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Clara Schumann: New Cadenzas for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor.
Romantic Visions of a Classical Masterpiece.

Ludwig Sémerjian



Special points of interest:

Clara Schumann's bicentenary

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2019 marks the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Clara Schumann, the great 19th century pianist and pioneer for women in the professional arts. In honour of the occasion, a little known manuscript by her of cadenzas for Mozart's D Minor Piano Concerto from the collection of the Library of Congress in Washington DC will be published for the first time.

This is the story of her manuscript, how it was recovered from the library's archives, the circumstances surrounding its composition, its mysterious links with Brahms's cadenza for the same concerto and its dramatic journey to the United States during the chaos of World War II.

Preface and Introduction

A few years back, I had the opportunity to give a piano recital at the Robert-Schumannhaus Museum in Zwickau on a piano that once belonged to Clara Schumann. The piano dates to around 1820 and was built by Matthäus Andreas Stein, son of the great Johann Andreas Stein, whose early instruments were greatly admired by Mozart. It is said to have been originally purchased by Clara Schumann's father, Friedrich Wieck, for the public debut of his talented nine-year-old daughter. The piano has a lovely tone, delicate, lyrical and responsive, but it was too early an instrument for the kind of repertoire we normally associate with Clara Schumann, namely the great Romantic works by Robert Schumann, Brahms and others. At only six octaves, it simply lacked the range to accommodate the larger works of the mid-nineteenth century. This was easily overcome for the purposes of the recital by adjusting the program to include earlier works by Haydn, Mozart and Schubert, but for future projects I wanted to find repertoire that both suited the piano and had direct links to Clara Schumann herself. Mozart's D Minor Piano Concerto came to mind. This great eighteenth

century work was perfectly suited to the Stein instrument and was a particular favourite of Clara Schumann's, and she even wrote cadenzas for it. Her cadenzas for the concerto are quite well known, they were composed and published in honour of the one hundredth anniversary of Mozart's death in 1891 and are still in print today. What is not generally known is that there exists another, much earlier set of cadenzas by her for this concerto, which has never been published and only exists in manuscript form in the archives of the Library of Congress in Washington DC.

These unpublished cadenzas came to my attention when I was at the Library of Congress for a concert and some unrelated research. I knew the original autograph of Clara Schumann's published cadenzas was in the library's collection and I took the opportunity to look it up. I was surprised to find not one, but two entries for cadenzas by Clara Schumann for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor. The first, as expected, was the manuscript of the familiar 1891 published edition. The other was something different, a second fully realized manuscript of cadenzas by her for the same concerto. The two manuscripts could not have looked more different. The 1891 score is a rough copy full of corrections and adjustments, typical of a document being prepared for publication. The second manuscript is a neatly written fair copy on a fancy paper, with almost no corrections or deletions, and was clearly meant to be used and played. The manuscript is unsigned and undated (see ex. 1).

On closer examination, we can see clear thematic parallels between the two scores, so there is obviously some kind of connection there, but differences in handwriting and paper type suggest that the unpublished manuscript came from a much earlier time, probably around 1855, just prior to her planned



Ex. 1 First page of Clara Schumann's 1855 unpublished manuscript. Printed by permission of The Library of Congress.

performance of the concerto during the Mozart Centennial of 1856. The most intriguing aspect of her early manuscript is its striking similarity to Johannes Brahms's cadenza for the same concerto. Brahms wrote his cadenza in 1855, around the same time as Clara Schumann's early score, and his autograph score (which only contains a cadenza for the concerto's first movement) is also held today in the Library of Congress. So what we have here are three distinct versions of what is essentially the same cadenza, written at different times by two different authors. Clearly, there is an interesting story here and it all seems to begin with Clara Schumann's unpublished manuscript.

In this article I will examine Clara Schumann's early manuscript from all sides, starting with a detailed stylistic analysis of the music itself and what it might tell us about her interpretive approach to Mozart's concerto. I will also look into its relationship with Brahms's cadenza to try to determine how their cadenzas came to be so alike. I will briefly discuss the 1891 version and look at some of the changes she made at that time. Finally, I will follow the fate of Clara Schumann's manuscript after her death and, in the process, will uncover the compelling and previously untold story of its connection to the Stonborough-Wittgenstein family and the dramatic journey that would bring the manuscript from war-torn Europe to the United States and, ultimately, into the collection of the Library of Congress.

The Romantic Cadenza

Clara Schumann (1819–1896) is best known today as one of the great pianists of the nineteenth century and wife of the pioneering Romantic composer Robert Schumann (1810–1856). Their passionate love affair and his subsequent descent into mental illness, suicide attempts and an early death in a mental institution has become the stuff of legend. Despite all this personal turmoil, Clara Schumann forged a long and brilliant career as a professional pianist and went on to become a great pioneering figure in her own right. She single-handedly broke the gender barrier, which at the time precluded the possibility of a woman (much less a widow with seven children) pursuing a serious career as a professional concert pianist, and her achievements did not end there. Over the course of her career, she redefined the profession itself through groundbreaking ideas in programming and in the way she presented herself to the public. She became the key transitional figure between the old mode of public performance (in place since at least the eighteenth century) and the modern type of concertizing we know today.

During the nineteenth century (and long before that), the public expected pianists to present mostly their own original compositions during their concerts and recitals. This was fine

if the pianist also happened to be an interesting composer, like Mendelssohn or Chopin, but more often than not, audiences were subjected to an endless parade of vapid showpieces designed solely as vehicles for technical display. Clara Schumann herself began her career this way. During her early years as a young virtuoso, she composed plenty of charming salon-style pieces for her recitals and also played exciting but unremarkable piano pieces by contemporary virtuosos like Pixis and Herz,¹ but over time this type of programming left her unsatisfied. It became increasingly difficult for her to present standard music to her knowledgeable audiences, especially when so much great music by truly great composers was going unheard. After her husband's death, Clara Schumann reinvented her career. She no longer composed original works for her recitals and instead filled her programs with music by great composers of the past, like Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, whose piano works, surprising as it seems for us today, were rarely performed in public at the time.² She supplemented her repertoire with newer works by important contemporary composers like Mendelssohn, Chopin, Brahms, and, of course, her husband Robert Schumann. This sounds very much like the type of programming we are accustomed to today, but in Clara Schumann's time it was something completely new. Her performances became less about herself and more about the music she played and her comportment on stage reflected this; she became known for her humility and restraint in front of the public (rare virtues in the era of Thalberg and Liszt). The old classics provided plenty of opportunity for technical display and as a bonus she could put forth a new skill: interpretation, the art of communicating in a most personal way the essence of a great piece of music; and in this, Clara Schumann had no peer. Her knowledge and comprehension of the repertoire was unmatched. She became the first exclusively interpretive pianist and her stunning success opened new paths for future generations. Eventually, her way would become the norm.

We have no way of knowing what Clara Schumann's famous interpretations sounded like. Her early original compositions may reflect something of her general playing style, but they cannot reveal anything about her approach to the music of other composers. This is why her cadenzas are such valuable documents for us today. A cadenza is not really an original composition. It is a section of a concerto, usually coming near the end of a movement, where the orchestra pauses and the soloist proceeds with an extended virtuoso improvisation using themes and motives from the concerto itself to display their musical and technical skills. A cadenza is, in essence, an individual performer's re-interpretation of the concerto's material according to his or her personal tastes and abilities and there can be no better description of Clara Schumann's art than that. Her cadenzas for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor provide some rare insights into her interpretive approach to this famous work and to Mozart's music in general, and despite Clara Schumann's reputation as a rather conservative pianist, dedicated to respecting the wishes of the composer, her cadenzas

are as Romantic as they come, far removed from the Classical practices of Mozart's day.

So what makes her cadenza so "Romantic"? Romanticism in music is difficult to describe. Esoteric elements, like hyper-emotionality, personal or poetic references, lavishness, nostalgia, etc., tend to overshadow the more formal structural and harmonic elements that separate the Romantic style from the preceding Classical era. One of the most important of these is the Romantic period's rejection of the principles of sonata form. Classical sonata form, as perfected by Haydn and Mozart, was the dominant architectural method for almost all instrumental music written during the latter part of the eighteenth century. The form is renowned for its grace, symmetry and, above all, its perfectly balanced tonal scheme, which serves as the foundation for the entire structure.

Briefly described, a movement written in sonata form (of which concerto form is a variant) is built upon three great tonal blocks of more or less equal duration called the exposition, development and recapitulation sections. The exposition broadly lays out the movement's principal tonality, then slowly moves away from it to establish a new key (usually the dominant or, in the case of a movement in the minor mode, the relative major). This creates a tension (or dissonance) with the principal tonality and will need to be resolved later. The development section reinforces the tension by freely exploring more distant keys; and, finally, the recapitulation section provides resolution by re-establishing the principal key and remaining there until the end to proportionately balance all previous tensions. To achieve this tonal symmetry, it was imperative that there be no further change of key during the course of the recapitulation section and that also applies to the cadenza. A formal cadenza invariably occurs near the end of a concerto movement—during the latter stages of the recapitulation section to be precise—therefore, it too must remain in the principal tonality throughout or risk upsetting the movement's tonal equilibrium. This is evident in all of Mozart's own cadenzas. Mozart wrote cadenzas for many of his concertos (although none by him exist for the piano concerto in question here) and no matter how long or complex, they never deviate from the movement's principal key.

Romantic composers had very different ideas when it came to the harmonic structures of their works. They rejected the long term symmetries and strictly balanced tonal schemes of sonata form preferring shorter, more concentrated works with free and fluid harmonic structures. Romantic composers did not like to stay in one key for too long. A piece written in the Romantic style typically moves away from the principal tonality almost immediately, creating a sense of harmonic tension and ambiguity right from the start. The tension is then maintained for as long as possible by delaying the return of the principal key until very near the end of the piece, and this is exactly what Clara Schumann does in her cadenza. Barely a few measures in, she defies Classical tradition and begins a long and leisurely modulation away from the principal key of D minor to establish a new key, B minor. She even accentuates the move with a *ritenuto*:

Clara Schumann: New Cadenzas for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor

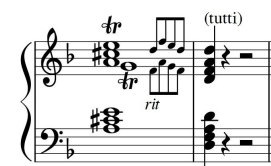


Ex. 2 Clara Schumann's unpublished manuscript

Clara Schumann seems unconcerned, oblivious even, that such an overt change of key might upset Mozart's finely balanced tonal scheme. For her, the cadenza was an independent piece, free from the rules and conventions that governed the concerto. She follows her instincts and writes a cadenza that in every way exemplifies the principles of Romantic style.

Another side of Clara Schumann's Romanticism is on display in the cadenza's lyrical middle section, which she labels *Recitativo*. A recitative is an operatic term for a highly expressive, declamatory form of singing that mimics the rhythms and inflections of ordinary speech. The accompanied recitative (not to be confused with the less expressive dry recitative, or *recitativo secco*, which is a sort of swift vocal banter with minimal accompaniment, commonly associated with comic opera) was a regular feature of eighteenth century *opéra seria* where it was useful for advancing the action during particularly complex or emotionally charged scenes. The orchestra would provide some suitably theatrical accompaniment, menacing tremolos, dramatic accents, mysterious chords and the like. Not surprisingly, Romantic composers were drawn to the melodramatic character of the operatic recitative and often inserted such passages into their purely instrumental works (Liszt was particularly fond of this) and Clara Schumann does not miss the opportunity to include one in her cadenza. For the "vocal line" of the recitative, she borrows an expressive theme Mozart first used to introduce the piano in his concerto (this theme has some recitative-like qualities of its own). Sweeping arpeggios in the left hand provide a mysterious backdrop. With the key changing every few measures, Clara Schumann creates a wistful, dream-like landscape with all the perfume of early nineteenth century Romanticism. It is the Romantic heart of her cadenza. After the introspective atmosphere of the *recitativo*, Clara Schumann must quickly bring things back down to earth, and back to the principal tonality of D minor, before the final wind-up and the re-entry of the orchestra. Her transition from the recitative is not wholly effective, however. Even with the added syncopations, it fails to generate any real sense of movement or anticipation and only succeeds in halting the flow of the music. Such are the dangers of straying too far from the principal key during a cadenza. But these minor foibles are quickly forgotten once the final wind-up is underway.

The cadenza's close is written more like an ending for a solo section of a concerto rather than that of a cadenza, which is usually more freely conceived, but it is nonetheless effective and exciting. For a final Romantic touch, Clara Schumann embellishes the cadenza's closing trill with a lavish multi-note flourish, complete with a *ritenuto*.



Ex. 3 Clara Schumann's manuscript

Purists will argue that Clara Schumann's cadenza is too Romantic for Mozart's concerto, but this kind of historically correct thinking is only a recent phenomenon. In her day, a cadenza that merely mimicked Mozart's style would have been considered unimaginative and dull. Clara Schumann's cadenza is a reflection of her world, not Mozart's and we should be grateful for it, because it is precisely what makes it such an interesting and personal piece. We certainly would not have much to discuss if she had done otherwise. Then there is the concerto itself. Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor is one of the most passionate and emotionally charged instrumental works of all the eighteenth century. It is one of those special works of art like Athenian sculpture or Mona Lisa that transcends all boundaries of period and style, which is why it was such a favourite during the nineteenth century and remains so today. As such, it is well equipped to withstand a little Romantic intrusion. Clara Schumann's cadenza only enhances the concerto's emotional impact and effectively transports it into a new era, the Romantic era, and such is the universality of Mozart's masterpiece that it is only too happy to oblige.

Comparison with Brahms

One of the most curious aspects about Clara Schumann's cadenza is its striking resemblance to the one Johannes Brahms wrote for the same concerto. Brahms's manuscript (which only contains a cadenza for the concerto's first movement) has been dated to 1855,³ around the same time as Clara Schumann's manuscript, although it was only published in 1926, almost thirty years after the composer's death. The editor of the first edition (as part of the complete

works published by Breitkopf & Härtel) was Eusebius Mandyczewski, a Romanian born musicologist who had befriended Brahms late in his life and served as executor of his will.⁴ In a subheading to the printed edition, Mandyczewski notes that Brahms's cadenza contains material originally composed by Clara Schumann, but offers no further explanation on the matter.⁵ Since the publication of Brahms's cadenza, many have remarked on its similarity to Clara Schumann 1891 published score, but this comparison gives a false impression of the relationship and will inevitably lead to a dead end. The great changes Clara Schumann made in 1891 mask the true extent of its initial connection to Brahms's work. To properly understand the relationship, we must compare Brahms's cadenza with Clara Schumann's early unpublished version and when we do, we see that they are not just similar, but practically identical. So how did their cadenzas come to be so alike? Which came first? Was there some sort of collaboration? Armed with Clara Schumann's original manuscript, we can now take another crack at these long unanswered questions.

When trying to understand the connection between two very similar things, sometimes the best course of action is to first seek out their differences, as these often hold the key to unlocking the mystery. The first time Brahms's and Clara Schumann's cadenzas differ comes during a short transitional passage near the beginning of the piece. In the ninth bar, Clara Schumann has this:



Ex. 4 Clara Schumann's manuscript

The same passage in Brahms's score:



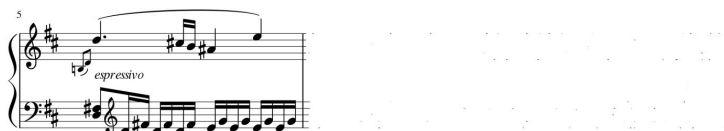
Ex. 5 Joh. Brahms: Cadenza for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor, K. 466. Breitkopf & Härtel, 1926/27, m. 9.

The differences here seem negligible, merely a slight variation in the distribution of notes in the right hand, but they are quite telling. Brahms's version is clearly superior. It fits more comfortably in the hand, exhibits better voice leading and creates a fuller, more harmonious sound. There's nothing inherently wrong with

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Clara Schumann's version, Brahms's rendering is simply an improvement and that is just the point. Brahms is obviously making a small correction here and this suggests he was working off an existing text. If Brahms's version had been the original, Clara Schumann surely would not have altered it to her disadvantage. It is an early sign that Clara Schumann's cadenza came first.

The next time the cadenzas differ occurs during the transition to the more lyrical second subject. This time, the differences are more substantial and more interesting, as they concern matters of personal style rather than musical orthography. In the previous chapter, we discussed at some length how Clara Schumann's romantic approach to the cadenza sometimes conflicted with Mozart's Classical ideals. We singled out in particular her daring modulation to B minor at the beginning of the cadenza as an example of something Mozart would not have done. This modulation also seems to have bothered Brahms. In his version he eliminates it completely, along with the long string of arpeggio-like figures used to transport the music to the new key. In its place, Brahms inserts a short, unmeasured phrase whose sole function is to sidestep the modulation and keep the music firmly in the principal key of D minor.



Ex. 6 Clara Schumann's manuscript



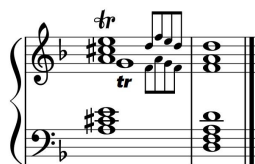
Ex. 7 Brahms: Cadenza for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor, mm. 10–13.

A Classically minded composer like Mozart would consider such a change of key during the cadenza disruptive to the movement's overall tonal structure (not to mention to the cadenza's basic function as an extended

Clara Schumann: New Cadenzas for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor

cadence). Clara Schumann, the arch-Romantic, pays this no heed, but Brahms cannot as easily dismiss the basic rules of sonata form and he sacrifices one of the loveliest passages in Clara Schumann's score to remain faithful to Classical principles. Brahms's deep attachment to Classical forms would be a defining feature of his mature compositional style and it is interesting to see this already manifested here in this little cadenza.

After a few measures, Brahms deftly catches up with Clara Schumann's score once again and their cadenzas continue pretty much in parallel until the end, except for two spots. Brahms spruces up the transition between the *Recitativo* and the final section (this was a weak point in Clara Schumann's score) and he replaces Clara Schumann's lavish decoration of the closing trill with a simpler, more Classical and more Mozartean two-note *Nachschlag*.



Ex. 8 Clara Schumann's manuscript



Ex. 9 Brahms: Cadenza for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor, mm. 80–81.

By now it's clear that Clara Schumann's cadenza came first. Brahms's version amounts to little more than a copy of her work, with some small, but significant amendments added along the way. What remains to be determined are the circumstances that led to the creation of these twin cadenzas in the first place and for this, we need to also look at the story through a biographical lens.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) first met the Schumanns in 1853 when, aged twenty, he travelled from his native Hamburg to Düsseldorf, where Robert Schumann was director of the local orchestra, to introduce himself to the eminent composer. Schumann was famously astounded at Brahms's immense talent and set about enthusiastically encouraging and promoting the young composer. Brahms, in return, idolized his mentor and spent many months in his company learning from the older master. Schumann's influence is very apparent in Brahms's earliest works, but the real sparks during the visit were between Brahms and Schumann's pianist wife Clara. A special bond developed between the two, one that would only intensify over the next few years and then last a lifetime.⁶

A year later, Brahms was back in Hamburg when news reached him that Robert Schumann had suffered a mental breakdown and after a suicide attempt in February 1854 was to be committed to a mental asylum. He immediately rushed back to Düsseldorf to be with Clara. He moved into a room in the same flat and remained there for the duration of Robert Schumann's two-year confinement, providing Clara with much needed companionship and support running the household, which included seven young children. Not much is known about their personal time together during this period, as most of the first hand evidence (letters, diary entries etc.) was deliberately destroyed at Brahms's insistence, in order to keep the nature of their relationship private.⁷ But thanks to our cadenza, we know of at least one thing they did do together, they prepared for their upcoming performances of Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor during the Mozart Centennial of 1856. Brahms had plans to perform the concerto in Hamburg on January 27, Mozart's hundredth birthday,⁸ and Clara Schumann was to play it in her hometown of Leipzig later that year.⁹ We can imagine a scenario where Clara Schumann composed cadenzas for the concerto and presented them to Brahms who promptly copied them out, possibly with the intention of using them for his concert in Hamburg, codifying his amendments into a new score, which he then presented back to Clara Schumann (Brahms's manuscript remained in Clara Schumann's possession throughout her life). Sadly, Clara Schumann did not perform Mozart's concerto the anniversary year. Her husband's condition had greatly worsened by then and she was forced to reduce her activities and remain nearby. Initially barred by doctors from visiting him in the hospital (her presence was seen to be too distressing), she was finally allowed to see her husband just days before he died. Brahms accompanied her on this grim visit. On July 29, 1856, Robert Schumann died and Clara Schumann entered into an extended period of mourning. She cancelled her engagements, and the cadenzas were put away. Brahms returned to Hamburg and eventually settled in Vienna. Although they remained in constant contact, they never again lived in close proximity to one another.¹⁰

If there is such a thing as a connection between an artist's life and work, then these cadenzas must rank highly among Clara Schumann's most personally significant compositions. She wrote little else during her husband's illness and gave up composing almost entirely after he died. As she herself freely admitted, the one bright spot during this dark time was the continuous presence of Johannes Brahms. The cadenzas are, by and large, by Clara Schumann and should be attributed as such, but they have Brahms's fingerprints all over them. He was likely the first to perform them publicly (with or without his alterations) and he made the cadenzas his own by creating a new score with his personal amendments and modifications (and it is not out of the question that there

may have been some collaboration during the creative process). If Brahms's companionship was indeed the one bright light during Clara Schumann's darkest days, then these cadenzas are surely a product of that light and an enduring symbol of the friendship that helped her through her life's worst hardships.

The 1891 Version

In 1891, the musical world observed the one hundredth anniversary of Mozart's death. Clara Schumann, now in her seventies and retired from the concert stage, decided to do her part by publishing cadenzas for his Piano Concerto in D Minor. Instead of starting from scratch, she dusted off her old manuscript from thirty-five years earlier and embarked on a whole-scale revision of the piece. The result was a new score, which was published the same year. The changes she made to the cadenzas at this time were substantial and reached into almost every detail of the piece. We only have time here to look at some of the most important examples.

In the first movement cadenza, Clara Schumann rearranges the sequence of the individual sections and adds a new and very grandiose central climax based on a dramatic orchestral passage from Mozart's concerto. The *Recitative* is given a new harmonic profile and the various connecting passages are extended with more elaborate virtuoso figurations. The 1891 score also exhibits a very noticeable change in tone, everything is expanded and enlarged. The delicate, slightly naïve, early Romantic stylings of the original version give way to something much more grand and imposing, in keeping with the late-Victorian tastes of the day. This largesse also extends to the style of piano writing, which in the 1891 version is much denser, with thicker chords and wider spacing between the voices. Pianos had changed a great deal since the 1850s, when they were still close to the delicate instruments known to Schubert and Chopin. By 1891, the piano had, for all intents and purposes, reached the archetype of the powerful modern concert grand.

The most noticeable change, however, is to the last movement's cadenza, which in the 1891 published score is a completely new piece, unrelated to the one in her original manuscript. At first glance, we assume that the new cadenza for the last movement was freshly composed in 1891 as part of the general revision process, but there is evidence that it was actually conceived at a much earlier date, closer to that of her original manuscript. This evidence comes from Clara Schumann herself in the form of a short note, which she wrote directly onto a blank page of Brahms's manuscript. In the note, which is signed and dated 1891, she explains some of the parallels between her newly published score and Brahms's cadenza. Her note is full of information and deserves to be quoted in full:

*Cadenza by Brahms for the D Minor Concerto by Mozart, which makes use of a cadenza of mine; in the cadenza I published later, I used several passages from Brahms's cadenza, which in the adjacent pages I have indicated with A-B C-D. In the second cadenza, for the last movement, the passage A-B is by Brahms. This comment is for my children, to avoid any misunderstanding. Clara Schumann, 1891.*¹¹

The first sentence tells us something we already know, namely that Brahms's cadenza is largely based on her original score of 1855. She goes on to say that she incorporated some of Brahms's ideas into the published version and is indicating the borrowed passages with the letters A-B and C-D, which she marks directly on Brahms's score. Her markings are still clearly visible on the pages of Brahms's manuscript.

The next sentence, however, reveals something surprising. She claims to have made similar markings on the pages of Brahms's last movement cadenza, again to indicate the parts belonging to Brahms, but as we have pointed out before, Brahms's manuscript has no cadenza for the concerto's last movement. There can only be one explanation, Brahms's score must have originally included a cadenza for the concerto's last movement, but these pages were somehow later lost, but they evidently still existed in 1891, when Clara Schumann penned her little note. It also tells us that Brahms's (now lost) cadenza for the last movement was related to the one in Clara Schumann's 1891 published score and not to the one in her original manuscript. So her "new" cadenza for the last movement wasn't so new after all. It had to have already existed (in some earlier form perhaps) in 1855, when Brahms created his copy. Her concerns about the original cadenza for the last movement therefore surfaced quite early on, and she decided to replace it soon after completing her original manuscript, perhaps even at Brahms's suggestion. It is not difficult to see why the original cadenza proved unsatisfactory. Its length and complexity hinder the momentum of Mozart's whirlwind *Finale*, sapping its fierce energy at a crucial point near the end. It is also rather over-written and unnecessarily difficult to play. The second cadenza is a marked improvement. Short, swift and simple, it complements the *Rondo*'s vitality and provides a better lead-in to Mozart's thrilling coda. The two existing cadenzas for the last movement should therefore be seen as near contemporaries, with the second one, the one that found its way into Brahms's copy and then into Clara Schumann published score, as the preferred choice, in keeping with her earliest wishes.

One other difference worth mentioning is that the 1891 score was conceived purely as a commemorative piece. Clara Schumann would not have had any intention of performing the concerto herself at this stage of her life. The earlier version, on the other hand, was written with a specific performance in mind while she was at the height of her powers and is probably a better reflection of the unique pianistic style she was famous for during her prime performing years.

Epilogue

The most unexpected twist in the story comes after Clara Schumann's death, as we follow the fate of her manuscript into the twentieth century and meet some of the people whose lives it passed through.

Clara Schumann: New Cadenzas for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor

When Clara Schumann's died in 1896, most of her personal effects passed to her eldest daughter, Marie. Marie Schumann (1841–1929) eventually settled in Interlaken, Switzerland, a place where her father had spent some time during his youth.¹² She bought a plot of land and built the house where she remained for the rest of her life (the Swiss-style home still stands today). She was eventually joined in Interlaken by her younger sister Eugenie and her partner, the soprano Marie Fillunger (they had met through their mutual friend, Johannes Brahms) who together purchased a house nearby.¹³ At some point, probably after 1918, the Schumann sisters were paid a visit by American businessman, trained chemist and avid collector of musical manuscripts, Jerome Stonborough. It was likely at this time that he purchased a number of items belonging to their famous mother, among them the original manuscripts of Clara Schumann's cadenzas for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor, both the 1855 and 1891 versions, as well as Brahms's autograph copy.

Jerome Stonborough (originally Jerome Hermann Steinberger) was born in New York City in 1873 to German-Jewish immigrants. In 1905, he married the Viennese socialite and heiress, Margaret (Gertl) Wittgenstein (1882–1958). The Wittgensteins were among the wealthiest and most cultured families in Europe at the time. They were also active members of the vibrant cultural community of turn-of-the-century Vienna. Margaret's brother was the famed philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein and her other brother, Paul, was a concert pianist who lost an arm during World War I and commissioned works for left hand alone from the likes of Prokofiev and Ravel. Margaret Wittgenstein's famous wedding portrait was painted by none other than Gustav Klimt. She actively encouraged her husband's collecting, and together they amassed an impressive collection of musical manuscripts which included, besides Clara Schumann's and Brahms's cadenzas, the original scores of Mozart's String Quintet in C Major and Brahms's Third Symphony. They also owned a sumptuous 19th century château in Upper Austria called the *Villa Toscana*.¹⁴

As the new century progressed, things took a turn for the worse for the Stonborough family. Jerome lost most of his American assets during the crash of 1929 and never fully recovered emotionally from this setback. The couple eventually divorced in 1938. That same year, despondent over the political situation in Europe and with no prospects in America, Jerome Stonborough committed suicide, shooting himself in the hall of his beloved villa just as the Nazis were entering Vienna.¹⁵ Margaret Stonborough remained in Vienna after the *Anschluss* in a futile effort to safeguard the family assets. She was regularly harassed by the Nazi government and jailed several times, gaining her freedom only through bribes and personal connections. Nevertheless, she managed to smuggle a good portion of the family treasures out of the country before the outbreak of war. When war finally came, she sent her youngest son, John, to the United States. Hidden in his suitcases were the priceless musical manuscripts collected by his father.¹⁶

By 1940, the situation in Vienna had become untenable for Margaret Stonborough. She travelled to Southampton where she boarded the SS *Washington* bound for New York City, but her problems did not end there. Incredibly, the Nazi government continued to pursue her in the still neutral United States, through lawsuits and threats against family members still in Europe, in order to get their hands on more of the family's assets. She paid out a small fortune until they finally left her alone and impoverished. She was forced to sell the very treasures she risked her life smuggling out of Europe in order to raise money. Her husband's collection of musical manuscripts, which included Clara Schumann's and Brahms's cadenzas, was purchased by the Library of Congress in 1941 through a grant from Mrs. Gertrude Clarke Whittall, a long-time benefactress to the Washington institution. After the war, Margaret Stonborough returned to Vienna and managed to recover some of her family's stolen treasures, including the Klimt portrait and the *Villa Toscana*. She died in 1958.¹⁷

Thanks in no small part to the efforts of the Stonborough-Wittgenstein family, Clara Schumann's and Brahms's manuscripts survived the war and are now safely stored together in the archives of the Library of Congress, inseparable it seems even after all these years, which is probably as it should be. In 2019, on the two hundredth anniversary of Clara Schumann's birth, the original version of her cadenzas for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor will be published for the first time and receive its premiere performance at the *Schumannhaus-Museum* in Zwickau on Clara Schumann's own piano.

Notes:

1. Julia M. Neuhaus, "Clara Schumann: Konzertreisen", *Schumann-Portal.de*, accessed February 15, 2019.
2. Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 658.
3. Johannes Brahms, *Cadenza for the Piano Concerto in D Minor by Mozart*, autograph score (c.1856). Gertrude Clarke-Whittall Collection, Library of Congress, Washington DC.
4. Karl Geringer, ed., "Johannes Brahms im Briefwechsel mit Eusebius Mandyczewski," *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 15 (1933): 337.
5. Eusebius Mandyczewski, ed., *Johannes Brahms, Sämtliche Werke Band 15* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1926/27).
6. José Bruyr, *Brahms* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1965), 21.
7. *Ibid.*, 27.
8. Michael Musgrave, *Brahms: Biographical, Documentary and Analytical Studies*, vol. 2, appendix (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 99.
9. This concert was cancelled due to her husband's death. It was later realized on January 27, 1857. Julia M. Neuhaus, "Clara Schumann: Konzertreisen", *Schumann-Portal.de*, accessed February 18, 2019.
10. Bruyr, 27–28.
11. "Cadenz z. D moll Concert v. Mozart v. Brahms mit Benutzung einer Cadenz von mir. Wiederum benutzte ich in meiner später herausgegebenen Cadenz einige Stellen aus der Brahms'schen Cadenz, und habe diese in den hier beiliegenden Exemplaren unter A-B C-D bezeichnet. In der 2ten Cadenz (z. letzten Satze) ist die Stelle von A-B von Brahms. Meinen Kindern diese Notiz zur Vermeidung etwaiger Irrungen." Clara Schumann, 1891. Translation from Nancy B Reich, *Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 328.

12. Gerd Nauhaus, "Robert Schumann Biographie: Schweizerreise 1829", *Schumann-Portal.de*, accessed April 7, 2019.
13. Gerd Nauhaus, "Robert Schumann Biographie: Familie", *Schumann-Portal.de*, accessed February 15, 2019.
14. Alexander Waugh, *The House of Wittgenstein: A Family at War* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2008), 19–21.
15. *Ibid.*, 173
16. *Ibid.*, 268–272
17. Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (New York: Penguin, 1996), 238.

About the author: Ludwig Sémerjian is a Canadian pianist, graduate of McGill University in Montreal and specialist in early keyboard instrument performance. His unique interpretations of the Classical repertoire have garnered him an international reputation and rave reviews in Europe and North America. Mr. Sémerjian recently recorded the complete set of Mozart's piano sonatas on historical instruments from the collection of the Germanisches-National-Museum (GNM) in Nuremberg, the first volume of which was awarded the Critic's Prize as one of the top ten classical recordings of the year. He is currently continuing his recording project at the GNM, this time concentrating on pianos from the Romantic Era. His latest recording of Chopin's piano works will be released in 2019.

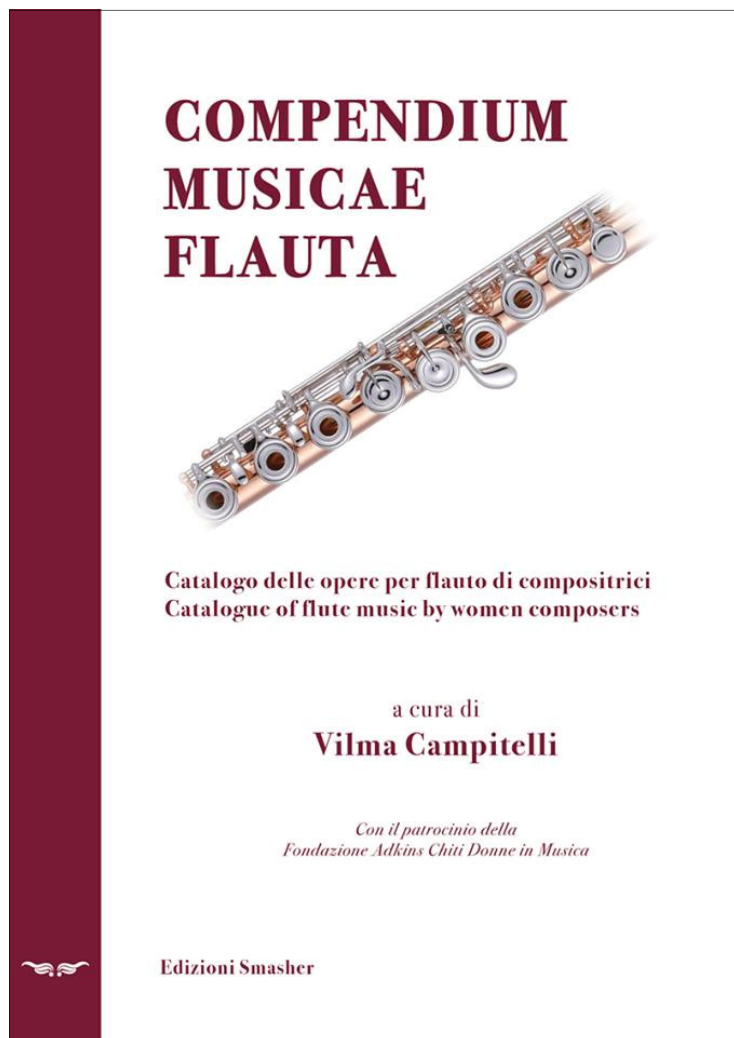


Don't look away just because the composer's name is unfamiliar and has too many syllables. Kaprálová (1915–1940) is a vital link in Czech music, her death at 25 the closure of a century of genius. This comprehensive account of her piano music gives strong hints of where she was heading. A sonata appassionata of 1933 takes percussive elements from Bartók and its elliptical narrative lines from Janáček; the voice is powerful but not yet formed. Her piano masterpiece dates from 1937 and is dedicated to the pianist Rudolf Firkušný, who had introduced her to Martinů. *Dubnová Preludia* (April preludes) calls to mind the Slavonic fixation with climate, from Tchaikovsky's *Seasons* to Janáček's *In the Mists*, with a touch of April in Paris. Kaprálová's expression is uniquely her own, inflected with hints of Debussy and Berg but original, vivacious and captivating. Just nine minutes long, it gives the strongest possible indication of her untapped potential. With Kaprálová's tragic death and her country's totalitarian subjugation, Czech music went flat for a very long time. Giorgio Koukl's chronicle of her life at the piano provides compelling listening.

From a review by Norman Lebrecht for *La scena musicale*.

Vif, plein de fantaisie, le jeu de Koukl (serveur patente de la musique de Martinů) met en valeur toute la singularité de la *Pasacaille grotesque*, des *Pièces* op. 9, des *Deux bouquets de fleurs* de 1935 et d'autres miniatures (*Ostinato Fox*, *Fanfare festive*). On découvre aussi, grâce à lui, deux pages majeures regorgeant d'énergie juvénile, d'idées fraîches et hardies : les quatre beaux *Preludes d'avril* op.13 (1937) et les *Variations sur le carillon de l'église Saint-Etienne-du-Mont* op.16 (1938), parfaite illustration du vocabulaire musical assez recherche de la jeune Tchèque, avec ses harmonies extrêmement originale.

From a review by Patrick Szersnovicz for *Diapason*. (Diapason d'or for the month of May 2017.)



VÍTĚZSLAVA KAPRÁLOVÁ

POVÍDKY MALÉ FLÉTNY

DVĚ DROBNÉ SKLADBY
PRO ZOBICOVOU NEBO PŘÍČNOU FLÉTNU
A KLAVÍR

TALES OF A SMALL FLUTE

TWO LITTLE PIECES
FOR RECORDER OR FLUTE
AND PIANO

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Vítězslava Kaprálová: Tales of a Small Flute

The last two years of Kaprálová's life were defined by her frantic efforts to absorb new stimuli and ideas and incorporate them into her own musical language. As a result of this experimentation, however, many of her late works, the chamber music in particular, remained unfinished or only in sketches. Nevertheless, even as musical torsos they are important to her oeuvre, especially the ritornel for violoncello and piano and the reed trio. Included among these unfinished compositions of the composer's last, Parisian, period are also little pieces for flute and piano from 1940, entitled *Tales of a Small Flute*.

Kaprálová initially conceived the *Tales* as a cycle of three miniature program pieces. While in the end she chose to complete only the first two, she did write short program texts for all three of them. The first text reads: *There was spring and yet it was not. Air scented too much with sadness for a true spring but something, somewhere, in the chestnut flower, was about to break out.* The second text is now only partly legible: *One day (...?) it looked like nothing would happen but suddenly the chestnut buds opened wide.* The third piece, which Kaprálová did not compose, was to be accompanied by this text: *And from the flower into the warm night came down a fairy named Love and transformed a hand-some boy into a prince.*

We do not know the exact dates of the *Tales*. In his autobiographical novel *Strange Loves*, Jiří Mucha included them among the fall 1939 events. Jiří Macek, in his monograph on the composer, dated them April 1940. Václav Kaprál, who took a careful inventory of the Kaprálová estate right after the war, described them in his catalog of Kaprálová's music as "two miniature compositions, Paris 1940." The texts also point out to spring rather than to fall.

Kaprálová dedicated the little pieces to her future husband Jiří Mucha, an amateur recorder player. "When we sometimes sat down together at the piano and nobody was near, Vitka taught me composition," Mucha recalls in his book, "and then I played my recorder – usually the Papageno motif which was more or less my only repertoire. And thus one day, she composed for me the *Tales of a Small Flute* so that I could learn to play also something else."¹

Kaprálová adjusted the technical demands of the *Tales'* solo part to Mucha's clearly limited musicianship. It is quite possible, however, that from the very beginning she set to work with both the recorder and the flute in mind, for she referred to the solo instrument as "Quasi flauto" in her score.

Both pieces are fairly short and easy to play. The first flows in slow tempo. Its ascending singing melody, accompanied in the piano part with chords of delicate colors, subsides after reaching its climax into quiet reminiscence of the introductory measures. The second piece is in fast tempo and has a scherzo-like character. Kaprálová conceived it as a witty little thing for a beginner flutist (she later revised the last few measures to make them even easier to play). The long trills evoke the twitter of birds, with the cuckoo sound interjecting just before the end of the piece. One can only regret that the character of the third piece is to remain a mystery.

The first to bring attention to the quality of these lovely little pieces was flutist Lucie Brotbek who also gave them their first concert performance at the Flute Festival in Freiburg, Germany on March 22, 2013.

Karla Hartl, Věroslav Němec

Notes:

¹ Jiří Mucha, *Podivné lásky* (Praha: Mladá fronta, 1988), 319.



Suite en miniature, op. 1 (recorded in 1974), *Variations sur le Carillon de l'église St-Étienne-du-Mont*, op. 16, (recorded in 2008), *April Preludes*, op. 13 (recorded in 1969), *Legend and Burlesque*, op. 3 (recorded in 2013), and *Elegy* (recorded in 2013). Pilsen Radio Orchestra with Josef Blacký, Jarmila Kozderková, Božena Pidermannová, Ondřej Lébr, Martin Kasík. Radioservis (2018).

The charming miniature suite for small orchestra, *Suite en miniature*, op. 1, came into being in autumn 1935 at the master school of the Prague Conservatory. Its ideas are much older, however; the composition is based on the musical material of Kaprálová's piano suite from 1931. That would explain both the music and the opus number, because chronologically the work neighbours in the composer's catalog *Three Piano Pieces*, op. 9. The seriousness of purpose and emotional maturity as well as increased pianistic demands of the original piano suite, which Kaprálová composed when she was merely sixteen years old, set it apart from her earlier juvenilia. Its colorful harmonic language at times evokes an almost orchestral sound; Kaprálová must have been aware of this quality when she later decided to orchestrate it. The dark Praeludium, with its mystical, almost tragic atmosphere, is scored for strings and the contrasting lyrical Pastorale for wind instruments; the gently melancholic Lullaby is scored for a small orchestra to which Kaprálová added a trumpet, timpani, triangle and cymbals in the final Menuett, ending the composition in a lightened mood.

Karla Hartl



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