

AN ANALYSIS OF SCHUBERT'S SONATA IN B^b (op. 960),
PROKOFIEV'S SONATA NO. 5 (op. 38), BARTOK'S CONCERTO NO. 3,
AND CORELLI'S 24 KEYBOARD PIECES

by

BARBARA FAST

B. A., Bethel College, 1975

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1978

Approved by:


Major Professor

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SCHUBERT

Schubert was born January 31, 1797. The son of a schoolmaster, he was educated to follow his father's profession. After three years of teaching, however, he decided to devote himself entirely to composition. He was a prolific composer. At his death he had composed nine symphonies, 22 piano sonatas, numerous short piano pieces, about 35 chamber compositions, six Masses, and over 600 lieder.¹ He died young, at the age of thirty-one, having struggled against illness and poverty for a large part of his life.

Tovey, at the time of the 1927 Beethoven centenary, told the following story:

There is a curious English musical dictionary, published in 1827, which may sometimes be found in the four-penny box outside a second-hand bookshop; and in this dictionary Beethoven is given one of the largest articles and treated as unquestionably the greatest composer of the day. Such was Beethoven's fame in the year of his death. Schubert died in the next year. There are five Schuberts in this dictionary, but Franz Schubert is not among them.²

During his lifetime Schubert went virtually without recognition except for a few loyal friends. Although he wrote twenty-two piano sonatas, none were performed in public during his lifetime. Five sonatas received private performances by Schubert while two of the five received large favorable reviews. Schubert saw only three of his sonatas in print.³

¹Donald Grout, A History of Western Music (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1973), p. 561.

²Donald Matthews, Keyboard Music (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), p. 186.

³William Newman, The Sonata Since Beethoven (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), p. 219.

Schubert's fame rested on his lieder. Amidst almost certain criticism for the formal aspect of his music, he was lauded for his lyricism. In his later years his output of songs dropped while he gained an interest in the larger forms of music.

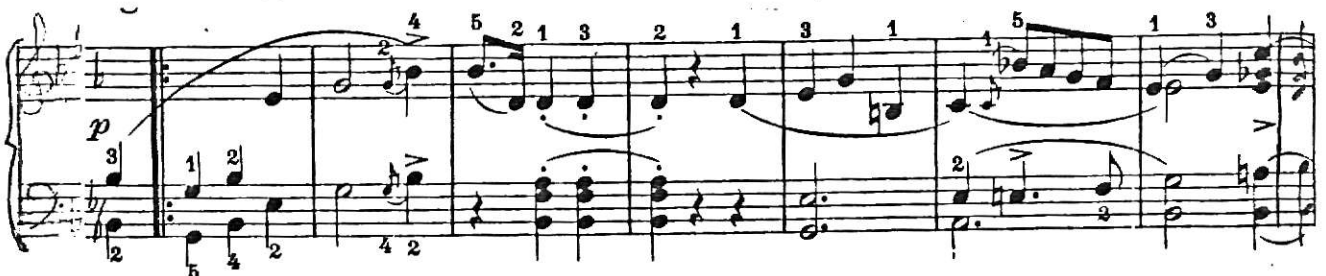
The sonatas discussed will be from his most prolific years: 1817, 1825, and 1828. Of his eleven completed sonatas, he wrote three in 1817, one in 1819 and one in 1823, three in 1825-26, and three in 1828.

There is often confusion related to the listing of Schubert's sonatas. The opus numbers were applied at the time of publication. Since most of his sonatas were published long after his death, the opus number merely indicates the order in which they were published. Otto Deutsch later catalogued Schubert's music chronologically, hence the D. numbers.

In 1817 Schubert wrote eight sonatas for the piano, though only three were completed. This was his most prolific sonata year. The completed sonatas of 1817, A minor (D. 537), B major (D. 575), E^b major (D. 568), give an accurate picture of Schubert's treatment of sonata form.

Schubert's themes are lyrical, songful melodies that are made up of well-defined phrases, as in the E^b major. (see example no. 1) Such themes lend themselves to development by modulation and sequence rather than to motivic development. Schubert is not always all lyricism. Sometimes, as in the a minor (D. 537) sonata, he exploits the resources of the piano with massive chords and incessantly driving rhythms.

EXAMPLE NO. 1



Schubert uses a variety of rhythmic patterns, with each pattern usually getting a thorough exposure. As Newman has pointed out, Schubert often indulged his inclination for dotted groups and triplets by combining the two figures throughout extended passages as in the B major (D. 575) sonata. (see example no. 2)

EXAMPLE NO. 2



Harmonically, Schubert was an innovator. His frequent alternation between the major and minor in successive chords or phrases, root movement by thirds, and an increasing interest in the diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords for modulatory or coloristic purposes are already exhibited in these first sonatas. Dramatic rests are frequently used to delineate form and harmonic color. D. 537/i gives an example of a measure rest which occurs before the entrance of the second theme. (see example no. 3)

EXAMPLE NO. 3



Compared to his later sonatas, the earlier 1817 sonatas are considerably shorter. The A minor (D. 537) is 189 measures in length compared to the final B^b major (D. 960), which 370 measures. Proportionately, the exposition,

development, and recapitulation remained about the same through all his sonatas. Both sonatas, D. 537 and 575, were written without a coda.

The sonatas of 1825-26, A minor (D. 845), D major (D. 850), and G major (D. 894), are particularly important because this was the period in which Schubert expressed his interest in emphasizing the composition of large instrumental works. The sonata D. 845 was his final sonata in A minor and one of the best known sonatas during his lifetime. It was the first of his sonatas to be published and receive favorable notices in the press. Along with the D. 845, D. 850 and D. 894 were published during his lifetime.

These sonatas, being more experimental than their predecessors, show a mature Schubert. They are written on a large scale with striking modulations and a new importance being given to the coda. They keep the Schubertian devices of dotted rhythms, root progressions by thirds, and the interchange of major and minor chords.

In these sonatas, "Again the lyric impulse, coupled with an even more grandiose exploitation of the sound capabilities of the piano, is of the greatest importance."⁴ This is noted particularly in the A minor sonata in the second-movement variations. The D-major sonata, written for Karl Maria Bocklet, a skillful pianist, is an ambitious work with a virtuosic treatment of the piano. The Biedermeier Waltz in the scherzo reveals Schubert's interest in dance forms. Root movement by thirds, which gives his sonatas such color, is nowhere better demonstrated than in the trio of the scherzo where he sequentially moves from C-E^b-G^b in measures 138-150.

The last three sonatas, C minor (D. 958), A major (D. 959), and B^b major (D. 960), were written in September of 1828, one month before Schubert died,

⁴F.E. Kirby, A Short History of Keyboard Music (New York: The Free Press, 1962), p. 241.

but were not published until 1838, ten years later. Schubert had requested that the sonatas be dedicated to Hummel. Because Hummel had died a year before publication, Diabelli, his publisher, decided to dedicate them to Schumann.

All three first movements are in sonata allegro form. The slow second movements are all in song form, with the C minor in a five-part and the A major and B^b major in three-part form. The third movements are scherzo-trios, with the exception of D. 958, which has a minuet and trio. All three movements are visually similar, all having an A-B section in the scherzo or minuet and an A-B section in the trio. Length of the sections resemble each other between sonatas. The final movements are all variations of rondo form: (D. 958) A-B-A-B-A, (D. 959) A-B-A-C-A-B-A/coda, and (D. 960) A-B-C-A-A-B-C-A/coda.

"While these works may be said to represent a culmination of Schubert's sonata composition, they also represent Schubert's...ways of dealing with the big first movement in sonata form."⁵ The sonatas demonstrate contrasting themes, use of the classical Alberti bass, developments which utilize exposition material, and recapitulations which do not introduce new themes or develop previous material. The final sonata in B^b major departs from these procedures by introducing a new theme in the development.

The three-part forms of the slow movements of the D. 959 and 960 sonatas are similar. Both begin with simple melodies which lead into a contrasting B section. The return of the A section in both sonatas restates the opening melody, but with a slightly varied accompaniment.

The similarity of the third movements has been mentioned. It should be noted that only in the B^b major sonata is there a change of mode to B^b minor.

⁵Kirby, A Short History of Keyboard Music, p. 243.

The three scherzi are significantly shorter in length than those of the previous sonatas of 1825.

Harmonically, Schubert is characteristically resourceful in these last three sonatas. Vacillating between major and minor within a chord, frequent root movement by thirds, and use of the Neapolitan and diminished seventh chord are devices again found in these sonatas.

"If any sonata were to be rated first among (the last three)...in fact, among all Schubert's sonatas, not only most writers, but most qualified performers and initiated listeners would give the palm to the very last in B^b major, with its almost elegiac first movement, its serene yet melancholy slow movement..., its less rapid but more brilliant finale...and with its truly 'heavenly length' throughout."⁶ The opening theme of the first movement, in parallel octaves, is a lyrical melody. Except for a grandiose climax in the development section, the mood of the first theme pervades the movement. The theme is restated in ^bVI above an Alberti bass in measure 20. The second theme in F# minor, ^bvi, is reached by means of a diminished seventh chord in measure 46. It is restated in the relative major measure 59 before settling into the expected second theme key of F major measure 80, where a dance-like theme in triplets is introduced. Imaginative harmonies are exhibited measures 94-105 employing neapolitan chords, altered chords, and diminished seventh chords. The root relationship of the third is seen again in measures 104-106 with A^b (enharmonic g#)-E and a-f.

The development opens with the first theme stated in C# minor. A modulatory passage moving by means of the diminished seventh through A-G#-B-B^b finally rests on D^b. Again chromatic and third relationships are demonstrated. The

⁶Newman, The Sonata Since Beethoven, p. 218.

development climaxes on D minor, after which it leisurely finds its way back to the recapitulation with an exchange between B^b major and D minor. Like all Schubert sonatas, the recapitulation is an exact repeat of the exposition. The opening theme is restated in the coda and the movement ends as quietly as it began.

In the C#-minor second movement, "It is the poetic atmosphere which most strongly claims attention."⁷ In the first and last sections the music assumes an almost static character with the left hand figure ranging across four octaves under and over a right hand melody. The harmonies are imaginative with use of the third relationship, the Neapolitan section measures 63-65, and the subtle change from C# minor to C# major in the final measures.

The scherzo in B^b major moves through a succession of tonal centers, almost too fast to be noticed. The B section begins in E^b major and moves by secondary dominants through A^b, D^b, and G^b. The G^b-major chord in measure 50 becomes F# minor by means of enharmonic spelling and a change from major to minor. Six measures later the relative major is reached. Measure 69 returns to the home key of B^b major. The trio in B^b minor is characterized by abrupt accents and interior melodies.

The octave announcement on G begins the final movement out of its own key, on the dominant of C minor. The movement is in sonata-rondo form, A-B-C-A-development-A-B-C-A/coda. The dotted rhythms in the C section over sixteenths and triplets resembles rhythmic figurations used in previous sonatas. The climactic development section goes through a series of modulations before culminating on the Neapolitan. Within this section the first theme is treated

⁷Gerald Abraham, The Music of Schubert (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1947), p. 147.

contrapuntally over or under a continuous triplet figuration. (see example no. 4) The return of the A,B, and C sections is an exact restatement in the tonic key. The coda lets the "wrong note" G finally find its correct key and upon doing so, bursts into a tumultuous prest in the tonic, B^b major.

EXAMPLE NO. 4
measures 280-284



Schubert's final sonata exhibits no new techniques. Rather, it demonstrates a culmination of previously used compositional techniques at a high artistic level. "It is representative of all that is finest in his treatment of the keyboard."⁸

This sonata was Schubert's last composition for piano. He died a month after completion, a young man at the age of thirty-one at the height of his compositional powers. "So fertile was his invention at the time of his death, and so diverse in character were the works of his last few months, that it is impossible to surmise what his next sonata would have been, or in what directions his pianoforte style would have developed. His life of active composition lasted barely twenty years; yet he left, to the pianist alone, a treasury so large, of works so valuable, that years of familiarity with them enhance their appeal rather than stale their beauty."⁹

⁸ Abraham, The Music of Schubert, p. 146.

⁹ Ibid, p. 147.

PROKOFIEV

"Of all music written since 1900, Prokofiev's is the most played today throughout the world."¹⁰ Sergei Prokofiev was born in 1891 and died in 1953. At the age of thirteen he passed entrance exams to St. Petersburg Conservatory. He remained there ten years, studying with such renowned teachers as Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazanov, and Lyadov, before graduating ten years later. His greatest stimulation came in the "Evenings of Modern Music" while he was at St. Petersburg, where he came into contact with Stravinsky and the music of Debussy and Schönberg. It was here, for the avant-garde group, that he performed some of his music for the first time.¹¹

Unlike many of his colleagues, Prokofiev spent a good deal of his life abroad. In 1918 he was granted permission to leave the country. Though the revolutionary events in Russia at the time were dramatic, it was probably the tradition of Russian musicians of accomplishment going abroad that motivated him to leave.¹² He spent time in the United States and Paris before returning to Russia fifteen years later. Abroad he gained a reputation as a virtuoso pianist and as a progressive and daring composer. In Europe he was involved with the Paris circle, especially Diaghilev. When he died, one of Prokofiev's strongest ties to Western Europe was broken. In 1933 he returned to the Soviet Union saying that he wanted to "see real winter and spring" and to "hear Russian speech". His move was motivated by nostalgia

¹⁰ Stanley Krebs, Soviet Composers and the Development of Soviet Music (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1970), p. 138.

¹¹ Israel Nestyev, Prokofiev (Stanford: University Press, 1960), p. 34.

¹² Krebs, Soviet Composers and the Development of Soviet Music, p. 141.

for Russia rather than the Soviet Regime, for Prokofiev was basically non-political.¹³

His music was frequently criticized by authorities as being too "modern" or "formalistic". Prokofiev did not take such criticisms seriously and satisfied the government with an occasional ceremonial piece. He was willing to improve himself but also willing to criticize, being outspoken and unafraid of political pressures.¹⁴ In 1948, a communist resolution put Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and other Soviet composers on a "black list". His works were continually under criticism and revisions were demanded of him. Ten years later the resolution was retracted as having been a "subjective feeling by Stalin". Prokofiev died before the retraction took place.

He died on the same day as Stalin. His death was so obscured by the event that when it was announced to the foreign press after several days delay, the date of March 4, rather than March 5 was given, an error which is retained in numerous reference works.¹⁵

Prokofiev wrote nine complete piano sonatas which encompass his entire compositional career. Being a substantial number of sonatas, they make a significant contribution to the twentieth-century piano repertoire. His sonatas employ traditional formal procedures: contrasting thematic material in the first movement, a three-part slow movement, and sometimes the use of rondo form for the finale. "Thus, while the harmonic vocabulary and the sonorous treatment of the piano may be new and characteristic of Prokofiev,

¹³Boris Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1972), pp. 117-119.

¹⁴Ibid, pp. 117-119.

¹⁵Nestyev, Prokofiev, p. viii.

the conception of the sonata as a large and expressive work using certain conventional music forms and procedures represents the direct continuation of the nineteenth century sonata...This is important to note, for the twentieth century sonata tended to appear at times on a smaller scale and to be derived from the late Baroque divertimento for formal structure...Prokofiev stands out, then, not only in his preoccupation with the genre, but also in his taking it as a large expressive form that he then submitted to his own individual idiom without, however, significantly altering either the forms or the intent of the genre."¹⁶

Prokofiev once itemized the principal elements in his musical composition: (1) the Classical, related specifically to Beethoven's sonatas; (2) the search for innovation, seeking a new harmonic idiom for strong emotional expression; (3) the toccata or motor element, the use of insistently repeated rhythmic patterns; (4) the lyrical; (5) the satirical or grotesque.¹⁷

The first two sonatas, F minor op. 1 (1907-09) and D minor op. 14 (1912), were composed during his student days while he was in Petersburg. The first sonata is in one movement and is a very romantic work with late nineteenth century harmonies throughout. The second sonata shows many characteristics of Prokofiev's more mature style. The lyrical first movement, the grotesque second movement, the practice of accompanying a melody with repeated chords as in the first movement second theme, lean textures, and ostinato figures alongside driving rhythms are all devices seen later in his fifth sonata.

The next two sonatas, A minor op. 28 and C minor op. 20, were started in 1907 and completed in 1917. The A minor is in one movement. It is his most

¹⁶Kirby, A Short History of Keyboard Music, p. 433.

¹⁷William Austin, Music in the Twentieth Century (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1966), p. 454.

popular sonata, being a large display piece. The fourth sonata again returns to Prokofiev's lyrical, melodic style. In this work, as in the fifth sonata, the use of the grace-note is important.

The fifth sonata was written five years after the fourth and sixteen years before the sixth sonata, during a lull in his piano sonata output. This was his only sonata written abroad. Nestyev said about the fifth sonata: "It is the first work that belongs entirely to the new, foreign period. The most lucid of the three movements of this sonata...is the first. The main theme in a bright C major with characteristically colorful digressions, is charming in its naive, Schubertian ingeniousness and classical clarity." He goes on to criticize the second and third movements. The Andantino he says is "tinged with sinister sarcasm. The persistent hammering of the ostinato phrase is like an evil 'idée fixe' or the memory of a nightmare." About the finale he says, "The main theme is forced and artificially complex. The polytonal combination of the theme and the unchanging bass sounds deliberately harsh...the narrative second theme...does not change the general impression of the music of the finale, in which abstract invention predominates over genuine feeling."¹⁸ Nestyev's criticism is due primarily to Prokofiev having been abroad and under "foreign influences" at the time of composition. Not only the fifth sonata but other "foreign" works are criticized by the Russian critics as being too formalistic. The fifth sonata was rewritten as op. 135 in 1953. "The text (of the second version) differs in all three movements in an extensive alteration of the last movement, including a more lengthy coda and reworkings of entire phrases."¹⁹

¹⁸Nestyev, Prokofiev, p. 211.

¹⁹Irwin Freundlich, Prokofiev Sonatas (New York: Leeds Music, 1956), p. i.

The next three sonatas, sketched in 1939, and completed during the next five years, date from the period of the second World War and are known as the "war sonatas". The sixth sonata, op. 82, is a large, difficult work, with the explosive opening contrasting with the allegro tranquillo of the fifth sonata. A march serves as the second movement and a waltz becomes the third. Reminiscences of the first movement are heard in the finale. The seventh sonata won him the Stalin Prize in 1943. The sonata is energetic and driving throughout with motor-like rhythms. "Were it not for the lyrical break of the second movement, the work might be emotionally unbearable."²⁰ Prokofiev won another Stalin Prize, this time for the eighth sonata. "It has qualities of suavity alien to the sixth and seventh sonatas,"²¹ and is less percussive than the "war sonatas". Material from the first movement recurs in the final movement.

The ninth sonata is Prokofiev's last original work for piano. It was completed several months before the Party resolution of 1948. Nestyev remarked that in comparison to Prokofiev's earlier sonatas, it seems to be somewhat anemic on first acquaintance. The second, sixth, and seventh sonatas recall first-movement themes in the finale. In the ninth, however, themes are foreshadowed. The coda of each movement states the theme of the movement to follow. In the fourth movement, the cycle is completed by restating the opening theme of the first movement in the coda.

The fifth sonata is characterized primarily by its lyricism. Some critics even comment that his use of melody in this sonata is of a "Schubertian mood".²²

²⁰ Ashley, Prokofiev's Piano Sonatas (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 1963), p. 262.

²¹ Freundlich, Prokofiev Sonatas, p. i.

²² Ashley, Prokofiev's Piano Sonatas, p. 171.

Only in the marcato section of the first movement does the angular Prokofiev melody come to light when the lyricism is interrupted with an awkward major-seventh leap.

The harmony in the first movement amply illustrates Prokofiev's fondness for different scales outside of the major-minor system. The whole tone scale was a favorite of his and pervades the entire sonata. In the first movement it makes its first appearance in measures 31-32. (see example no. 5) It reappears in measures 100-102 and 167-169.

EXAMPLE NO. 5



There are whole tone phrases as in measures 66 and 67 and whole tone chords as in measure 51. Prokofiev also utilized the chromatic scale and a scale consisting of alternate whole and half steps. The latter occurs three times in the first movement, making its first appearance measure 42. (see example no. 6)

EXAMPLE NO. 6



Prokofiev also makes use of polytonality. Within the development section, measures 78-88, the E major and B^b major triads, a tritone apart, are stacked on top of each other. They are interchanged with each phrase. Measures 90

and 91 move into the polytonal regions of B^b and C. Prokofiev also frequently makes abrupt foreign key changes in the midst of a melodic phrase.

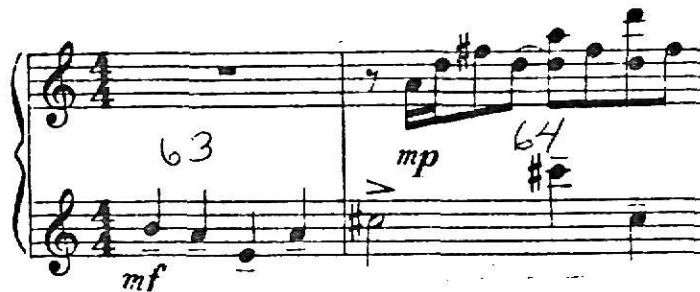
In the first movement there is little motivic treatment of themes except at the beginning of the development and the coda. In measure 63 the opening sixteenths are augmented into quarter notes and measure 74-76 treat the same figure motivically. (see example no. 7) The same motivic use of the opening theme occurs in the coda.

EXAMPLE NO. 7

opening theme stated



opening theme augmented



opening theme used motivically

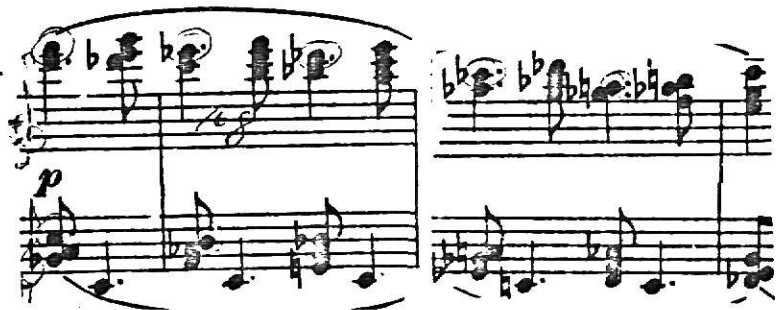


Prokofiev's music is dominated by its linear conception. "Between cadence points line is probably the most important single element...An interest in two-voice writing of a contrapuntal (though not imitative) nature produces passages of a balanced clarity not often heard in contemporary counterpoint. Here the writing is dependent almost entirely on interval rather than implied harmony."²³ Two-voiced counterpoint is demonstrated in measures 180-183. Also see examples no. 5 and 6 for demonstrations of linear writing. Diatonic melodies are often counterpointed with inner voice chromatic lines and were a favorite device for filling in harmony. In measure 108 the whole tone scale is pitted against a chromatic scale. (see example no. 8)

EXAMPLE NO. 8

whole tone scale-----

chromatic scale-----



The second movement is in the G^b tonality, which gives a tritone relationship to the two outer movements which are in C. The movement is carried along by a persistent eighth-note rhythm through the entire six pages, on top of which is a melody of irregular phrase lengths. There is also a third voice which fills in the rhythm when a melody note is extended. The grotesque and sarcastic nature of the movement provides a stark contrast to the bright C major movements which surround it.

Again the whole tone scale, or fragments of it, are present. Often the figuration of the third "voice" is made up of an oscillation between two notes

²³ Ashley, Prokofiev's Piano Music, p. 303.

a whole step apart. The tritone relationship that exists between the movements occurs in the coda measures 123-135. Here G^b and C are polytonally pitted against each other. One is reminded of the polytonal tritone relationship in the first movement.

The final movement is once again in C. As in the first movement, the major, minor, and whole tone scales are all used. The polytonal exchange as seen in the first movement, also occurs in this movement in measures 11 and 12. The fourth movement, to a greater extent than the first, treats the themes motivically, particularly in the development. At the beginning of the development, measure 53, the first theme is augmented and disguised within a dotted rhythm. The second theme is treated motivically in measure 76. The third theme, which originally occurs in measure 35, is also augmented in the development, measures 60-68. The coda is extensive with a toccata like finish. A pedal point on C, which is also an ostinato figure, is extended for twelve measures before the final cadence.

BARTOK

"One of the most original and influential voices of the twentieth century has been that of the Hungarian composer, Bela Bartok."²⁴ At the age of twelve he began serious study of piano and composition. Six years later, in 1899, he entered the Royal Conservatory in Budapest and was educated as a pianist and composer.

In 1904 he began working with Kodaly collecting Hungarian folk songs, which was to remain a life-long interest. "He published nearly two thousand

²⁴ Peter Hanson, Twentieth Century Music (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971), p. 223.

folk tunes, chiefly from Hungary and Rumania, these being only a part of all that he had collected....He wrote five books and innumerable articles on folk music, made settings of or based compositions on folk tunes, and developed a style in which he fused folk elements with highly developed techniques of art music more intimately than had ever been done."²⁵

In 1907 he became a professor of piano at the Budapest Conservatory, a post he held for thirty years. He refused to teach composition as he felt it would interfere with his creative work. During the 1930's he increased his appearances as a concert pianist, often playing one of his two piano concertos.

Bartok was making a tour of the United States in 1940 when the war broke out. Because of Hungary's collaboration with Nazi Germany, Bartok made the painful decision to leave his homeland and go into exile. His five years in the United States were a constant struggle against poverty and ill health. His publishers found it legally impossible to send him royalties. Columbia University gave him an honorary doctorate so that he might be able to continue his research, though the appointment could not be made permanent. Bartok's uncompromising nature, which did not let him write for radio or teach composition, did not help his financial matters. He wrote, "Our situation grows worse from day to day. All I can say for the past twenty years, I have never found myself faced with such a terrible situation as that into which I shall perhaps be plunged in the near future."²⁶ Ill health and financial problems continued to plague him. He died of leukemia in 1945 without being able to return to his native homeland.

²⁵Grout, A History of Western Music, p. 665.

²⁶Serge Moreux, Bela Bartok (New York: Vienna House, 1974), p. 193.

In his early compositional year, 1905-1920, Bartok was primarily concerned with integrating folk elements into his compositional style. Because the folk melodies were often not within the major or minor mode, he experimented with accompaniments that were often quite dissonant.

In the following years, 1920-1930, the folk influence was less prominent, while he showed an increasing interest in counterpoint. "The instrumental works of this period are characterized by a certain hard and uncompromising quality."²⁷ Rhythmically the works were complex and tonality was sometimes tenuous. The first two piano concertos, the piano sonata, and the Out of Doors Suite for piano date from these years.

"Bartok achieved a masterful synthesis of his art during the years, 1930-1940. The folkloristic explorations of the first period and the bold experimentation of the 1920's ripened into an integrated art."²⁸ He explored new sound possibilities with the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion and the Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celeste.

In the compositions of Bartok's last years in exile (1940-1945), much of the harshness and complication of earlier works disappeared and was replaced by serenity and lyric charm. Because these last compositions are easier to understand, they have become the most popular of his works. The Concerto for Orchestra and the Third Piano Concerto were written during these last years.

The piano remained of greatest importance to Bartok throughout his life. He was a virtuoso who concertized throughout Europe. Piano teaching was

²⁷ Otto Deri, Exploring Twentieth Century Music (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1968), p. 247.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 250.

his occupation, and his largest group of compositions was for the piano. Between 1897 and 1926 he wrote some thirty works for piano. The six volumes of the Mikrokosmos were written between 1926 and 1937. This was a complete course in piano technique containing 157 individual pieces ranging from very easy to difficult. The Mikrokosmos display his various compositional techniques.

The First Piano Concerto was written in 1926 and the Second in 1930. Both are characterized by harsh dissonances. The First Piano Concerto frequently uses minor seconds, major sevenths, and tone clusters. Ostinato figures and motoric rhythms give the concerto great vitality. "It is by no means a relaxing or a 'pleasant' piece: sharp and brittle, making full use of the martellato style."²⁹ The first movement of the Second Concerto omits the strings completely. The resulting woodwind and piano sound is reminiscent of Stravinsky's neo-classic Concerto for Piano and Wind Ensemble. Both outer movements contain a great deal of contrapuntal writing. The second movement contains Bartok's use of "night music", which he also used in the second movement of the third concerto. Most of the material for the final movement is derived from the first movement, only rhythmically transformed.

The Third Piano Concerto was Bartok's last work. He was still working on it at his deathbed but was unable to orchestrate the last seventeen measures before he died. This was completed by Tibor Serly, a pupil of Bartok's. The composition began as a concerto for two pianos and orchestra which had been promised to an American two-piano team. Realizing that he was mortally ill,

²⁹ Halsey Stevens, The Life and Music of Bartok (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 236.

Bartok dropped the plan and wrote the Third Piano Concerto as a parting gift for his wife, Ditta Pasztori. "It was a precious heritage. In its serene mood, sustained almost throughout, with the musical vivacity of its first and last movements and the deeply moving meditation of its central movement, this piano concerto represents the truly Apollonian transparency and grace of the Hungarian master's final style."³⁰

The concerto opens with the theme stated by the piano in E major. Eighteen measures later it is restated by the orchestra in C. In measure 27 the piano bursts forth with an ascending, sixteenth note motif, which is used developmentally later in the concerto. The transition to the second theme takes place at the "Grazioso". The flourish in the flute and oboe is imitated by the piano and the second theme, measure 54, is imitated by the clarinet. At this point imitation and counterpoint become more frequent and dominate the rest of the movement.

The development begins measure 75 with the winds stating the opening theme above the piano accompaniment. Upon finishing the statement, the piano immediately takes over with its own rendition of the theme. The ascending sixteenth note motive from the exposition becomes increasingly important at the close of the development. Measures 100-103 the piano states the sixteenth note motive with the oboe and clarinet imitating one beat behind, against which the cornet plays first theme motives. (see example no. 9) The imitation grows to include the upper woodwinds in a stretto section.

³⁰ Agatha Fassett, The Naked Face of Genius: Bela Bartok's Last Years (London: Victor Gollancz, 1970), p. 282.

EXAMPLE NO. 9

Ob. I

Clar. I in A

I

Cor. in F

II

p. ma marc.

poco a poco

103

Pf.

The recapitulation occurs measure 118. The setting for the themes and transition passages may be varied from the exposition, but rhythmically and sequentially they remain the same. Bartok adds color in the recapitulation with the string glissandos. The transitional passage to the coda, measures 170-175, is treated imitatively and the coda concludes with an extended fragment of the first theme.

The beautiful second movement, in three-part song form, can be characterized as a meditation. It opens contrapuntally with imitative string entrances at two-beat intervals. The strings introduce a piano chorale whose different stanzas are separated by the string motif. A more animated intermezzo, the B section, makes its appearance against trills from the strings, and little leaps and staccati from the woodwinds. A three-note motive, taken from the first three notes of the chorale, is picked out on the piano. This motive is finally thrown back and forth in all directions, until it is augmented into quarter notes by the xylophone and piano and into four measure whole notes by the cornet.

The "B" section of the second movement contains what has been termed "night music". 'Tt is here that Bartok brought into play his extraordinary

sensitivity to the sounds of nature."³¹ Bartok had used his "night music" before in the Out-of-Doors Suite. One movement is entitled "The Night's Music," and the movement is dedicated to Ditta, his wife. "From the frequent recurrence of this nocturnal mood, and from its final appearance in the "Third Piano Concerto", which was also designed for the composer's wife, it is not illogical to postulate an extramusical connotation aside from the merely pictorial."³² The "night music" is primarily concerned with sound and texture. Characteristically, fragments of melodies are heard, blurred sounds are created with soft cluster chords and scale-like passages. (see example no. 10)

EXAMPLE NO. 10

The musical score for Example No. 10 features five staves. The top four staves are for woodwinds: Oboe III (Ob. III), Clarinet I in A (Clar. I in A), Cor Anglais I in F (Cor. I in F), and Trombone I in C (Tbn. I in C). The bottom staff is for Piano (Pf.). The woodwinds play a melodic line with some rests, while the piano provides a complex accompaniment with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, often beamed together. A measure number '84' is visible in a box on the piano staff.

The initial choral reappears in the return of the A section, but this time in the woodwinds while the piano accompanies it with a two-part counterpoint. The piano ends the movement with the same four note motive as in the last four measures of the first movement, though this time it is augmented and given a different harmonization.

The final movement is in rondo form, A-B-A-C-A/coda. Hungarian folk rhythms burst into the opening theme. The timpani solo leads into the B section, which is a fugato played solely by the piano. The orchestra gradually joins in with

³¹Stevens, The Life and Music of Bartok, p. 138.

³²Ibid.

much imitation, culminating in a stretto section. The principal A theme is returned to briefly before the timpani again leads into the next, more tranquil interlude in B^b. Here two themes are counterpointed against each other: The rising octaves in the piano against a new orchestral theme which is treated imitatively. (see example no. 11)

EXAMPLE NO. 11

orchestral theme against rising scales



new orchestral theme treated imitatively

This musical score snippet shows five staves: Piano (Pi.), Violin I (Viol. I), Violin II (Viol. II), Viola (Vie.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The Piano part has a rising scale marked 'mf, dolce'. The Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts have a rising scale marked 'grazioso'. A measure number '402' is written in the Violoncello staff.

Measure 402 another fugato takes place, this time solely within the orchestra. It is based on a motive of fifths over which the piano continues its scales. The fugato theme is inverted in the upper woodwinds and finally in the piano before returning to the interlude in B^b. The "A" theme returns for the last time followed by a brilliant stretto in the coda.

The writing for the piano is unusual for it is treated much of the time as a single-line melody instrument, with unison octaves between the left and right hands. Linear motion, which gives the concerto an open texture, takes predominance over vertically placed chords.

The orchestration is texturally thin. As in the piano, different instruments frequently play in unison. Even in thicker passages, duplication and parallelism are present. Bartok writes very colorfully for the orchestra. The bright woodwind sounds take priority over the strings. The timpani, particularly in the last movement, is used as a solo instrument, whose role is to help delineate form.

Halsey Stevens has remarked how unusual the serenity of the Third Piano Concerto is among Bartok's larger works. Possibly the work marked a new stylistic turn for Bartok. Its extreme refinement is a beautiful contrast to his first two, more barbaric piano concertos.

CORELLI

Corelli, born in 1653 in Fusignano, Italy, was part of a family that was numbered among the oldest and wealthiest of the town. Like most Italian boys, he received his first musical instruction from a priest. He had no intention of becoming a professional musician, but while studying at Bologna, the violin moved him so much that he decided to devote himself to it. In 1681 his first volume of trios was published. The following year found him first violinist at the Church of St. Louis-des-Francais. The second violinist was Fornari, his pupil and friend, who remained with Corelli throughout his life.

In 1687 Cardinal Panfili engaged Corelli as music master. He lived in Panfili's palace for four years. "The accession to the papacy of Alexander

VII determined the destiny of Corelli and attached him forever to the Eternal City of Rome."³³ His nephew, twenty-nine year old Ottoboni, was named vice chancellor of the church. He was a wealthy man whose major passion was music. Well-known composers believed they were insuring success for their music by dedicating it to Ottoboni.

"No one was to acquire a place in Ottoboni's favor comparable to that which Corelli held from the outset."³⁴ He quickly moved from servant to friend. His material wants were assured which allowed him to lead a leisurely life. This was quite different from his contemporaries who had to produce several operas a season and concertos every week. His fame continued to grow. In 1706 he was received into the Accademie dei Arcadi, an exclusive society of artists and writers, of which Scarlatti was also a member. "By unanimous consent he was esteemed as the greatest composer of instrumental music in the world."³⁵

Corelli had a double claim to a prominent place in the history of music. Not only was he a great composer, but a great violinist who laid a firm foundation for further technical development and a "pure style of playing". The normally placid character of Corelli was transformed in performance. "A person who heard him perform says that whilst he was playing on the violin it was usual for his countenance to be distorted, his eyes to become as red as fire and his eyeballs to roll in agony."³⁶

³³Marc Pincherle, Corelli (New York: W.W. Norton, 1956), p. 32.

³⁴Pincherle, Corelli, p. 33.

³⁵Ibid, p. 34.

³⁶Ibid, p. 46.

After 1710 Corelli failed to appear in public. He was ill the following two years and January 8, 1713, he died. Ottoboni had Corelli buried in the church of Saint Maria della Rotunda, which had been the specific resting place of painters, architects, and sculptors since the sixteenth century. Because Corelli was a musician, a special enactment by Ottoboni was required.

Corelli's fame rests entirely upon six books of instrumental music. He wrote no vocal music, which was unusual, for at the time it was customary to tackle all genres. The six books of music he wrote were spaced over thirty years. This was a small quantity compared to the amount required of his contemporaries. His circumstances under Ottoboni allowed him to polish his works and write only that which he could write well.

His first four collections are comprised only of trios, Op. I and III being comprised of sonatas da chiesa or church sonatas and op. II and IV comprised of sonata da Camera or chamber sonatas. Op. V contains the twelve solo violin sonatas also divided into church and chamber sonatas. Op. VI is made up of concerti grossi.

The 24 Pieces for Keyboard Instruments is a collection of various movements from op. I through V. For example, no. 1 "Sarabande" and no. 2 "Adagio" are movements from op. 5 no. 7 and no. 5, and no. 4 of the keyboard pieces is entitled "Adagio" and comes from op. 1 no. 8. The transcription for keyboard has "with more or less plausibility been attributed to Corelli."³⁷

Corelli is thought to be one of the first composers to write music within the major-minor tonality, free of modality. Thus, "A fundamental technical device in all of Corelli's music is the sequence...Whether carried out diatonically within one key or modulated downward in the circle of fifths, the sequence

³⁷Pincherle, Corelli, p. 214.

is one of the most powerful agents in establishing tonality."³⁸ The principles of tonality that Corelli established were expanded by Vivaldi and Bach.

"In his trio sonatas Corelli summed up the achievements of Italian chamber music in the late seventeenth century."³⁹ It was the trio sonata that was favored by Italian composers at the time. It made possible an ideal balance between melody and polyphony.

Corelli's solo sonatas are considered more progressive. "The sonata for solo instrument, remained a rarity for almost the whole of the seventeenth century."⁴⁰ His innovation here lies in his treatment of the violin. "Although the third position is never exceeded, there are difficult double and triple stops, fast runs, arpeggios, cadenzas, and etude-like movements in moto perpetuo."⁴¹ Even so, Corelli never lost sight of the "cantabile" qualities of the violin. He who was capable of great virtuosity showed restraint in his sonatas. He never let empty virtuosity overtake the musical aspects of his compositions.

³⁸Grout, A History of Western Music, p. 389.

³⁹Ibid, p. 389.

⁴⁰Ibid, p. 389.

⁴¹Ibid, p. 389.

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AN ANALYSIS OF SCHUBERT'S SONATA IN B^b (op. 960),
PROKOFIEV'S SONATA NO. 5 (op. 38), BARTOK'S CONCERTO NO. 3,
AND CORELLI'S 24 KEYBOARD PIECES

by

BARBARA FAST

B. A., Bethel College, 1975

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1978

The report is divided into two large sections. The first section consists of a tape of the recital performed June 28, 1977, and the second section consists of program notes over the music performed. The program notes are divided into four sections covering the four selections performed. The sections on Schubert, Prokofiev, and Bartok first give a brief synopsis of the composer's life, followed by an overview of the rest of the composer's works in the same genre. Each section concludes with an analysis of the composition that was performed. The section on Corelli deals with his life and gives an overview of the original works from which the piano transcriptions were taken.