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The “Still Center” in Brahms’s Violin Concerto, Op. 77

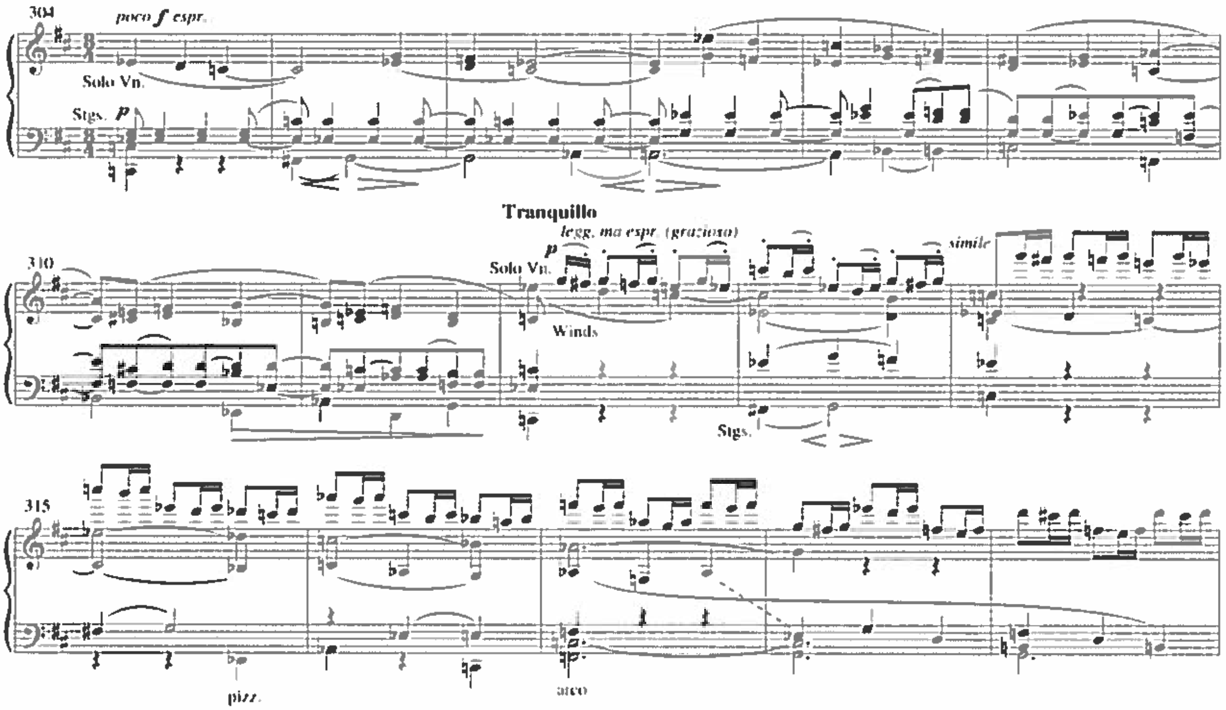
Most students of Brahms’s music would agree with Christian Martin Schmidt that “the formal concept of the variation series carries special weight in Brahms’s works.”[1] This idea might well apply to the central part of the development section in the first movement of his Violin Concerto, Op. 77. Although not a series of variations in a strict sense, this music nevertheless presents a number of variation-like characteristics.

An eight-measure “theme” in C minor shown in Example 1 (mm. 304–11, presented *poco forte*, like several of Brahms’s original themes for variations), is followed by another eight-measure section (mm. 312–19) marked *tranquillo*, and featuring a *leggiero* violin obbligato. The retention in the orchestra of the beginning of the theme creates the impression that this section is a variation. An appended cadential section (mm. 320–31), is followed by another variation-like section in C minor (mm. 332–39). Marked *a tempo* and *marcato*, it has the same phrase length as the theme, but introduces a trill motive for the solo violin while the orchestra takes up the sixteenth-note motive from the first variation.[2] The descending three-note head-motive of the theme at first appears to be missing from this variation. Brahms, however, provided a clue to its presence when he responded to Joseph Joachim’s suggested revisions in measures 337–39 by insisting: “I cannot do without the deep and high beginning notes” of the solo violin arpeggios.[3] These notes turn out to be E-flat, D, and C, the initial tones of the theme, which here close rather than open the last variation in a kind of virtuosic apotheosis. A final section (mm. 340–47), motivically linked to the first variation, moves away from C minor toward D major, the key of recapitulation, so I call it an “escaping” section.[4] The sections are divided from each other by half cadences. Brahms often constructed variations on short themes in this way, as in the passacaglia from his *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Op. 56a, the variations in the central section of the Romanze, Op. 118, No. 5, and variations 9–13 in his early *Variations on a Hungarian Song*, Op. 21, No. 2.[5] Variation pairs appear in all the works named above, and the Violin Concerto’s theme and first variation clearly form such a pair. The second variation is then paired with the escaping section through commonality of tempo and motive. Like variations, then, the sections exhibit a variety of tempos, textures, and figurations, and like variations, they hold in common elements such as phrase length, cadence, and key.

Joseph and Amalie Joachim in 1875. Photo courtesy of the Brahms-Institut an der Musikhochschule Lübeck.

The theme of these variations—really more an initiating motive—has roots deep in the movement’s orchestral and solo expositions. Example 2 shows how it evolved from a melody in mm. 41–45 of the orchestral exposition. Brahms isolated two measures of this idea in mm. 49–52, and then, in mm. 53–58, transformed them from a six-beat to a five-beat form. In mm. 69–73, the ascending second at the end of this five-beat prototype was transferred to an inner voice. One might call this the “contrapuntalization” of the idea, since its elements were spread out over two voices.[6] In the solo exposition (mm. 236–41), the ascending-second motive is thrown into sharp relief by the solo violin’s double stops. In the variation theme (m. 304), it appears for the first time in the lowest voice (cellos), so that the descending three-note motive becomes the theme’s primary melodic focus.[7]

The theme’s original antecedent (mm. 41–45) has the straightforward harmonies of a cadence figure in D major. At mm. 53–58, however, where it is transformed into the five-beat prototype, Brahms tonicized the subdominant area, i.e., G major, creating a sense of distance from the governing tonic of D major. This unexpected harmonic remove, the *pianissimo* dynamic, the suspension of the prevailing triple meter, and the repetition of the five-beat motive all contribute to the impression that the music has ceased its forward motion. It is a moment of stillness. Each subsequent appearance of this music leaves the same impression. Brahms sustains a diminished seventh sonority throughout mm. 69–74, all but extinguishing any sense of harmonic movement, and then extends the passage with a *diminuendo* abetted by an orchestration that trails away nearly into silence. This happens again in the solo exposition at mm. 236–41, except that there the local tonic chord of A minor extends through the first four measures.



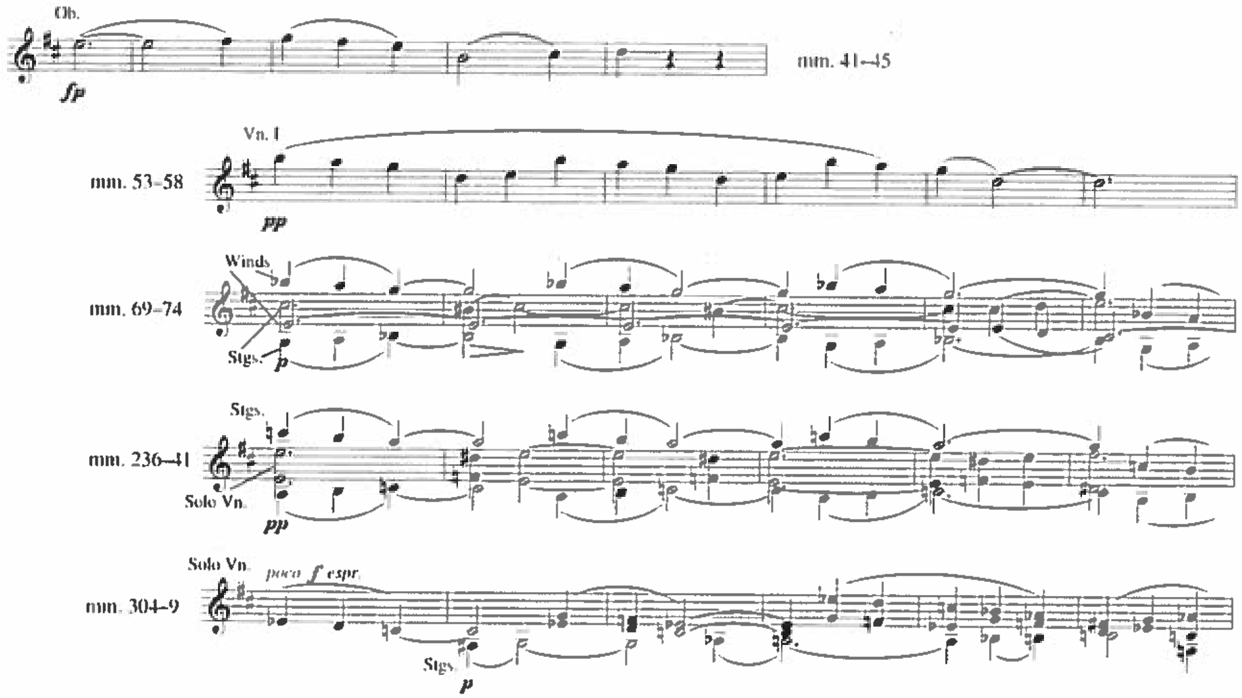
Example 1: Johannes Brahms, Violin Concerto, Op. 77, Mvt. 1, mm. 304–319

To transform this idea into a theme for variations, Brahms projected the descending three-note motive first a third and then a sixth higher, so that the flat, almost featureless melodic circling figures from the orchestral and solo expositions are reshaped into a generous melodic arch. The two-note ascending motive, a static feature in both expositions, pushes up chromatically in the lowest voice until it migrates to the upper parts at measure 309, leaving the bass to cycle downward in fifths. Both the upward chromatic movement in the bass and its descending fifth progression evoke the world of Baroque variations. As Robert Pascall observes, the delicate solo violin figuration in the first variation also has Baroque associations.[8]

So the floating, stillness-imbued moments of the exposition are transformed into an arching "theme" undergirded with strongly directed harmonic movement. Nevertheless, the sense of quietude associated with these ideas is reflected in the contemplative violin obbligato in the first variation and is ultimately magnified by the variation-like procedure itself. Sonata-form developments ordinarily emphasize tonal mobility, with few strong cadences, and feature fragmented motives rather than long-breathed melodic statements. The variation-like process in Brahms's Violin Concerto works against these expectations with its lengthy prolongation of C minor, emphatic cadences that produce a regular, eight-measure macrorhythm, and the variations' long melodic arches.

Example 3a shows that Brahms's development begins, as in many classical concertos, with a post-cadential transition section that bridges from the key at the end of the exposition to the key in which the next part of the development is launched. In a typical classical concerto, the post-cadential transition begins with an orchestral *tutti* immediately following the landmark cadence that concludes the solo exposition, and that is true of Brahms's Violin Concerto. A classical concerto development typically ends with a retransition to the tonic key, capped by standing-on-the-dominant immediately before the recapitulation. The recapitulation then coincides with another orchestral *tutti*, as is the case here. So the beginning and end of Brahms's development reflect well-established classical norms.[9] This makes the appearance of a group of variations in the middle of the development all the more remarkable—a "still center" in the midst of an otherwise conventional formal design.[10]

The concept of a "still center" linked to variation procedure must have pleased Brahms, since he returned to it in his Double Concerto, Op. 102. In the last movement, the development section of the sonata-rondo form contains a placid, sixteen-measure theme (mm. 148–64, marked *pianissimo* and *dolce*)



Example 2: Brahms, Violin Concerto, Op. 77, Mvt. I, passages related to the variation theme

followed by two graceful variations. The immediate further exploration of a variation-like "still center" in a string concerto, however, was left to Brahms's friend Antonin Dvořák, whose Cello Concerto, written in 1894–95, contains such a moment in the development section of the first movement. In his extensive study of the concerto, Jan Smaczny observes that "this episode—no other word will do—is prepared in a way that sets it apart from the texture of the rest of the movement, almost as if it is an aria, a 'still center' at the very heart of the movement."[11] After a *tutti* post-cadential transition (mm. 192–223), Dvořák presents an eight-measure phrase in G-sharp minor (mm. 224–31) that transforms the impetuous head-motive of the movement into a pleading *cantabile* (see Example 4). The following eight measures (mm. 232–39) combine with the first phrase to complete a period, but Dvořák also continues to vary the head-motive of the movement, and both phrases are written over a similar bass/harmonic pattern. Then a third eight-measure phrase (mm. 240–47) yields further variations of the same melodic ideas over much the same harmonic framework. In retrospect, the first eight-measure phrase has begun to sound like a "theme" paired with a first "variation" by their common *molto sostenuto* marking and underlying string tremolo. The second eight-measure "variation," marked *Animato*, introduces a light, sixteenth-note obbligato figure in the solo cello. This variation is paired with the following section (mm. 248–56) by a common tempo and shared motives. This last part is an escaping section, since it modulates away from G-sharp minor toward a standing-on-the-dominant in preparation for the recapitulation. (Dvořák's recapitulation begins with the second theme, in B major rather than B minor, at m. 267. In a brief nod to tradition, it commences with a drastically abbreviated orchestral *tutti.*)

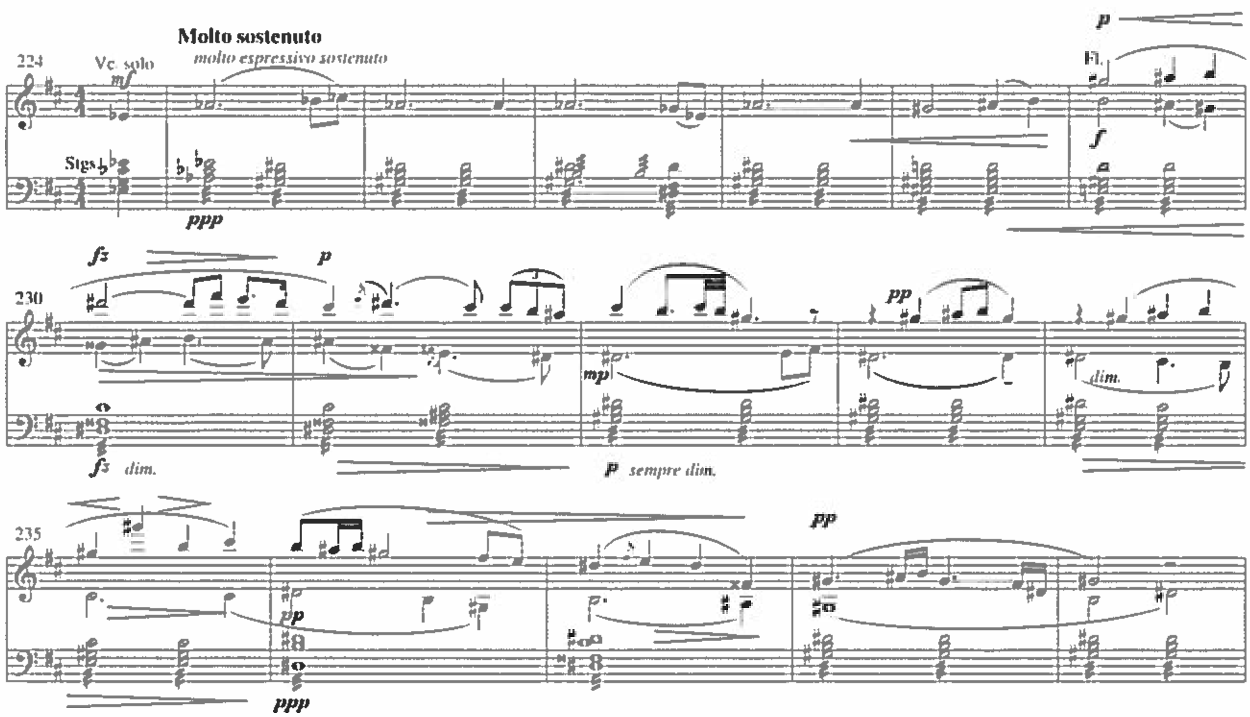
Dvořák's variation procedures differ markedly from those of Brahms, centering on ever-new melodic transformations of the movement's opening idea rather than on a neo-Baroque

Post-cad. trans.			Variations	Escape/retrans.		St.-on-dom.	Recap.
a	C	c	c	→→	d (e, f♯,a)	V/D	D
272	280	300	304	340	347	361	381

Example 3a: Johannes Brahms, Violin Concerto, Op. 77, Mvt. I, Development

Post-cad. trans.			Variations	Escape/retrans.		St.-on-dom.	Recap.
D	c	a♭	a♭/g♯	→→	b D	V/B	B
192	211	216	224	248		256	267

Example 3b: Antonin Dvořák, Cello Concerto, Op. 104, Mvt. I, Development



Example 4: Antonin Dvořák, Cello Concerto, Mvt. I, mm. 224–39

complex of motives. But there are also strong similarities between the "still centers": the strict holding to the same key throughout; the pairing of the theme with the first variation; the pairing of the second variation with an escaping section; the straightforwardness and regularity of the cadences, creating predictable, eight-measure macro-rhythms; the slowing of the tempo in the theme and first variation; the concomitant quickening and gathering of energy throughout the second variation and escaping section; the interpenetration of motivic material throughout the variations; the similar expressive trajectories of the whole. Moreover, Examples 3a and 3b show how closely Dvořák's music retraces the overall formal patterns in Brahms's development. All these concordances suggest that Dvořák had Brahms's Violin Concerto in mind when he composed his development section.

One wonders whether Brahms noticed. Florence May reports that early in 1897 Brahms invited the cellist Robert Hausmann to his rooms to play Dvořák's cello concerto for him.[12] Hausmann recalled that Brahms "accompanied the entire work on the piano and broke into enthusiastic admiration at the end of each movement, exclaiming after the last one, 'Had I known that such a violoncello concerto as that could be written, I could have tried to compose one myself!'"[13] Brahms already knew the work intimately, having corrected the proofs for his and Dvořák's publisher, Fritz Simrock, in January of 1896. Brahms's remarks to Simrock in a letter written on the 29th of that month are illuminating: "The cellists can be thankful to your Dvořák that he has bestowed on them such an excellent work. It appears to me better and also more practical than his piano concerto and his violin concerto."[14] In other words, Brahms's great enthusiasm for Dvořák's cello concerto was linked to a comparison with Dvořák's two earlier works in that form.[15]

Dvořák had composed his violin concerto in the summer of 1879 at Simrock's urging. He sent the first draft to Joachim at the end of November, hoping not only for technical suggestions from the great virtuoso, but also for Joachim's support in promoting the work. However, Joachim had serious reservations about the first draft, and at his suggestion Dvořák "revised the whole concerto, holding back not a *single bar*."[16] Additional suggestions from Joachim and further revisions by Dvořák were made in 1882. Simrock published the concerto in 1883, but Joachim never played it in public. He probably objected to the truncated form of the first movement, which lacked a classical double exposition. Moreover, the second movement commenced immediately after the recapitulation of the first subject, a formal anomaly that disturbed even Simrock's editor, Robert Keller.[17] Brahms was probably more involved in critiquing the concerto than has been recognized. Dvořák first discussed the work with Joachim at the end of January 1880 in Berlin. A month later Brahms and Joachim visited Dvořák in Prague, and the concerto may have come up for discussion. Moreover, a letter from Joachim to Phillip Spitta indicates that Brahms played through what must have been the revised version of the concerto with Joachim in mid-September of 1880 at Berchtesgaden.[18] Given Brahms's strong interest in Dvořák's music, it is difficult to imagine that the long-time friends failed to discuss the work.

In this context, Brahms may have been surprised by the traditional form of the cello concerto's first movement, with its double exposition, expansive development, and relatively orderly recapitulation. Perhaps he was also struck by the development's variation-like "still center," so similar to the one in the first movement of his own violin concerto. As a developmental strategy, this was quite unlike anything Dvořák had done before in a large orchestral work. So there might have been a touch of irony in Brahms's comment to Hausmann: "Had I known that such a violoncello concerto as that could be written, I could have tried to compose one myself!" For his part, although Dvořák had long since left off incorporating elements of Brahms's personal style into his music (his "still center" sounds nothing like Brahms), the formal indebtedness traced here suggests that when he approached the troublesome genre of the concerto for the third and last time, he drew on his experience of Brahms's music once more.

William Horne

Notes: 1. Christian Martin Schmidt, *Johannes Brahms und seine Zeit* (Regensburg: Laaber-Verlag, 1983), 91. **2.** The combination of continuous trills with ascending triad figures in this variation is reminiscent of several passages in the last movement of Giuseppe Tartini's "Devil's Trill" Sonata, a work Brahms would have associated with Joseph Joachim, the concerto's dedicatee. Renate and Kurt Hofmann list no fewer than sixteen occasions on which Brahms accompanied Joachim in this sonata. See Renate and Kurt Hofmann, *Johannes Brahms als Pianist und Dirigent* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 2006). **3.** *Johannes Brahms im Briefwechsel mit Joseph Joachim*, edited by Andreas Moser, 2 vols. (Berlin: Deutsche Brahms-Gesellschaft, 1908; repr. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1974), II: 170. **4.** So far as I know, only Arno Mitschka has drawn attention to the variation-like organization of this passage. See Arno Mitschka, "Der Sonatensatz in den Werken von Johannes Brahms," Ph. D. diss., Johannes-Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, (Gütersloh, 1961), 161. Mitschka postulates four variations rather than two, including as variations the areas I regard as cadential and escaping sections. **5.** Eight-measure phrase lengths and persistent half cadences also characterize Bach's D-Minor Chaconne, another work Brahms associated closely with Joachim. Brahms had arranged the Chaconne for piano, left hand alone, in 1877, about a year before he first drafted the violin concerto. In a June 1877 letter to Clara Schumann, he wrote: "The piece inspires one to engage with it in every way." Perhaps his engagement with the chaconne contributed to the idea of including a variation-like section in the first movement of his violin concerto. See Berthold Litzmann, ed., *Clara Schumann. Johannes Brahms. Briefe aus den Jahren 1853–1896*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1927), II: 111. **6.** Tovey called this process the "division" of the motive. See Donald Francis Tovey, "[Brahms's] Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77," in *Essays in Musical Analysis*, Volume 3: *Concertos* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), 126–39. **7.** This process of motivic transformation was first described by Brahms's Viennese friend, Richard Heuberger. See his "Johannes Brahms: Konzert für Violine mit Begleitung des Orchesters," in *Johannes Brahms: Erläuterung seiner bedeutendsten Werke*, edited by August Morin (Frankfurt am Main: H. Bechhold, n.d.): 282–95, prev. publ. *Der Musikführer*, [189?]. **8.** See Pascall's article on Brahms's concertos in *Brahms Handbuch*, edited by Wolfgang Sandberger (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2009), 478–96. **9.** In Brahms's manuscript of the Violin Concerto (Library of Congress, Washington DC), *tutti* and *solo* sections are designated above the staff. **10.** For a broader discussion of this idea, see David Beveridge, "Non-traditional Functions of the Development Section in Sonata Forms by Brahms," *The Music Review* 51 (1990): 25–35. **11.** Jan Smaczny, *Dvořák: Cello Concerto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 44–45. Smaczny and I arrived at the expression "still center" independently. **12.** Hausmann had played the concerto in Berlin on 13 November 1896. See Smaczny, 93. **13.** Florence May, *The Life of Johannes Brahms*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London: Arnold, 1905, repr. Neptune City: Paganiniana, 1981), II: 663. **14.** *Johannes Brahms Briefe an P.J. Simrock und Fritz Simrock*, edited by Max Kalbeck, 4 vols. (Berlin: Deutsche Brahms-Gesellschaft, 1917–19), IV: 189. **15.** Brahms owned scores of both of Dvořák's earlier concertos. See Kurt Hofmann, *Die Bibliothek von Johannes Brahms: Bücher- und Musikalienverzeichnis* (Hamburg: Karl Dieter Wagner, 1974), 151. **16.** Dvořák's letter to Simrock of 9 May 1880. See Antonin Dvořák: *Korespondence a Dokumenty*, 10 vols. (Prague: Edition Supraphon, 1987–2004), I: 217. It is less well known that Dvořák wrote to Joachim, when sending the concerto for the first time: "Besides, I have altered a great deal. So in particular the violin part in the development section and in many other places that I marked next to in pencil. Also, I have altered a lot of the instrumentation, which appears to me too strong in many places" (letter to Joachim of 29 November 1879, *Ibid*., I: 189). It is impossible to know whether Brahms had a hand in these early revisions, but for several years Dvořák had been profiting from Brahms's private comments on some of his scores. **17.** For Keller's objections, see *The Brahms-Keller Correspondence*, edited by George S. Bozarth in collaboration with Wiltrud Martin (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), xxxv–xxxvii. Roger Fiske argues that Dvořák modeled the first two movements after Max Bruch's Violin Concerto in G Minor (1866) in Antonin Dvořák, *Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op. 53* (London: Ernst Eulenberg, 1976), iii–iv. **18.** Letter of [19 Sept. 1880] in *Briefe von und an Joseph Joachim*, edited by Johannes Joachim and Andreas Moser, 3 vols. (Berlin: Julius Bard, 1913), III: 227. According to Clara Schumann's diary, the reading took place on 13 September. See Berthold Litzmann, *Clara Schumann: Ein Künstlerleben*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1920), III: 412–13.

Geiringer Scholarship Awarded

Congratulations to Laurie McManus of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, who has been awarded this year's Karl Geiringer Scholarship in Brahms Studies to support completion of her dissertation, "The Rhetoric of Sexuality in German Music Criticism, 1848–1883." In this work, McManus takes a fresh look at the "Brahms-Wagner" debate, focusing on images of sexuality, gender, and the body in the critical texts. She examines the terms in which notions of sensuality (Sinnlichkeit) and purity (Reinheit) were defined and the impact of these rhetorical strategies on the perception of music of Brahms, Wagner, and their contemporaries. Ms. McManus will be an assistant professor at Shenandoah Conservatory in Winchester, Virginia, starting in the autumn.

The Geiringer Scholarship supports students who are in their final stages of preparing a doctoral dissertation relating to Brahms at a North American university. Guidelines for applications were included in the Fall 2010 Newsletter and are available on the American Brahms Society website.

Review

Review of *Stimme und Geige: Amalie und Joseph Joachim, Biographie und Interpretationsgeschichte*, by Beatrix Borchard. Wiener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte 5. Vienna: Böhlau, 2005. 670 pages plus CD-ROM. ISBN 3-205-77242-3

In the introduction to this dual biography, Beatrix Borchard invites readers to consider the fates of two busts: the one of Joseph Joachim destroyed in 1938 as part of an effort to erase all record of the contributions of Jews to German culture, and the one of Amalie Joachim removed from her husband's brother's house in England after Amalie and Joseph's separation in 1880 and taken to Austin, Texas, by the sculptor, Elisabeth Ney. Borchard maintains that the stories of the two busts demonstrate a need for different kinds of biographical work for these two artists. In the case of Joseph Joachim, she engages in what she terms "Gegenlesen" (counter-reading), exploring ideas addressed insufficiently or not at all in the principal sources about his life: the biography by his student Andreas Moser, written in consultation with Joachim and revised after his death[1] (Borchard terms this an "(auto)biography"), Joachim's published correspondence edited by Andreas Moser and eldest son Johannes Joachim,[2] and the letters of Joachim and Brahms, edited by Moser and published as part of the Brahms *Briefwechsel* in 1912.[3] Borchard maintains that these publications aimed to document a *career*, rather than a *life*; she seeks to understand the artist more fully as a human being. The question of his Jewish identity—how it colored his self-image as a German artist, and its impact on his work and legacy—is a principal concern. By comparison, the published sources reveal little about Amalie Joachim. The fact that records of her life, and particularly of her personal life, are scant or missing altogether for large periods requires the author to engage in a process she calls "Lückenschreiben" (writing the gaps).

Borchard structures the book so as to allow the stories of her two subjects to develop independently and intersect at appropriate moments. In addition to passages of biographical narrative she presents two lengthy montages of letters with minimal commentary (though she discusses some of these elsewhere in the book). Through these montages Amalie, Joseph, and others emerge as multifaceted and fully human characters, and the reader is able to make independent observations. The author's brief accounts of episodes in her own research involve the reader in the excitement of the search and also communicate important lessons about the nature of biographical research and the role that the generosity of individuals and pure serendipity may play in it.

In a chapter entitled "Annäherungen" (Approaches), Borchard surveys the sources relating to the two musicians. Not surprisingly, there are many for Joseph: archival records, press reviews of concerts spanning his entire career, and hundreds of unpublished letters and documents in archives and private hands, in addition to published sources. Most of Amalie's papers stayed in the family, because they were thought to be of no value to others or were considered too personal to be shared.[4] There are more than one hundred letters, a prospectus for a private singing school, and an autobiographical sketch of Amalie's life up to age 15, when she entered into contract with the Vienna Court Opera, plus additions to this account on loose sheets; two versions of this account are included in an appendix. Amalie's name is found in archival records in Vienna, and reviews and advertisements of her Lieder concerts appeared in the 1880s and 1890s. That Amalie's story was largely forgotten after her death, despite her success as an important interpreter of the German Lied, gives weight to two of Borchard's claims: that performers have not received sufficient attention in the writing of music history, and that women tend not to be remembered beyond their lifetimes.

Part I of the book examines Joseph's and Amalie's lives to 1868 in separate chapters. Borchard follows Joseph's growth from Wunderkind to high priest of German music. She explores cousin Fanny Figdor's role in guiding Joseph to Vienna and on to Leipzig, and Felix Mendelssohn's importance as role model as musician, teacher, Jew, and also anti-virtuoso—in other words, as true artist. After Mendelssohn's early death, Joseph sought new direction at Weimar, where his devotion to Beethoven's music grew through friendship with Bettine von Arnim, and where he fell in love with her daughter, Gisela, a writer. Borchard describes Joseph's baptism in Hanover in 1855, with the King and Queen standing as godparents, as an act of distancing himself from heritage and family. In Hanover he attempted to synthesize Schumann's poetic music and Liszt's programmatic music in his own compositions, in what he called "psychological music," but this phase lasted only a few years. In Borchard's view, Joseph Joachim came to believe that his character was insufficient to enable him to create music that was "pure expression of inner feelings"—that is, he felt unequal to Brahms not in his musical ability, but in his inner constitution. He felt torn by conflict—with his family, between his desire for material gain and his artistic aspirations, and between the need to cater to public tastes and to promote "pure" art, an art he served as an interpreter but to which he felt unequal as a composer (127–28). He viewed this predicament as intertwined with his Jewish heritage. Under the influence of the Schumanns, Joachim separated himself formally from Liszt in 1857 and, after Robert Schumann's suicide attempt in 1854, devoted himself to a lifelong campaign for "truth in art" (130). To help explain why he composed few works after 1857, Borchard notes that his music was so personal that he was uneasy turning it over to other performers, and that he had difficulty reconciling composition with the promotion of a developing canon of masterworks. He described himself as a Hungarian composer, but a German violinist. Her statement that Joachim's separation from the New German School required him to go against his natural compositional inclinations and to exclude all approaches other than absolute music (130) bears further investigation and refinement, since the concept of "absolute music" was not operative in 1857, nor were the categories of programmatic and non-programmatic music clearly separated.

In the case of Amalie Schneeweiss Joachim, the challenge is in finding her story. According to her own account, it fell to her to rescue the family after her father's early death, by becoming a successful opera singer. Part of her mother's pension went to travel expenses and stage costumes. There were hardships and disappointments: one theater director absconded with the cash box, and for lack of money Amalie and her mother had to part from Amalie's older sister for a time. From the end of 1854 to 1862—that is, from ages 16 to 23—Amalie appeared in productions of the Vienna Court Opera under the name Amalie

Weiss. This section of the book provides a fascinating look at opera in Vienna from the inside. Borchard is able to reconstruct all of Amalie's singing roles, her financial situation (including debts she incurred supporting her mother and ailing sister, who died from tuberculosis at age 20), and disputes with theater management, but not her own perspectives, nor the details of her everyday life. Weiss made her debut as Fatima in Weber's *Oberon* and played other supporting roles, including Flora Bervoix in *La Traviata*, Arucena in *Il Trovatore*, the second lady in *Zauberflöte*, Mary in *Dutchman*, and Barberina and Marcellina in *Figaro*. Where direct information is lacking for her subject, Borchard "writes the gaps" by drawing on records relating to other singers. Given Amalie's strained financial circumstances and demanding schedule, Borchard's suggestion that the singer may have developed her aesthetic sensibilities by attending concerts of Joseph Joachim, Clara Schumann, and Julius Stockhausen in Vienna, as well as historical concerts of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde and soirées of the Hellmesberger Quartet, seems rather implausible.

In 1862 Amalie Schneeweiss was hired as court singer in Hanover, where Joseph Joachim served as concertmaster. Her tough stance in attempting to negotiate her contract is evidence of her assertiveness and also of hard lessons learned in Vienna. When Amalie and Joseph married in June 1863, Amalie gave up her stage career, as required by the terms of her contract and also by her husband; for a woman, a middle-class existence and an opera career were not compatible. This was an enormous leap of faith for the singer, whom Borchard claims was well positioned to achieve a breakthrough in her career and who had earned her own money since the age of 14.

Part II of the book, entitled "Der Geiger-König und seine Königin" (The Violin King and His Queen), opens with a montage of letters of Amalie and Joseph from their courtship to 1868; Amalie's letters and some of Joseph's are published here for the first time. They tell of their marriage and honeymoon, Amalie's conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism, her pregnancy and the birth of their son Johannes (1864), Joseph and Amalie's separate travels for concerts, her lengthy illness after the birth of their second child Hermann (1866), her study with Julius Stockhausen, Joseph's travels with Brahms and his journey to England in 1867, and the birth of their third child Marie (1868). There follows a chapter about Joseph's founding of the Hochschule in Berlin as a training ground for German musicians and in fulfillment of the legacy of Felix Mendelssohn. In his position as director he condemned the New German School in strong terms. He opposed the appointments of Clara Schumann and Amalie Joachim as heads of the piano and voice departments, respectively, but Amalie seems to have had a role in designing the curriculum and also to have been employed as a teacher in 1875. Initially, Joseph was reluctant to admit women students; however, the school graduated a number of fine female musicians, including violinists Marie Soldat and Maud Powell.

In a companion chapter, Borchard examines Amalie's role as mother, wife, and artist. During this period Amalie Joachim spent much of her time at home due to pregnancy, illness, and recovery after the births of children Josepha (1869), Paul (1877) and Lisel (1881). Yet the couple did tour together in Germany, Austria, and Sweden, and represented the ideals of German music in their respective areas of accomplishment—thus, "Stimme und Geige." Borchard examines questions of gender perspective in Amalie Joachim and Clara Schumann's performances of Robert Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*, a work portraying the ideal of womanhood, created by a male poet and male composer and performed by two women married to famous men; they performed only the first four or five songs, tracing a woman's experience of love, marriage, and birth of a child, but leaving out the phase of widowhood. As the public well knew, neither of these women conformed to the ideal presented in this cycle. Amalie Joachim continued to program the work after she and Joseph separated, but then she sang the entire cycle—an act that allowed her to project on stage an identity that she no longer had in life.

A second montage of letters tells of the family's life in Berlin, their concerns over the Franco-Prussian War, Joseph's concerts in Russia and England and Amalie's in Vienna and Königsberg, Amalie's gallstone illness in 1874, and the couple's separation in 1880 after Joseph accused his wife of having an affair with Fritz Simrock. Joseph exerted his influence to ensure that artists and concert establishments would no longer engage Amalie. Brahms was one of very few who offered her continued friendship and support; as is well known, this led to a break with Joseph for a time and a permanent cooling of their friendship. Joseph's two lawsuits against Amalie were found to be without merit, the couple divorced, and the children were split up. Amalie's attempts at reconciliation seem to have been at least partly successful in the years leading up to her death of complications from gallbladder surgery in 1899.

The divorce had the effect of bringing Amalie Joachim into our view, since she then embarked upon a career as a concert singer. In Part Three of the book, Borchard addresses her voice and technique, her programs, and her tours of several countries, including the United States. Beginning in December 1890 Amalie Joachim presented a cycle of four historical Lieder evenings that offered a chronological overview of German song from the fifteenth century to the present. Scores for these works were published by Simrock, some of them for the first time.

Borchard offers a fuller account than can be found elsewhere of the singer's role in interpreting and also inspiring some of Brahms's works. Brahms was charmed by Amalie's personality and by her pure, deep alto voice, which he likened to the sound of an old Italian viola, and the sensitivity of her expression. Beginning in the mid-1860s Amalie performed 139 of Brahms's songs, more than of any other composer; "Feldeinsamkeit," Op. 86, No. 2, "Vergebliches Ständchen," Op. 84, No. 4, "Wiegenlied," Op. 49, No. 4, and "Ständchen," Op. 106, No. 1, are among those she sang most frequently. She established the *Alto Rhapsodie*, Op. 53, in the repertory and also performed the *Magelone* cycle. The *Two Songs for Alto, Viola, and Piano*, Op. 91, which Brahms published in December 1884[5] (thus shortly before Amalie and Joseph's divorce), seem also to have been written with her voice in mind. With Julius Stockhausen she sang the *Four Duets*, Op. 28, dedicated to her, and Brahms accompanied her in concerts in Holland in 1882. Simrock called upon her to try out new, unpublished Lieder of Brahms in private gatherings and public matinees he organized. Borchard provides additional perspective on Amalie Joachim's stature as a performer of Brahms's music through comparisons with Hermine Spies and Alice Barbi, performers who may come more readily to mind as "Brahms singers," but whose careers had a more limited span, since they gave them up after marriage in the early 1890s.

In a final chapter on Joseph Joachim's position as a champion of German instrumental music, Borchard describes his solo repertory, which emphasized a small core of pieces including the Bach D-Minor Chaconne and concertos of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Spohr, Viotti, and Brahms, and his own Hungarian Concerto, Op. 11. Joachim's name is identified closely with Beethoven's music, especially the late quartets and the Violin Concerto, a work that he established at the age of 13 and programmed throughout his career. His quartet performed all of Brahms's chamber music for strings, and as director of the Hochschule he promoted Brahms through the institution's concerts. Over a 36-year period the Joachim-Quartett presented 288 concerts in the Singakademie in Berlin, bringing the playing of quartets into the public sphere and helping to establish a canon of chamber music for strings that encompassed the entire works of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms. In Joachim's eyes, this was a means of building not only a German repertory, but a German nation.

In place of a conclusion, Borchard poses a series of questions. She observes that the reception histories of Joseph's quartet evenings and Amalie's Lieder evenings demonstrate that the writing of music history based on the history of performance (*Interpretationsgeschichte*) and on gender perspectives significantly challenges the established framework. She questions the hierarchy of genres that privileges orchestral and chamber music over the Lied, and also the tendency to view programs mixing a variety of works as non-serious. In a moment of "counter-reading," she asks why Joseph Joachim, who belonged to more than one cultural tradition, would devote his life to the promotion of a "pure" German musical tradition, and suggests that giving up composition may have been the price he believed he must pay in order to be counted among German musicians.

The book includes an extensive bibliography of published and unpublished sources; the index, unfortunately, is limited to a register of persons. An accompanying CD-ROM presents a wealth of material: repertory lists for the Joachim-Quartett and the Hellmesberger-Quartett and for Amalie Joachim, materials relating to Amalie's historical concerts of German Lieder, an inventory of Joseph's compositions, employment contracts for both artists, a schedule of the Vienna Court Opera season in 1855–56 with Amalie Weiss's roles specified, Amalie's prospectus for a private singing school, the program for Joseph's 60-year jubilee concert, portraits, obituaries, and other documents.

Pending further study of Joseph Joachim's compositions and the preparation of critical editions and a full catalog of works—projects that surely will be undertaken— Borchard's works list on the CD-ROM must be taken as provisional and used with great caution (as must the compressed version published in *MGG*); it is incomplete and contains errors. To focus on one work with which the reviewer is familiar: Joachim's *Ouvertüre zu Heinrich IV.* was composed not in Leipzig, but in Göttingen and Hanover.[6] No edition was published by Simrock in 1897; the overture remains unpublished. The surviving sources for this work are not mentioned: the autograph in the Archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, dated 1854 and with a dedication to Brahms, and a copy in the Brahms-Institut Lübeck, dated July 1854. According to Joachim, Robert Schumann completed several pages of a four-hand (not solo) arrangement in Endenich.[7] Borchard identifies a copy of Brahms's arrangement for two pianos in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz but misses the copy in the Archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, as well as the autograph there (score plus separate Piano II part) dated August 1855; her dating of 1854/56 for the arrangement therefore can be refined. A similar list of corrections and additions could be offered for the *Ouvertüre zu Hamlet* and the *Ouvertüre zu Herman Grimms Demetrius*, Opp. 4 and 6.

Despite these problems—and they have minimal impact on the substance of the book—Borchard's joint biography of Amalie and Joseph Joachim is an excellent and most welcome contribution to the scholarly literature. It documents the professional and personal lives of two exceptional artists—one of them scarcely visible previously and the other known mainly through his professional legacy as performer and teacher. It also provides insights into broader topics, including the role of gender in nineteenth-century musical life, the special position of Jews who devoted themselves to the promotion of German art and culture, and the very human enterprise of combining work, art, love, and family. Borchard's strategy of combining biographical narrative with exchanges of letters and accounts of her own research experiences effectively links past and present and provides important insights into the construction of biography and history.

Valerie Goertzen

Notes. 1. Andreas Moser, *Joseph Joachim: Ein Lebensbild* (Berlin, 1908; rev. vol. 1, Berlin, 1908, vol. 2, Berlin 1910). **2.** *Briefe von und an Joseph Joachim*, edited by Johannes Joachim and Andreas Moser, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1913). **3.** *Johannes Brahms im Briefwechsel mit Joseph Joachim*, edited by Andreas Moser (vols. 5–6 of *Johannes Brahms, Briefwechsel*) (vol. 1, 3rd ed., Berlin 1921; vol. 2, 2nd ed., Berlin 1912). **4.** Borchard's bibliography identifies the locations of these materials, some of which have found their way into libraries and archives. **5.** See Margit L. McCorkle, *Johannes Brahms: Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (Munich, G. Henle, 1984), 374–75. Brahms had sent a version of Number 2, a lullaby, to Joseph in September 1864, before the baptism of the couple's first child, Johannes, Brahms's godson. Borchard discusses further connections between this work and the Joachims (462–64). **6.** *Briefe von und an Joseph Joachim*, I: 73, 105, and 134; also an unpublished letter to brother Hermann, dated Göttingen 25 July 1853 (Brahms-Institut an der Musikhochschule Lübeck 1991.2.53.7). **7.** Letter to Gisela von Arnim [8 August 1856]; *Briefe von und an Joseph Joachim*, I: 364.

Brahms on the Web

The Brahms-Institut an der Musikhochschule Lübeck has made its online databank "Brahms Briefverzeichnis" (BBV) available for visitors to its website, www.brahms-institut.de. The catalogue lists more than 10,800 items of Brahms's correspondence in chronological order. About 6,840 of the items originated with Brahms, and about 3,960 with his correspondents, who numbered over 1000. Of the listed items, 3,476 have yet to be published. The user may call up

(Continued on p. 10)

Brahms's Waltz in A Minor

An interesting Brahms autograph manuscript was sold by the Doyle Auction Galleries in New York City on 20 April 2011. A facsimile of this item appears online at http://www.artdaily.org/index.asp?int_sec=11&int_new=46690. Written on a single page in the midst of an autograph album and signed *Zur Erinnerung / Johs Brahms*, with its closing barline elaborated into the initial *B*, it preserves an alternative version, for solo piano, of the waltz-like trio section of the second movement of the Horn Trio, Op 40, a chamber work that Brahms completed in Baden-Baden in May 1865. In the key of A minor (rather than A-flat minor) and with a tempo marking of *Allegro con espressione* (rather than *Molto meno Allegro*, indicating a shift from *Scherzo. Allegro.*), this fifty-bar piece in binary form varies significantly from the horn trio from its double barline through to the recapitulation (bars 13b–30) and again for its final four bars. What we have here is material shared with the horn trio, used to create an independent little piano piece, one that has yet to be published. But which is the chicken and which the egg?

During the year 1872 Brahms changed the way he wrote his natural signs, and this manuscript contains the earlier type, providing a *terminus ad quem* for its creation. The middle and closing sections that vary between trio and piano piece also show significant compositional revisions in the autograph manuscript of the horn trio (Whittall Collection, Library of Congress). In the portion after the double barline the revisions in the horn-trio autograph all concern instrumentation, the music being the same before and after. But in the closing sections—mm. 335–43 of the trio, mm. 39–46 of the solo piano piece—the piano piece matches the *final* version of the horn trio, which would seem to suggest that the piano piece was prepared *after* the horn trio was completed in 1865, and before Brahms changed his natural signs in 1872. However, with Brahms one never can tell. The piano piece could have come first, and while writing out the horn trio Brahms first thought to alter the passage, but then reverted to his original (=solo piano piece) reading.

The final four bars of the piano piece are entirely different from the closing in the horn trio, which stretches for nineteen bars. At the beginning of this passage in the horn-trio autograph, using a lead pencil, Brahms entered a slanted line above the barline.

The album in which the piano piece is found also contains autograph musical quotations by a host of important performers and composers—Hans von Bülow, Ferdinand Hiller, Niels Gade, Moritz Hauptmann, Joseph Joachim, Johann Wenzel Kalliwoda, Jenny Lind, Charles Henry Litolff, Heinrich Marschner, Felix Mendelssohn, Alfredo Piatti, Carl Reinecke, Gioachino Rossini, Anton Rubinstein, Robert and Clara Schumann, Ludwig Spohr, and Henryk Wieniawski—and a number of relatively minor musical figures, as well as textual entries and several drawings and watercolors. From the inscriptions on the entries, it is clear that the album belonged to the composer and conductor Arnold Wehner (1820–80), who held positions in Göttingen, Hanover, and Leipzig. The entries are written on at least two different papers, suggesting that the album may have evolved as two separate albums later bound together. The entries in the first album were made in the 1840s and early 1850s—there is one by Louis Spohr from 1842, as well as two others by him from 1848 and 1851—while those in the second album stem from *ca.* 1870. The Brahms page occurs in the first album.

Brahms met and became very friendly with Wehner during the summer of 1853 in Göttingen, where Wehner was director of music at the university. Comparison of the handwriting in the album page with manuscripts from this period reveal no incongruities in style. Indeed, the inscription in the album looks quite similar to the inscription *Zur freundlichen Erinnerung / Johs Brahms* on the autograph of the song *Liebe und Frühling*, Op. 3, No. 4, which Brahms wrote in the album book of Louise Japha and dated *Düsseldorf im October [18]53.* Moreover, the entry directly before Brahms's is an autograph musical quotation by Eduard Reményi (the page after Brahms's contains a watercolor of a marine scene). Since Reményi did not accompany Brahms to Göttingen at the end of June 1853, after their visit with Liszt, but remained in Weimar, severing his collaboration with Brahms, this pair of pages must date from the beginning of that month, when Brahms and Reményi briefly visited Joachim in Göttingen and would have met Wehner for the first time. So this music began its life as an independent little piano composition—one which Brahms kept in his portfolio for a decade before employing it in the horn trio. This scenario is the same as occurred with Brahms's sarabande and gavotte in A major, composed by 1854/55, long before they became the thematic materials for the set of double variations in his String Quintet, Op. 88, of 1882.

George Bozarth

I wish to thank Lubran Music Antiquarians for calling this manuscript to my attention and answering queries about its contents.

Conferences

The symposium "Brahms am Werk. Konzepte, Texte, Prozesse," organized by the editorial board of the Johannes Brahms Gesamtausgabe, will be held 7 October 2011, as part of the annual meeting of the Gesellschaft für Musikforschung. The symposium will focus on issues that have come to the fore as a result of work on the collected edition of Brahms's works, including matters relating to Brahms's compositional processes and habits of writing; the concept of the work in light of Brahms's revisions, alternative versions, and arrangements; the movement of works from the composer's immediate purview to the public arena; and the interrelations between philological perspectives, performance, analysis, and cultural criticism. Further information is available at http://www.uni-kiel.de/fakultas/philosophie/musikwiss/.

A conference entitled "Brahms and the Home," scheduled for 4–6 November 2011 at the Royal College of Music, London, will provide a forum for discussion of Brahms and his music in domestic life. Topics include Lieder, chamber music, and piano music of Brahms and his contemporaries, and arrangements and transcriptions by Brahms and others in his circle. ABS member Dr. Michael Musgrave will give the keynote address. The conference website is www.rcm.ac.uk/brahms/.

The call for papers for the ABS conference entitled "Brahms in the New Century," to be held 21–24 March 2012, appeared in our Fall 2010 Newsletter. Guidelines for submissions (due 1 June 2011) are available at http://brahms.unh.edu/Call.pdf.

(Brahms on the Web, continued from p. 8)

chronological lists of items by decade and may further limit searches to correspondence to or from a particular person, or to correspondence written from a particular place. Citations are identified by the sender and recipient of an item, its place of origin, its date, and by text incipit. All printed sources are cited for items that have been published, and for all items the present location of the original letter is provided, if known, along with accession numbers in libraries and archives. For the texts of the items themselves, the user must access the printed sources or contact the libraries or archives that hold unpublished items.

Experienced consultants of Brahms's correspondence will know that not all items were dated by their authors. Consequently, the dating provided in some published sources—for example, in Brahms's correspondence with Joseph Joachim—can be unreliable. The editors of the BBV have taken care to provide conservative and soundly reasoned dates for such items, often in the format of *terminus a quo* or *terminus ad quem* based on the content of the item. This very useful catalogue is edited by Wolfgang Sandberger and Christiane Wiesenfeldt, with assistance from Fabian Bergener, Peter Schmitz, and Andreas Hund. The project received financial support from the Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft and the Possehl-Stiftung Lübeck, and could not have come into existence without the cooperation of libraries, archives, and scholarly societies from around the world.

On 27 October 2010 the Brahms-Institut came closer to its goal of making its entire collection available through the Internet when it launched its digital collection of Brahms autographs and engravers' models. Among the treasures here are Brahms's address book and the autograph engravers' models of the piano-vocal score of the fifth movement of the German Requiem and the Piano Quartet, Op. 26. The Archive's manuscript and print sources for a given work are brought together on a single page, making comparison of the materials easy (one can open documents simultaneously in different windows). Information on the compositional history, first performances, and sources for each work— sources in the Lübeck archive and elsewhere—is also provided. The Archive's photo collection was digitalized in 2003, and in 2006 the "Digitaler Notenschrank" (Digital Music Cabinet) was launched, presenting first editions of Brahms's works. Also available through the website are close to 250 concert programs from the period 1859–1947, scores for nearly 80 pieces dedicated to Brahms, and other materials pertaining to those in his orbit. These projects were carried out by Mathias Brösicke, Stefan Weymar, and the digitalization firm Dematon, with funding from the Wissenschaftsministerium des Landes Schleswig-Holstein through the Schleswig-Holstein-Fonds.

Recent Publications

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Bashford, Christina. "Historiography and Invisible Musics: Domestic Chamber Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 63, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 291–360.

Diergarten, Felix, et al, eds. *Musik und ihre Theorien: Clemens Kühn zum 65. Geburtstag.* Dresden: Sandstein Verlag, 2010. ISBN 978–3–942422–06–2

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Jan Philipp Sprick, "Liedanalyse im Kontext. Ein Unterrichtsentwurf zum Vergleich von Brahms' und Wolfs' 'An eine Äolsharfe,'" 149–60

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Christina Anagnostopoulou and Chantal Buteau, [Introduction:] "Can Computational Music Analysis Be Both Musical and Compositional?" 75–83
Darrell Conklin, "Distinctive Patterns in the First Movement of Brahms' String Quartet in C Minor," 85–92
Atte Tenkanen, "Tonal Trends and α–motif in the First Movement of Brahms' String Quartet Op. 51 Nr. 1," 93–106
Philippe Cathé, "Harmonic Vectors and Stylistic Analysis: A Computer-Aided Analysis of the First Movement of Brahms' String Quartet Op. 51-1," 107–119.

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(Continued on p. 12)

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Critical Editions

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Editors' Notes

Contributors to this issue include Valerie Goertzen (Loyola University New Orleans), whose critical edition of Brahms's arrangements for piano four hands and two pianos of works of other composers for the new *Johannes Brahms Gesamtausgabe* will soon be available from G. Henle Verlag; George Bozarth (University of Washington in Seattle), whose many contributions to the Brahms literature include coauthoring, with Walter Frisch, the article on Brahms for the second edition of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*; and William Horne (Loyola University New Orleans), whose article, "Late Beethoven and 'The First Power of Inspiration' in Brahms's *Variations on an Original Theme*, Op. 21, No. 1," will appear in volume 30 (2011) of the *Journal of Musicological Research.*

We are grateful to Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Sandberger and Mr. Stefan Weymar of the Brahms-Institut an der Musikhochschule Lübeck for providing the photograph that appears on the cover of this issue, to George Bozarth for his editorial assistance, and to Douglas Niemela, who distributes the Newsletter from the Society's office at the University of Washington in Seattle. Materials for the fall issue should be sent to the Editors via email by 1 September 2011.

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