpins for each of the sequence's three steps disappeared: each step received the same dynamic markings in the first edition and, as a consequence, in the collected works published in the 1920s.

The new edition's many virtues make it an invaluable resource for both scholars and performers. We anticipate studying the other volumes that have already come out and additional volumes on the way with great pleasure.

Margaret Notley

Recent Brahms Publications, Papers, and Recordings

Books and Articles

Appel, Bernhard R., ed. *"Neue Bahnen": Robert Schumann und seine musikalischen Zeitgenossen*. Mainz: Schott, 2002. ISBN 3-7957-0429-4. Among the seventeen articles in this volume are five concerning Brahms:

George S. Bozarth, "Brahms und Schumann: Erinnerungen in Musik"

Akio Mayeda, "Schumanns Motto und Brahms' Erste Symphonie: Motivanalyse und Versuch einer Deutung"

Michael Struck, "Beziehungs-Probleme: Zum Verhältnis der Komponisten Schumann und Brahms, dargestellt am Beispiel von Violinsonaten"

Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller, "Suitenbildung mit alten und neuen Tänzen in der Klaviermusik von Schumann und Brahms 1853-1855"

Linda Correll Roesner, "Brahms und die Schumann-Gesamtausgabe"

Cohn, Richard. "Complex Hemiolas, Ski-Hill Graphs and Metric Spaces," *Music Analysis* 20 (2001): 295-326.

Daverio, John. *Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. ISBN 0-19-513296-3.

Drawing on contemporary critical theory and a wide variety of nineteenth-century sources, Daverio explores the connections between art and life in the works of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms. Topics considered include Schubert and Schumann's uncanny ability to evoke memory in music and the allure of the Hungarian Gypsy style for Brahms and others in the Schumann circle. Although in his comprehensive discussion of the nineteenth-century practice of cryptography Daverio debunks the theory that Schumann and Brahms planted codes for "Clara Schumann" throughout their works, he portrays the three composers as musical storytellers, each in his own way simulating the structure of lived experience in works of art.

Hofmann, Renate and Kurt. *Johannes Brahms privat: Tafelfreuden und Geselligkeit*. Heide: Verlag Boyens & Co., 2002. ISBN 3-8042-1091-0.

Hofmann, Renate. "Clara Schumann und der Schweizer Dichter Josef Viktor Widmann im Briefwechsel." In *Schumanniana Nova: Festschrift für Gerd Nauhaus zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Bernhard R. Appel, Ute Bär, and Matthias Wendt, pp. 266-300. Sinzig: Studio Verlag, 2002. ISBN 3-89564-085-9.

Hofmann, Renate and Kurt. "Zu den Beziehungen zwischen Johannes Brahms und Mathilde Wesendonck." In *Minne, Muse und Mäzen: Otto und Mathilde Wesendonck und ihr Züricher Künstlerzirkel*. Zurich: Museum Rietberg, 2002.

Meyer, Martin. *Brahms-Studien*, vol. 13. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 2002. ISBN 3-7952-1092-5

Wolfgang Sandberger, "Neue Schätze im Brahms-Institut Lübeck—

zur Brahms-Motette *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her*, op. 29, Nr. 1" Styra Avins and Josef Eisinger, "Sechs unveröffentlichte Briefe von Brahms"

Renate Hofmann, "... das nöthig Salz zur großen Wassersuppe"—Ein unbekanntes Schreiben von Johannes Brahms an Elisabeth von Herzogenberg"

Angelika Dombrowski, "Der Autographen-Bestand des Brahms-Museums in Hamburg"

Gerhard Kohlweyer, "Elise Denninghoff-Johannes Brahms: Der Briefwechsel der 1880er Jahre"

Walther von Diest, "Von Gustav, dem Glückliche—Begegnungen mit Joachim und Brahms im Hause Schumann"

Kurt Hofmann, "Ein Brahms-Denkmal für Hamburg? Zur Geschichte des Modells von Reinhold Felderhoff"

Herta Müller, "Richard Mühlfeld—der Brahms-Klarinettist"

Gerd Sannemüller, "'Ich habe eine eigene Liebhaberei für die Form der Variation'—Zu den *Variationen über ein eigenes Thema* von Johannes Brahms"

Die Internationalen Brahms-Wettbewerbe—Eine Dokumentation

Samson, Jim, ed. *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

This multi-author volume of essays examines musical styles and languages and investigates the intellectual and sociopolitical history of the time. Commentary on Brahms's music appears throughout.

Papers Presented at Conferences

Papers read at the National Meetings of the American Musicological Society and the Society for Music Theory, Columbus, Ohio, 31 October-3 November 2002:

Antonious Bittmann (Rutgers University), "Brahms, Strauss, Sheep, and Apes: Reger's 'Heroic' Struggle with Tradition"

Peter H. Smith (University of Notre Dame), "The Sorrows of Young Brahms?: On the Intersection of Structure and Tragic Expression in the C-minor Piano Quartet"

Papers read at the Annual Meeting of Music Theory Midwest, University of Minnesota, 17-19 May 2002:

Yonatan Malin (University of Chicago), "Metric Displacement and Romantic Longing in the German Lied"

Ryan McClelland (Indiana University), "A Metrical Narrative in Brahms: Implications for Performance"

Music

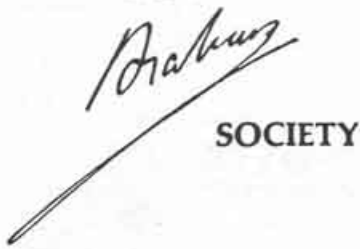
Brahms, Johannes. *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her, Motette Opus 29, Nr. 1: Faksimile nach dem Autograph im Besitz des Brahms-Institutes an der Musikhochschule Lübeck*. Commentary by Wolfgang Sandberger. Munich: G. Henle, 2002.

A beautifully executed full-color facsimile of the autograph once in the possession of Theodor Avé-Lallemant.

Brahms, Johannes. *Symphonie Nr. 2 D-Dur Opus 73*. Johannes Brahms Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke, Serie I, Band 2. Edited by Robert Pascall and Michael Struck. Munich: G. Henle, 2001.

Schubert, Franz. *20 Ländler für Pianoforte zu vier und zu zwei Händen*. Arranged by Johannes Brahms. Edited by Peter Roggenkamp. Vienna: Universal Edition, 2002.

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Nota Bene

Last summer the Brahms-Institut an der Musikhochschule Lübeck, under the direction of Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Sandberg, moved from its original site, high up in the dormers of the Institut für Medizin- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte in the middle of historic Lübeck, to more ample space outside the city walls in the newly restored Eschenburg Villa, a neo-classical country house designed by the Danish architect Christian Frederik Hansen around 1800. The new address is Jerusalemsberg 4, D-23468 Lübeck (phone: 49 (451) 1505-401; fax: 49 (451) 1505-420; e-mail: Brahms-Institut@mh-luebeck.de; web: <http://www.mh-luebeck.de>).

On 17 May 2002 Sotheby's of London (catalogue LO2302) offered at auction the engraver's model for Brahms's Double Concerto, Op. 102. This 169-page manuscript, in the hand of Brahms's regular copyist, William Kupfer, with revisions by Brahms and others, had been in private possession in Germany. Although it was not available to Han Gál when he edited the work for the old *Johannes Brahms sämtliche Werke* (1927), it was consulted by Michael Struck during the preparation of his edition for the *Neue Brahms-Ausgabe* (his source AB'). The Sotheby's catalogue includes a full-color facsimile of the third page of the manuscript (mm. 6-32) showing a rescoring of the bassoons and third horn (mm. 27-30). The starting range was £100,000-150,000.

At its Mitgliederversammlung on 12 July 2002, the Johannes-Brahms Internationale Vereinigung e.V. elected the pianist and conductor Cord Gerben as its new President, to succeed Prof. Eckart Besch, who has served in that position for five years.

With the next issue of the American Brahms Society Newsletter, its editorship will be assumed by William Horne of Loyola University in New Orleans. Professor Horne, who holds a doctorate in composition from the University of North Texas, joined our Board of Directors in 2001. His writings on Brahms include articles on the "Düsseldorf Suite" and the Intermezzo, Op. 116 No. 2 (*The Musical Quarterly* 73/2), the Op. 10 Ballades (*Journal of Musicology* 25/1), Brahms's Heine-Lieder (in *Brahms als Liedkomponist*, ed. Peter Jost and Anne Schneider), and the Variations on a Hungarian Theme, Op. 21 No. 2 (*Brahms Studies* 3). Proposals for articles and reviews may be addressed to him via fax (504/865-2852), e-mail (wphorne@loyno.edu), or mail (College of Music, Loyola University in New Orleans, LA, 70118).

Since the Spring 1997 issue the position of Newsletter Editor has been held by Margaret Notley, whose excellence in this capacity has been evident to readers of this publication. The Board of Directors and Officers of the ABS wish to express their most sincere thanks to Dr. Notley for her splendid efforts.

George Bozarth

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