

Natalia Strelchenko

*Style Brillante:*

Piano technique in Performance Practice of early 19th century



Critical reflection





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## Introduction.



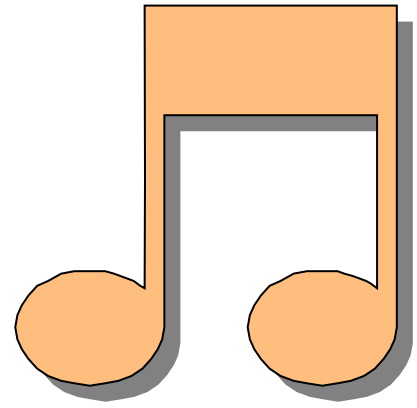
The goal with my project was to investigate different piano traditions of early 1800s, and to find out how the development of technique 1800s interacted with,- and probably influenced - musical language (or style), in light of evolution of piano mechanics.

The project was based on the analysis of the pianistic principals employed by a number of performer-composers in the early 1800s, who used technical elements both methodically (as exercises collections and/or method books) and artistically (as elements of compositions and/or performance). They absorbed the predominant technical traditions of the previous stylistic period, and at the same time anticipated the next one, thereby creating a style that has been a binding links between two stylistic epochs (Classicism and High Romanticism).

Additional attention will be paid to the influence of European piano tradition on the development of Norwegian keyboard tradition, which will be centered around main presenters of *Style brillante* in Norway: German-Danish (Norwegian) performer-composer Friedrich Kuhlau (1786-1832), Liszt's pupil Agathe Backer Grondahl (1847-1907),and Chopin's pupil Thomas Tellefsen (1823-1874).

Research of the mechanical evolution will be realised in collaboration with national and international Instrument Museums.

The Western Classical Piano style did not generally undergo sudden change, but rather, developed gradually. As a result of my research, I made a conclusion that the concept of the Classical and Romantic styles is an artificial construct that has been adopted in later times to frame the music into neat historical patterns. There are various sub-genres (or styles) both within Classicism and Romanticism, with discernible periods of transition between them.



## Placement of my project in connection

professionally nationally and internationally.

Musicological aspect.

An artistic project “Piano technique and Style in Performance Practice of early 19th century” has started 1.october 2007. The goal with this project was to investigate different piano technical traditions of the early 1800s, and to find out how the development of technique interacted with and probably influenced musical language (or style).

General research on Early Romantic piano practice is already a combination of two different areas. From one side, this area of investigation has been a natural continuation of research on Baroque European keyboard playing tradition, started actively in 1960s and being widespread in our time. Additionally to this, Early Romantic European piano tradition research is based on a solid foundation of 18<sup>th</sup> century’s output. Historical treatises present information on authentic methods playing styles. Research on Baroque European keyboard tradition has a 50 years experience of analysis of the written material and its transfer into the live playing tradition, some principles of which may be useful for the research on Romantic European piano playing tradition.

Being relatively new area of investigation, Research on Early Romantic European piano playing tradition has expanded last decades, and already started to create its own structure, based on output of C.Rosen, S.Pollence, K.Hamilton, S.Rosenblum, C.Brown among others.

One of useful studies for this research is the eighth chapter from David Rowland’s ‘A History of Pianoforte pedalling’, published in 1993 by Cambridge University Press, investigating use of sustaining syncopating pedal after 1800s in production and playing style of Dussek, Kalkbrenner, Clementi, Cramer, Hummel, Moscheles. In appendix author publishes excerpts on piano pedaling from three major piano method book of early 1800s: J.P.Milchmeyer, D.Steibelt and L.Adam.

He also gives a good description of Thalberg’s three-hand technique and its dependence on pedaling. Following Rowland’s cites from the authentic critics, Thalberg’s and Chopin’s pedaling was closest to pedaling we use in our days, while Liszt’s pedal was either less delicate or just more various than pedaling of two first named. However, this chapter is very condensed and short. Therefore, Chopin’s pedaling is taken as a whole, without diving in different time periods. Chopin’s pedal indications in his piano Concerts, written in young age, are quite different from his

pedal marks in later Nocturnes. Development of Chopin's pedal will be investigated in my research as a parallel to Thomas Tellefsen's pedalling.

Another important source of knowledge about the historical playing methods will be music scores of less known composer-performers from the relevant period. Artists from the beginning of 1800s was well-known for combination of performance practice, composition of artistic production and composition of technical exercises , often followed by method books.

Sandra Soderlund's study 'How did they teach? How did they play?' (2006) has examined widest collection of historical keyboard method books from the 15<sup>th</sup> century up to start of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The actual period is presented in chapters 8-17, investigating transitions to first pianos and then the way through Graf, Broadwood, Erard, Pleyel up to Steinway pianos, and the piano schools related to those periods. Author suggests a short summary of every method book, viewing different aspects of piano technique (such as hand position, approach to finger exercises, articulation, pedaling and writer's comments and advices regarding the performance style) in every treatise.

This study is a good starting point, helping to organize and classify method books for further investigation.

Period 1750-1850 was marked as a period of most extensive development of keyboard instrument mechanics. A chance to change the instrument stimulated composers to search for new principles of piano playing. New piano techniques were growing out old cembalo playing tradition, either conflicting with the old style, or absorbing previous experiences.

Stewart Pollens' 'The Early Pianoforte', published in 1995 by Cambridge University Press, is a study, describing first keyboard instruments starting from Henri Arnaut's *dulce melos* up to Bartolomeo Cristofori's *gravecembalo*. This book contains mostly technical information describing action, soundboards and striking points. Mark Kroll's Practical and Historical Guide 'Playing the harpsichord expressively', published in 2004, opposite, and contains an order of practical harpsichord lessons building up patterns of various technical elements for the player. In historical commentaries Kroll relates his own descriptions of every technical element to a historical origin where this particular element was first described. For example, exercises for *overlegato* technique are related to Nicolo Pasquali's description of *overlegato* in 'The Art of Fingering the Harpsichord' (1758), Francois Couperin's 'L'Art de toucher' (1717) and Michel de Saint Laumbert's 'Principes du Clavecin' (1702). Combination of those two studies gives a good fusion of theory and practice in understanding of main principles of the early keyboard technique.

In 2010 Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger publishes 'Chopin et Pleyel'. This book consists of collection of documents on Pleyel instruments, register of instruments, a history of Pleyel piano manufacture, particularity of Pleyel piano's mechanics. Eigeldinger illustrates various types of pianos and cites correspondence between Pleyel and

Chopin. As well, he lists choice of Pleyel instrument that Chopin chooses for his performances.

Material is very condensed. Author presents documents and information without enforcing his subjective opinion about them. Only in the last chapter IX, called 'Perspectives', author gives some sketches about what can this information change in pianistic interpretation of Chopin's works. This approach does not create any system of how use of authentic instrument would change interpretation of Chopin's works, but getting an important source and characteristics that are necessary for creating such a system by a reader, or a performer. For example, author does not describe Pleyel's difference of mechanics in comparison to previous type of mechanics, but just portrays contemporaries' reviews on it. He cites C.Montal's description of what new Pleyel's mechanics changes in touch and piano sound: M.Pleyel, en modifiant la mécanique anglaise par un système de levier bien combiné, est parvenu à vaincre la dureté du clavier et à lui donner une facilité, une égalité et une rapidité dans la répétition des notes, que les artistes et les facteurs croyaient impossibles. Pour obtenir ce résultat, le centre ou balancier de la touche a été changé; le nez de la noix du marteau ou point d'attaque de l'échappement a été élevé au-dessus du pivot de cette noix, la pente de l'échappement a été modifiée; la vivacité du ressort a été augmentée par l'écrouissement du métal; les frottements ont été diminués par la précision avec laquelle toutes les pièces de ce mécanisme ont été exécutées. Pour améliorer la qualité du son, on a augmenté le diamètre des cordes, on a changé leur longueur, le frappeur des marteaux a été calculé de manière à donner un son pur, net, égal et intense; les marteaux, garnis avec soin, d'abord très durs, puis recouverts d'une peau élastique et moelleuse, procurent, lorsqu'on joue piano, un son doux et velouté. lequel prend de l'éclat et une grande portée au fur et à mesure que l'on presse le clavier; en un mot, aucune précaution n'a été négligée pour assurer la solidité et la qualité de ces instruments.

Mr. Pleyel altering the English by a mechanical lever system combined well, managed to overcome the hardness of the keyboard and give him ease, equality and speed of the repetition of notes, the artists and the factors believed impossible. To achieve this, the center or balance of the key has been changed, the nose of the nut or hammer attack point of the exhaust was raised above the pivot of this nut, the slope of the exhaust has been modified, and the vivacity of spring has been increased by the metal nut, friction has been decreased by the precision with which parts of the ALL THAT mechanism were executed. To improve the quality of a sound, we increased the diameter of the strings, they changed their length, the knocking of hammers was calculated to give a pure, clean, even and intense, hammers, carefully trimmed, at first very hard, and then covered with a skin soft and elastic, provide, makes sport when piano, a soft and velvety. which takes the brilliance and far-reaching as and as you press the keyboard in a word, no precautions were neglected to ensure the soundness and quality of these instruments.

Eigeldinger, p.168. C.Montal, p.223, Voir aussi A.Marmontel, *Historie de piano*, p.245-258.



As a result, such a research is very ambivalent can be used in connection to many different composer-performers from the relevant époque, both European and Norwegian.

Charles Rosen's 'The Romantic Generation', written in 1995, presents an opposite way to maintain ideas. Vivid and witty written, this book presents a chain of music examples and virtuous conclusions, even paradoxes. Rosen is not aiming to open new universes, as unknown manuscripts or seldom instruments,- he discovers hidden meanings in those that already exist, through accurate review of music score. His idea of Chopin's new conceptions of polyphony and phrasing and its dependence of pedaling (p.20), absence of syncopated pedaling in Early Romantic Piano Practice (p.24), *temps dérobé* (rubato, p.412) are particularly interesting and will be used and developed in my research.

Evolution of keyboard instrument was an important part of piano technique development. This is why research on mechanics of period instruments is an important source of information.

Data from A.Kjeldsbeg's study 'Et piano i Norge – et uunværlig instrument' ('Piano in Norway – an indispensable instrument') presents chronologically the scope of Norwegian piano makers and gives a concentrated description of historical mechanics.

Concept of style will be an issue for discussing in this study. A relationship exists between development of piano technique and style transformation. Arnold Schönberg in his Style and Idea mentions uslovnost of style and absolute priority of idea over style concept that will be a consequence. Richard Crocker in his History of Musical Style (1966) relates style concept to every concrete composer rather than to époques.

Research on Norwegian Piano music from Style Brillante Epoch is less investigated, and source of information is often limited to several studies and chapters in articles, books and PhD dissertations. This is why research on Norwegian Piano music may be seen in light of general research on Norwegian Music from that time.

The most comprehensive source of information on Norwegian piano music in 1750-1850 are several chapters from the 'Norwegian Music history' by A.Vollsnes, O.Edwards, I.Karevold, N.Grinde, H.Herrethel and O.K.Ledang.

The figure of Thomas Tellefsen and relationship between Frederic Chopin and Thomas Tellefsen has not been widely investigated. However, one of the most significant publications by now is Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger's 'Esquisses pour une method de piano' (2001). Eigeldinger lists compilation of four original manuscripts of Chopin's sketch for the method aside to Thomas Tellefsen's 'Traité du mechanism de piano', complemented by Tellefsen's thorough biography and excerpts from his letters. In his objective manner, author does not add any personal opinions to the

materials but just list them ready for the further investigation and comparative analysis.

Thomas Tellefsen's letters, edited and published by O.A.Sandvik, is a valuable source of information on his earlier years in Paris, providing notes of his communication with Kalkbrenner and Liszt. Unfortunately, description of Tellefsen's connection Chopin is quite limited presented in those letters, that were originally written for family use only.

Recently, in vitro studies, I.Loe Dalaker has investigated Tellefsen's piano style in her PhD on the overnamed composer-performer.

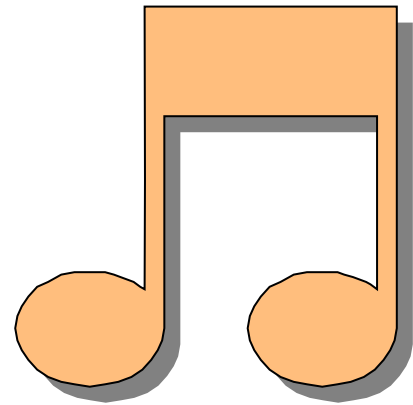
Artistic aspect.

Research in Baroque and Classical Performance Practice has started in 1960. There are established traditions within this area now. Education systems for fortepiano and harpsichord are built up into the Conservatories and Music Academies schedule. Research within the Romantic Piano Practice is younger, and has all the benefits and disadvantages of the newly invented area of investigation. There are some pianists who work with the area of Historically Informed Performance practically. Among others, Malcolm Bilson and his disciples should be named. However, this society is focused more on a Classical Stylistic display. Professor Liv Glaser has done a significant artistic research on period instruments from Early Romantic Epoch and has been a worthy consultant for me during my research period. Professor Pierre Goy at the Conservatoire de Lausanne has newly recorded a CD of F. Chopin's piano music in collaboration with piano technician C. Clarke and musicologist J. J. Eigeldinger. His way to work with the material appeals closest to the way I view an artistic research. This is really a pioneer work. A researcher feels much more free from accustoms and preconceived opinions. However, lack of clear patterns makes the working process somehow slower. There is no education on period instruments from the transition period between the Classical and Romantic Piano performance styles, and even no common terminology for the techniques from this period.

This is why I decided to employ a concept of *Style Brillante*, with the following definition:

*The Style Brillante manner of playing was invented by a whole generation of piano performer-composers who reformed the principals of piano playing and created a new musical style. It was employed in solo piano in the Romantic style, and often performed by the composer himself in music salons. Style brillante compositions are usually fairly short and often focus on virtuoso pianistic display or emotional expression of a sentimental character. Common sub-genres of style brillante music are the operatic paraphrase or fantasia, in which multiple themes from a popular opera are the basis of the composition, and the musical character-piece, which portrays a particular situation or narrative. An important attribute of Style brillante is use of Early Romantic techniques, such as jeu perle, third hand effect, tremolos, improvisation. Often the titles of the works includes "brilliant" as an adjective (Rondo Brillante; Polonaise Brillante; Variations Brilliant" etc).*

## Use of theory



- Definition of style concept.
- Main areas of research.
- Historical treatises that have made a basis for the further pianistic experiments.
- Investigation of piano mechanics and period instruments from Finchcocks Instrument Museum, involved in my artistic research.
- Viennese instruments.
- English instruments
- French instruments.
- Restoration.

Definition of style concept.

An artistic project "Piano technique and Style in Performance Practice of early 19th century" has started 1. October 2007. The goal with this project was to investigate different piano technical traditions of the early 1800s, and to find out how the development of technique interacted with and probably influenced musical language (or style).

The 1800s gave us a whole generation of piano composers-performers, who reformed the principals of piano playing and created a new musical style. The stylistic evolution, the development of piano technique and mechanics has been interwoven into each other and created new types of expression.

Every performer has a stylistic interpretation naturally integrated in the daily practice since the very start of music practice and throughout the whole life. One of my first music memories was Ralf Kirkpatrick's recording of Scarlatti harpsichord sonatas and me, 7 years old, playing the same sonata on my old piano, and thinking about which instrument suits better for the piece. Now I am 30 and the question is still relevant. Performers use the style, but mostly intuitively, on the symbol level. If you ask a performer about a formal definition for a style concept he will be much more concerned, than if you ask whether Liszt's piece stylistically different than Mozart's one.

In his book "Style and idea" Arnold Schoenberg observes:

The first of these concepts have been widely used in the 25 years, while not so much ado has been made about the last one. Style is the quality of a work and is based on natural conditions, expressing him who produced it. In fact, one who knows his capacities may be able to tell in advance exactly how the finished work will look which still sees only in his imagination. But he will never start from a preconceived image of a style; he will be ceaselessly occupied with doing justice to the idea. He is sure that, everything done which the idea demands, the external appearance will be adequate.

Exactly in the same manner, performers during their creative process operate with the concept of idea, rather than with the concept of style.

The definition of style is quite unclear. There is always disagreement about the definitions of genre and style, and it is impossible to list all stylistic categories in existence. There is possible to treat the terms genre and style as being the same, stating that genre should be defined by pieces of music that share a certain style or 'basic musical language'. Another variant is to state that genre and style are two separate terms. However, in both cases the most important is that musical style could be defined by the context and the themes (content and spirit).

Reginald Gerig quotes the words of Nadia Boulanger: "Everything in music is about the technique, because this is the only aspect of music we can control" (quoted after: Gerig, Reginald: Famous pianists and their technique", p.4, Indiana University Press, re-print edition 2007. This sentence sounds provocative. However, meaning with this postulate is of course not the predominant role of technique over musical goals. Opposite, Boulanger means that any idea a pianist would like to express, demands technique as means. In the interpretation a pianist should give an indication of the

stylistic belonging of the performed piece. Therefore, stylistic identity can be expressed by technical means, and defined by choice of particular techniques.

Main areas of research.

My research has been based on three main dimensions: the analysis of historical treatises, an investigation of the mechanisms of period instruments, and relevant pianistic practice.

Among the main historical treatises, the source for investigation have been following method books:

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1791) - Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments

Johann Peter Milchmeyer (1750-1813) - *Die wahre Art das Pianoforte zu spielen*

Muzio Clementi (1752-1832) - Art of Playing on the Piano Forte

Louis Adam (1758-1848) - *Méthode De Piano Du Conservatoire*

Jan Ladislav Dussek (1760-1812) / Ignace Pleyel (1757-1831) - Art of Playing the Piano Forte or Harpsichord

Daniel Gottlieb Steibelt (1765-1823) - *Méthode pour le Piano-forté: ou, L'art d'enseigner cet instrument*

Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837) - *Ausführlich theoretisch-practische Anweisung aum Piano-forte Spiel*

Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1785-1849) - *chiroplast hand guide*

Friedrich Kuhlau (1786-1832) – Instructive Sonatinas

Carl Czerny (1791-1857) – Kunst der Improvisazione

Isaak-Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870) – Méthode des Méthodes

Frederic Chopin (1810-1849) - Etudes

Franz Liszt (1811-1886) –Etudes d'execution Transcendante

Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871) - L 'Art du chant applique' au piano

ThomasTellefsen (1823-1875) – Sketch on Chopin's Piano Method

I have been honoured to be invited to come to Finchcocks Instrument Museum (Kent, UK) to investigate period instruments of Style Brillante Epoch. Among others, Stein, Graf, Walter, Collard/Collard, Clementi, Erard and Pleyel pianos have been thoroughly investigated under supervision of Dr.Alaistair Lawrence.

The main working principle was to investigate authentic principles as they are described in method books, experiment with them on period instruments, employ them in performance practice and, to a certain extend, transpose them on a modern pianos. Reason for such a transposition was, partly, logistic impossibility of reaching a period piano for every concert or lecture, partly – conscious intention to use the knowledge on authentic techniques for finding new interpretative solutions for a modern instruments.

On the artistic display, I have got a chance to present some parts of my project 3 times at Wigmore Hall in London (3.01.3008, 3.01.3009, 2.12.2009), in Casals Hall (Tokyo, Japan), on the festivals in Spain, Italy, Slovenia, Russia, Germany, Norway and United Kingdom.

Historical treatises that have made a basis for the further pianistic experiments.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1791) was the most renowned performers and teachers of his days. His keyboard style was renowned for its expressivity, and the keyboard instrument that could reflect it in the best way was clavichord. His *Versuch ober die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen (Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments)* is one of the very first method books on keyboard playing that still can be related to the challenges a performer overcomes on a modern instrument. Even though this treatise has no direct point of reference to my project, this method book was yet so influential in Romantic period, that it felt sensible to include it in the area of investigation. C.P.E.Bach mentions three major factors related to the true art of playing keyboard: correct fingering, good embellishments, and good performance. Among the various fingering he mentions that his late father suggested 1-2-3-1-2-3-4 or 1-2-3-4-1-2-3 as two ambivalent variants for the scale fingering. This makes sense. For example, use of 1-2-3-4-1-2-3 fingering on up-going A-Minor scale makes a position of the hand on the keyboard more comfortable and corresponds with the harmonic structure of the scale (4 notes in T/S + 3 notes in D).

The author stresses the passing of the thumb under the other fingers, that was quite revolutionary for that time, motivating this with the nature of the thumb that is constructed to be naturally adept at turning under. The idea of searching for the natural ways of playing is very important and was later on slightly lost in the virtuoso fever of early 1800s.

One of the techniques C.P.E.Bach mentions is a snap technique (from the German word *schnellen*): ‘...After the stroke the upper joint of the finger is sharply doubled and drawn off and away the key as quickly as possible’ (Versuch, p.101). He mentions it often during his treatise, as a regular technique, along with legato and staccato, but does not give a particular description of the technique. Possibly, this technique was so obvious for his playing that he did not feel the need of a thorough comment on it.

His description of legato is following: ‘Notes which are to be played legato must be held for their full length’ (Ibid, p.149). This description gives space for over-legato technique as a technique that now is mentioned as a legato.

Even though C.P.E.Bach writes about a hand position while playing the keyboard, the best description of his hand position seems to be given by Nicolaus Forkel, who was very well familiar both with J.S. and C.P.E.Bach, and meant that those used quite similar touch:

According to Sebastian Bach’s manner of placing the hand on the keys, the five fingers are bent so that their points come into a straight line, and so fit the keys, which lie

in a plane surface under them, that no single finger has to be drawn nearer when it is wanted, but every one is ready over the key which it may have to press down. What follows from this manner of holding the hand is:

1. That no finger must fall upon its key, or (as also often happens) be thrown on it, but only needs to be *placed* upon it with a certain consciousness of the internal power and command over the motion.
2. The impulse thus given to the keys or the quantity of pressure, must be maintained in equal strength, and that in such a manner that the finger be not raised perpendicularly from the key, but that it glide off the forepart of the key, by gradually drawing back the tip of the finger towards the palm of the hand.
3. In the transition from one key to another, this gliding off causes the quantity of force or pressure with which the first tone has been kept up to be transferred with the

greatest rapidity to the next finger, so that the two tones are neither disjoined from each other nor blended together.

Quoted and translated in Hans T. David, Arthur Mendel, and Christoph Wolff, eds., *The New Bach Reader* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), 432.

Johann Peter Milchmeyer (1750-1813) in his *Die wahre Art das Pianoforte zu spielen*, is firmly convinced that fortepiano (he mentions primarily a square piano) is the best instrument to play on, blaming harpsichord for having too stiff action and the last for being too soft. Legato technique, as described by Milchmeyer, seems to be an over-legato in reality: '---The legato style, which is indicated by a small half-circle for a few notes or by a line curved at each end for several measures, requires a soft, as it were, melting touch. All players of the pianoforte should generally, for the sake of the instrument, choose the legato style, since knicking and hacking notes do not suit the instrument, but rather it must be caressed in a tender manner...' (p.18).

Milchmeyer is a significant advocate of wrist technique. His description of Staccato presents the very first reference of wrist motion: '... Good execution of this [detached] style requires that one lift the finger from the first key before striking the second, the finger from the second before striking the third and so on. All notes in this style, whether single or double notes, are made by a small motion of the hand, without moving the arm' (p.19-20). His description of an octave technique refers directly to the wrist: '... The octaves must be played without the slightest strain, without movement of the arm, only with the wrist...' (p.69).

Milchmeyer gives so many different variants for fingering, that it is getting clear that there was not a common pattern for playing the scale. Using different fingering on the scales and passages gives more variety to connect a particular passage to its harmonic content, as it was previously described in the case of C.P. Bach's fingering. However, conscientious choice of fingering for every particular scale inhibits the dexterity, that is a mechanical process. Further extension of length of piano keyboard followed the possibility to produce longer passages, that demanded equal fingering for the scales, and, as a consequence, draw attention away from the harmonic content of every passage.

Among the new techniques Milchmeyer presents tremolando, that makes a path to the romantic piano style. He calls this technique tremando, and describes the production of it as a performance of written notes with a certain trembling as fast as possible.

Muzio Clementi's *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Piano Forte* (1801), published in London and republished eleven times in French, German, Spanish, and Italian, influenced the playing style of the most pianists in Europe. Clementi describes different touches:

The best general rule, is to keep down the keys of the instrument, the full length of every note  
(p.8)

Clementi says, that when the contrary is required, the notes are marked either staccato (2 variants), staccato with a legato bow, or legato. There are descriptions of staccato and legato that are particularly interesting:

Staccato denotes distinctness, and shortness of sound; which is produced by lifting the finger up, as soon as it has struck the key...



...The notes marked legato must be played in a smooth and close manner, which is done by keeping down the first key, 'til the next is struck; by which means, the strings vibrate sweetly into one other. N.B. When the composer leaves the legato, and staccato to the performer's taste; the best rule is, to adhere chiefly to the legato; reserving the staccato to give spirit occasionally to certain passages, and to set off the higher beauties of the legato. (p.8-9).

Interestingly, his description of touches is different from the previous treatises. He insists in holding a note its full length, not a half-length what seems to be obvious in those times. As well, description of legato is basically what was meant as over-legato in harpsichord technique. Actually, Clementi introduces the touches the way how we perceive those touches in our days.

The first piano method book to come out of the Conservatoire was *Méthode ou principe général du doigté pour le Forte Piano* (Method or General Principles of Fingering for the Fortepiano) by Louis Adam(1758-1848) in 1798, revised in 1804.

Adam insists on the light touch that was the characteristic of French pianism throughout the nineteenth century:

It is essential never to strike the key with the force of the arm, but only with the strength provided by the muscles of the fingers. These muscles must never be tense and must be allowed free movement....The fingers must be curved and the muscles relaxed and supple, for all muscular tension blocks freedom of movement and makes it impossible for the hands to extend and contract the fingers promptly, which one needs to be able to do at all times...

...It is only by means of touch that one can draw out beautiful sounds; therefore it is necessary to become accustomed to using only the strength of the fingers to bring out the *forte* sounds as well as the *piano*.

Louis Adam, *Méthode De Piano Du Conservatoire* (Paris: Magasin de Musique du Conservatoire Royale, 1804), 149.

Jan Ladislav Dussek's Instructions on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte or Harpsichord, published in London in 1796, stresses the same scope of topic that seems to be standard from those times. He recommend to avoid shifting of fingering more then necessary. This make indicate the next stage in fingering development: turning the thumb under the other fingers has been so natural and obvious that one can recommend to not to do it more then necessary. At the same time, a trend to keep a fixed position of 1-2-3-4-5 fingering wherever it is possible indicates limited use of arm and forearm. Mechanics of instruments from that period was still light and fragile, and it was still no need to include the arm weight in the process of playing. Dussek gives fingering for broken thirds, sixths, arpeggios, and parallel thirds and sixths. However, there is not that much of this type of technical elements in his music. This may mean that these elements were used as a material for improvisation, and made a path for the further paraphrase music form.

Daniel Gottlieb Steibelt (1765-1823) in his *Méthode pour le Piano-forté: ou, L'art d'enseigner cet instrument* (Paris, 1805), along with a general information on finger position (curved) and some basic technical exercices, presents two main issues that

are fairly new and revolutionary for the piano technique. First of those is tremolando technique, called vibrando in several critical reviews of that time. The second important subject that he stresses is pedaling. Steibelt was a huge advocate of using pedals. He writes:

I will show especially that this addition, important to the instrument, serves to bring out the colours, to mark the shades and gradations, and that the means of using them are subject to rules that taste has laid out' (p.4).

Further on the author describes different pedal and their basic effects. He stresses the importance of pedal techniques and rules for using the pedal but however does not list any of those. There is still very early times in piano development, where the pedal technique was not refined yet and the performers were still divided in two general camps: pro- and contra-pedal.

Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837), a pupil of W.A.Mozart and one of the most important predecessor of Chopin, is one of the classic examples of the composer-performers from the Early 1800s. His *Ausführlich theoretisch-practische Anweisung zum Piano-forte Spiel* has sold thousands of copies. Almost all the important pianists of the Early Romantic Era were in the Hummel concerto repertoire. Chopin played it, Clara and Robert Schumann, Mosheles. Liszt made his debut with this concert in the age of 11 years.

Another influensive figure of early 1800s was Friedrich Kalkbrenner. In his Complete Course of Instructions for the Piano Forte With the Assistance of Hand Guides (1831) he presents his own version of Logier machine.

Friedrich Kuhlau (1786-1832), born in the North German town of Uelzen, near Hannover, in a family of a musician in a military band, studied composition in Hamburg with Schwenke, and lived in Copenhagen since 1810, obtained an appointment as a non-salaried musician in the Danish Court in 1812. He supported himself by giving recitals and teaching music.

Kuhlau has not left any method books, however he is well remembered for his piano music, particularly because of its pedagogical value. His sonatas and sonatinas are not difficult pieces of a mixed style, spreading from Classical to Early Romantic periods, and offer musical an excellent training ground for the more challenging works.

Almost all of the first publication of Kuhlau's sonatinas contain detailed fingering, which is quite unusual for publications of that era. This allows concluding that sonatinas were intended as guidance material for the students. These works represent a kind of transitional stage between exercises and artistic works. Analysis of fingering gives an opportunity to examine hand position on the keyboard, turning of the thumb and dependence of melodic passages of a phrase's harmonic structure.

Carl Czerny (1791-1857) studied with Beethoven and became an important teacher as well as a prolific composer, particularly of etudes for the piano. In his extensive piano method published in 1839, he delineates five basic touches—Legatissimo, Legato, Mezzo staccato, Staccato, and Marcatissimo or Martellato. His description of Legatissimo involves the weight of the arm:

Both hands must always be held firm, and with all their weight resting on the keys;  
although the fingers, wherever *P* or *PP* is indicated, must strike as gently as is necessary.

Carl Czerny, *Complete Theoretical and Practical Piano Forte School, Op. 500*, trans. J. A. Hamilton (London: R. Cocks & Co., 1839), III, 21.

Mezzo-staccato touch is usually indicated by dots under a slur. Czerny describes two types, the first, for slow movements, is "to be executed with a slight movement of the hand."<sup>37</sup> The second type utilizes the Bach touch: ... each finger with its soft and fleshy tip on the keys, makes a movement like that used in *scratching* or in *tearing* off something...and thereby obtains a very clear, pearly, and equal touch, by which, even in the quickest times, all passages may be executed with equal roundness and finish, with a full and not too harsh a tone, and with the most perfect and pleasing tranquillity of the hands. All compositions written in the brilliant style, and consisting of a vast number of notes, and in a quick degree of movement, must *in preference* be played in this manner; because the quiet Legato style would appear too dull and monotonous, and the pointed Staccato too hard and coarse.

Carl Czerny, *Complete Theoretical and Practical Piano Forte School, Op. 500*, trans. J. A. Hamilton (London: R. Cocks & Co., 1839), III, 21.

Staccatissimo may be carried on till it amounts to the *Martellato*, or hammer-like percussion of them, in which the notes are struck as short as possible...A more than usual elevation of the hand and even of the arm, particularly in skips, is allowed here....the Pianist must be most particularly careful to preserve a *fine tone*, even in the greatest *ff*, so that the *Martellato* may not degenerate into a mere thump or crash.

Ibid; Carl Czerny, *Complete Theoretical and Practical Piano Forte School, Op. 500*, trans. J. A. Hamilton (London: R. Cocks & Co., 1839), III, 21.

One of the main Kalkbrenner's opponents was Isaak-Ignaz Moscheles. There is difficult to underestimate influence of Moscheles. He was studying in Wien with, among others, Andreas Streicher and Salieri, was an admirer of L.Beethoven, a rival to J.N.Hummel, friend of Clementi and Cramer, and a teacher to F.Mendelssohn, S.Thalberg, E.Grieg among others he taught first at the Royal Academy of Music in London and later in Leipzig Conservatory.

He described his main goals:

The leading features of this (the older) school are the cultivation of amazing powers of execution, overwrought sentimentality, and the production of piquant effects by the most rapid changes from the soft to the loud pedal, or by rhythms and modulation, which, if not to be completely repudiated, are only allowable on the rarest occasions. It is quite natural that I should not ally myself to this modern faction; a great deal they do, I would not; their power I could not imitate, although in my own school of playing I feel in full vigor without any trace of age or want of nerve. In my school such a prodigal display of mechanical power was a thing unknown. For the future, should the world take less interest in my performances as an executant, my desire will be the more ardent to cultivate music in accordance with my own taste and convictions

Moscheles, *Recent music and Musicians as Described in the Diaries and Correspondance of Ignaz Moscheles*; p.250.

In collaboration with Francois-Joseph Fetis (1784-1871) Moscheles wrote *Méthode des Méthodes*, a treatise, divided in three parts, whereof the first one was written by Fetis and two others written by Moscheles. The Fetis's, written part, the author first lists main principles of playing, definitions of music terms and ornamentation. Then he presents a system of instruction for the piano-forte, advocates use of a thumb on the black keys, and discusses various technical approaches:

Tranquil hand, naturally painting oval, and the fingers raising just enough to produce the sound

Hand position with the fingers falling perpendicularly on the key and triking them firmly

Loose wrist when playing sixs and octave passages, without any assistance from the fore-arm

Octave production with the fixed arm and for lightness, rapidity and facility on octave production

Fétis describes Moscheles piano technique as well:

The latter [Moscheles] has several different modes of attacking the keys, according to the effect he wishes to produce; and it is universally allowed that he dies not resort in vain to the use of these ingenious contrivances of art peculiar to himself, his style being alike remarkable for variety and brilliancy.

He second and the third part of *Méthode des Méthodes* presents piano exercises and Etudes by

Among others Dussek, Clementi, Adam, J.B.Cramer, Hummel, Kalkbrenner, Henselt, H.Herz, Czerny, Chopin, Henselt, Liszt, Moscheles and Thalberg.

Frederic Chopin, in his uncompleted Sketch for the piano method, started from the very basic information, for sure with a thought to make the method book as complete as it is possible. However, since the work has not been completed, the information on piano touch and particular techniques is not widely presented there. The best source of information on Chopin's touch and technique would be absorbed from the letters of his pupils and friends:

His tenderly-subdued style of playing... was his own, and inseparable from his conception of pianoforte touch; it was incapable of modification from any influence whatever. His *fortissimo* was the full pure tone without noise, a harsh inelastic note being to him painful. His *nuances* were modifications of that tone, decreasing to the faintest yet always distinct *pianissimo*. His singing *legatissimo* touch was marvellous. The wide, extended arpeggios in the bass were transfused by touch and pedal into their corresponding sustained chords, and swelled or diminished like waves in an ocean of sound. He kept his elbows close to his sides, and played only with finger-touch, no weight from the arms. He used a simple, natural position of the hands as conditioned by scale and chord-playing, adopting the easiest fingering, although it might be against the rules, that came to him. He changed fingers upon a key as often as an organ player.

Edith J. Hipkins, *How Chopin Played* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1937), 5.

Franz Liszt has not left any method books. However, information on his playing style and technical methods can be richly absorbed from his Etudes, virtuoso elements in his pieces, and critical reviews from his concerts.

M. Liszt draws from the piano tones that are purer, mellower, and stronger than anyone has been able to do; his touch has an indescribable charm. This is largely due to the exact observance of legato and staccato with respect to consonances and dissonances; and also to the way in which his fingers touch the keyboard. I would say that he has no touch at all, and, at the same time, that he has all possible touches. His fingers are very long, and his hands are small and pointed. He does not keep them in a rounded position.

He maintains that this position lends a feeling of dryness to one's playing and this horrifies him. Neither are they altogether flat, but they are so flexible as to possess no fixed position. They are able to approach a note in every way, but never with stiffness and dryness.

Perhaps the most wonderful feature of his playing was his touch, or rather, plurality of touches—one as light as a falling snowflake or the flutter of a butterfly's wing, another as rich as Genoa velvet of triple pile, a third as clinging as a young lover's first kiss, a fourth as hard and bright as the blow of a diamond-headed hammer. He could make the instrument, to others a machine of readily exhaustible tone-resources, do anything—sing, talk, laugh, weep, and mimic orchestral effects without number. There never was and probably never will be another such genius...

British journalist William Beatty-Kingston, quoted in Adrian Williams, *Portrait of Liszt by*

*Himself and His Contemporaries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 437.

The essence of Liszt's rival Sigismund Thalberg's (1812-1871) pianism seems to have been his tone.

L'Art du chant provides the best analysis of Thalberg's goals and techniques as a pianist.

Thomas Tellefsen's (1823-1874) Sketch for the Method is an attempt to revive and complete Chopin's uncompleted Method. Ironically, he progressed almost to the same point as Chopin and did not complete the Method neither. Tellefsen's method starts very similar to Chopin, with very basic information on quantity of the lines on

the music and the main clefs. However, further on Tellefsen notes some ideas that are not presented in Chopin's Sketch. These ideas have been a foundation for my further pianistic experiments on period instruments.

### Investigation of piano mechanics and period instruments from Finchcocks Instrument Museum, involved in my artistic research.

Next important topic for investigation, that was already partly mentioned previously, has been development of keyboard mechanics and its influence on piano technique.

For investigating authentic piano technique, it is necessary to get thorough knowledge about the piano mechanics and the development of the instrument since 1700s.

The course I have been awarded at Finchcocks Instrument Museum (Kent, UK) has been a wonderful gift for me.

... I am coming to the dreamworld. 3 floors with over 20 rooms full of old musical instruments. I put my fingers on the Graf from 1826 and let music stream out of it. Touch, lightness of the keys, elephantbone cover – everything feels just so RIGHT. It is like to come home after a long tiring journey. Side by side there is an Erard from 1868.

They have lived a long life. They have secrets. They can scare. They play by themselves in the night.

A room with the old clavichords along the walls, and some costumes from the old centuries standing in the middle and looking as a ghosts (visions). I had to pass through this room in the middle of the night, after a long practising day, in the best traditions of the worst American horror films. Every night, when I passed through this room, the clavichord standing at the wall suddenly played some notes, a descending pentatonic scale. It happened every night, and got me into the cold sweat. I think I overworked and started to have hallucinations. After some days I discovered the secret. Inside in the clavichord there was a piece of wood with the name and year production information, sitting on the keys. When I pass along, the old wooden panels on the floor move under my feet, and this movement was just enough for the clavichord changes the angle. This movement was just enough for this block pressing down the keys so that they start to sing. So sensitive are these instruments.

## Viennese instruments.

Graf belongs to the school that was founded in Vienna, founded by the piano builder Stein, who was in fact Mozart's piano builder. His action system was very special and very different from any other.

In order to analyse the secret of the Viennese piano action, it is first necessary to take the name-board off. There is a very secret part of this piano, which other pianos don't have. There are no screws, no bolts, nothing – and here is the secret! – part of the case, comes away and spreads out.

The Viennese mechanism, designed by Stein and improved by people like Conrad Graf and Walter, had very tiny hammers – small hammers in the bass and even smaller ones in the treble. They are not covered by felt like modern pianos, – they are covered with leather, which is in fact skin from the roe-deer.

The special thing about the Viennese instrument is that the hammer is facing the “wrong” way – on a modern piano the hammer is the other way round. The question is which way is the right one and which is a wrong one?

What is a single escapement action? In simple terms it means just a key and a hammer – no more complicated than that – it is very simple but very sophisticated. When you play a note the beak presses into the escapement on the spring and, as you press, the hammer rises up until it will suddenly trip – it trips just before the string.

Then it drops down. This is what is called the escapement action. This is Stein's mechanism, which is very responsive and very fast. It is very easy to play fast and to keep perfect control. It is very expressive allowing you to get a good dynamic range. When you press the key do you feel a kind of moment when the key already goes down but there is still no sound?

This little tiny moment is what we call 'lost motion'. It exists on English pianos too. Generally speaking, this moment has to exist on all 'single-lever' actions that were made before Sebastian Erard introduced his double-escapement so that this little lost motion disappeared. So all pianos with single escapement action have to have 'lost motion.'

When the key starts to go down, the hammer rises and the beak slips out – but it has to get back underneath the spring on the way back, and if you didn't have that little bit of a gap, the hammer couldn't get back underneath for repetition. It is absolutely necessary. You have to have that little gap to be able to repeat: The weight or force that you use for playing on this Viennese pianoforte is also dependant on the amplitude of the hammers. If we press too hard, as often happens with pianists who do not practise on period keyboard instruments, so we see that the hammer is moving too hard.

This is called hammer-bounce and this is a problem with all early pianos which is why you have to play them in a special way. If you hit them too hard, too forcefully, then the hammers will bounce. This system does not have what we call a check. The later pianos have something to catch the hammer as it comes back – what is called a back-check, and therefore you could have a too much unwanted bounce. So the type of touch in many respects is dependant on the amplitude of the hammer. To derstand what sort of touch you should use on these instruments, you should get the hammer to move naturally, somehow to allow the instrument tell you what it can do.

Viennese instruments do not have a una corda pedal – but they have what we call a 'moderator'. What is the difference between them? Because of the way the Viennese

keyboard and action is put together, with the sledge, it makes it very hard to make una corda. In fact Beethoven longed for a una corda - he kept asking the Viennese makers to make him a una corda', and they would not do this, because it was too difficult. So, that is partly why in 1801 he went out and bought a French piano with pedals and una corda. What the early Viennese makers liked was not pedals at all (some of the Viennese pianos had no pedals). They liked to have knee-levers. In later years they had to follow international piano development, and started to make them. The Graf that was used for this recording, built in 1822, has sustain pedal, moderato, una corda and a bassoon pedal. The curious thing is that the places they are located can be interchanged, so the sustaining pedal may well be on the left, and the una corda to the right, or vice versa.

One of the design features, that made the Viennese piano in many ways superior to the English pianos, was the dampers. All the English pianos had what we call flat dampers which land on the top of the strings and which don't always work very well. It creates a kind of 'aftersound' that is clearly recognisable on the recording. You tend to get a 'ring' that the early Viennese instruments have 'V' - formed dampers or "wedge dampers". They are like a wedge shape, and they actually go into the string. It makes them much better at choking the sound. Viennese pianos had 3 rather than 2 strings, and the 'V' damper lands right in between the strings.

Now when we compare it with the English grand which we will do shortly we will hear that the English damping is not anything like as good as this.

Moderator is a very special system, which is only found on Viennese pianos. It is a strip with some little pieces of wool, which come between the hammer and the string. The hammer tries to hit the string - it cannot because the cloth comes across and is in the way, so in fact it is the cloth which hits the string.

It is a very special effect, and sounds absolutely mysterious. The cloth damps all the hardness of the tone. In this case if you use the moderato pedal you may, in some occasions, play without changing the sustain pedal at all - even between tonic and dominant harmonies! - because it disappears quickly enough by itself.

In a Viennese piano most of the mechanism is actually under the sound board. In order to get in and under, the sound board itself has to float - we call it the floating soundboard, or suspended soundboard. That in fact affects the quality of sound - the effect is to make it very fluid and singing. But it is not very strong, and the English pianos are better in this area. They don't have a floating soundboard, which is all suspended and just floating in mid-air. The English pianos are cut off with a very strong foundation and glued - with a big foundation. It influences the sound and makes the top treble much more powerful and brilliant. That was a design problem for the Viennese makers. They liked to have the hammer the other way round, but to do that, they had to enable the action to go under the sound board, which no other instruments do.

If the hammer on Viennese grands is turned the other way around. What does it do? What does it change in the sound production? Because the hammer is turned the other way around, it is striking the string very close to the end of the string, which is about 1/12th (sometimes a bit more, - 1/15th, or even 1/20th ) of the string length. So the hammer is striking right on the edge of the string. That makes the sound very clear and fresh and a little bit thin. The English pianos strike at 1/9th or 1/8th, and 1/8th which is exactly what a modern Steinway has.



English instruments.

The next instrument in this audio collection is an English Broadwood Grand Piano from 1843, belongs to the English piano building tradition, based on the Cristofori Italian design. Bartolomeo Cristofori (1655-1732), lived in Florence built and developed the very first piano in history. This was in about 1709/10, he called the instrument "gravicembalo col piano e forte". His instrument did not bring him an immediate success and received criticism for being less powerful and brilliant than the harpsichord, and also for having a smaller keyboard – 4 octaves in contrast to the French harpsichords of that time that had a 5 octave span. During whole of the 18th century early pianos evolved in Europe. The German piano builder Heinrich Zilbermann (1727-1799) continued Cristofori's tradition in Freiburg, and provided pianos for many distinguished keyboardists in Germany and abroad. Being a mechanical machine, the piano gained from all the benefits of Europe's industrial revolution. It is a bit curious that during the initial period the main piano builder in London was not an Englishman but a Scotsman - Stodart. There was also Backers and Broadwood, who continued and developed his tradition. It has the single lever English action, which is the original action which goes all the way back to Cristofori. The hammer is turned the same way round as that used by Cristofori and as the modern Steinway uses now (the opposite to Viennese hammers, which are the other way round). The Italian tradition came to England through Zilbermann in Germany and was applied in England by a piano builder called Backers. Broadwood, Stoddart, Collard&Collard (this company had been later bought by Clementi) and the other English makers all went to work with Backers and to study this mechanism. Of course, they all copied this style – including Erard who was in London in the 1790's. His first grand pianos had the English mechanism and eventually the English system became the modern piano.

The hammers have a different shape than the Viennese: They are much longer first of all. The first English hammers were still Leather-covered (not felt), and were covered much more generously than the Viennese pianos. Felt did not come in until the 1830s, so the instrument used for the recording – a Broadwood grand from 1845 – already has a felt cover. Compared to the Viennese hammers the English ones are enormous, really huge.

The English instruments had 3 strings per note, like modern instruments. The reasons for this goes right back to the early Broadwood grands – they wanted more power. Because of these heavier hammers, the instrument can really make a powerful noise. If you had 2 strings, there would be a risk they could break. Particularly, if you push the una corda on, and then hit the hammer hard by mistake, it would break the string. This is why the English instruments are much more powerful than the Viennese, but less delicate and a bit coarser. When you play the una corda you are still striking 2 strings for example. Another problem was the strings on the early pianos, particularly the brass strings in the tenor area that break very easily. There was a practical idea behind this: if a string broke in a performance, or the arrangers couldn't get a tuner just before the start, you still had 2 strings to play!

The dampers on the English instruments are not like Viennese dampers, these are more like harpsichord checks or cembalo jacks. In the English instrument the dampers are flat all the way through from the top to the bottom, they don't have a V shape that goes into the string – they just sit on the top of the string and that tends to

make a damping system that is not so good and precise. But is this in fact worse, or just different?

This instrument has 3 pedals. We have the una corda – the keyboard shift, which we don't get on the early Viennese piano. That idea has come right the way through to the modern piano – all modern grands have the una corda system as a normal feature.

As you may notice, when I play a staccato chord on a Broadwood, it has a strange after-sound, which you would hear as a sort of “echo”. That sound is as a result of wear and also the instrument's imperfections, and may be not very pleasant, and even be irritating to some pianist's ears in our modern days. In fact, it seems to be a special effect that they actually liked at that time, and we have evidence for that. Much later the Erard grand piano from the 1860s still has this effect! The other evidence we have is this remarkable thing called the bridge of reverberation, the design of which had a patent and was protected and registered by William Collard, who invented it (he was one of Clementi's piano building manufactory foremen). The idea of this is to increase the resonance. The functions of the bridge of reverberation is as follows. The first part of the string has a normal speaking length, and then the string goes over the bridge. There is another string over the bridge. The waste length is tuned an octave higher (or an octave and a 5th). If you lift the bridge of reverberation, you would see that this string is not struck by the hammer at all, – that string is dead! However, when you play the note associated with this string, the “dead” string is resonating with it, giving an additional colouristic effect with the aim of give the piano more power and expression. This idea was copied 50 years later by Steinway, and they have the same bridge of reverberation on the modern Steinway grand pianos.

Collard, when he constructed this instrument (and Clementi as well) did not tune the wasted length of the string. What is very interesting is that after Clementi's death in 1832, this idea was taken away, company stopped doing it. If you look at Clementi/Collard pianos from then later years, you don't find this at all.

So, it may have actually been Clementi's wish. Certainly it as quite expensive to put in – they didn't become a normal feature, and it was produced as an experiment during 8-10 years.

The bar in the Broadwood piano is interesting. The makers had discovered by 1820, that if you had just a wooden frame on a piano, it put a colossal stress of all these strings (remember, there is one extra string for every note compared with the Viennese!). Even though they used a very heavy oak, and wooden frame was thick and strong – the pianos would bend! It was mostly the English instruments that suffered from this, because the smaller and thinner Viennese instruments carried on without iron bars for many years afterwards. Conrad Graf would not have iron bars in his pianos, so the Graf instrument we used for this recording has a wooden frame. But Broadwood made a very first attempt at the iron frame. They put just one thin bar through the strings, where the wood stress was the heaviest. This experiment succeeded, it lallowed piano to stay in tune better, and in a few years they put another one on, then another one, and finally by the 1840s they had the modern iron frame.

French instruments.

The third instrument, used in this recording, is a French Erard from 1866. The mechanical genius Sebastian Erard started as a harp-maker – and he was in fact a famous harp maker (he designed and developed the double-action harp which is the modern harp). He started making grand pianos and square pianos in England during the French revolution, when he was a refugee in London.

His Erard Grand from 1866 was closest to modern grand pianos, and there is a big difference between this instrument and these earlier instruments. This instrument is more evolved in 2 ways. First of all, it has much more iron in the frame: four crossed bars and a huge metal iron plate, called the strip. It takes a colossal strain. If we were to measure the load of the strings on this instrument, it is about 16 tons! If you took away the bars, the whole structure would collapse totally. So, the bars are absolutely essential in order for this piano to survive. It is still not a full iron frame (a frame made from just one piece of iron) even though the frame is massive, it is bolted together from a series of smaller pieces. You will find leather only underneath in the first layer). It is the felt that really gives the piano the romantic round warm sound. With leather it is more of a classical sound, and it is hard to get a romantic piano sound with leather hammers. Erard started with felt hammers from round about 1830/1828. The French were the pioneers in felt - the French makers in Paris were the first makers to use felt successfully.

The special feature of the Erard hammer system, that you will only find in Erards, is that the shank (the stick), that holds the head, is forked. It was constructed like this partly to make it stronger, but also because when it goes into check, the hammer flies up to the string.

The magic of the Erard system is a result of his discovery that he invented in 1823 – (attention, Messieurs et Mesdames, c'est un moment historique!) – a double escapement action. What is this, and how does it function? The middle lever is an extra lever inside. So, instead of just being a single action, which has just one lever pushing the hammer up, the Erard has a double escapement.

In a single escapement action (both English and Viennese) the check stops the hammer bouncing up and down, to take it a bit nearer the string to help the repetition. But the Erard has a special magic feature. When we release the finger slightly from the key, a little miracle happens to the hammer: the hammer jumps up by itself – now no other piano did that then ever before. It is the springs of the under lever, that are pushing the hammer back up again. That enables much better repetition, because the hammer is travelling back to the string again, ready for fast repetition.

There is an intermediate lever underneath, with the spring, which helps the hammers to jump up again. The other function of the intermediate lever is an accelerator that helps the hammer to travel faster to the string. This action is travelling much quicker than an English action. When you have the accelerator, you don't need so much weight to press a very heavy hammer. If you had a single Viennese or English action, you would really have a struggle with those massive hammers. So that intermediate lever is really the key to everything.

Under the lever there is the repetition lever, that has the function of taking the weight of the hammer off the hand. and it is also (when it is regulated properly) helping the hammer to travel back.

That was a revolution, a little miracle defying gravity in a way. It had great consequences for the development of the piano technique, and for new approaches in composition as well. It allows us to repeat notes without relieving the note fully, and that opens the way both for quick passages, repetitions, martellato, and for soft accompaniments, opening up the era of virtuosity, Erard was proud of this system when he made it in Paris, and protected by it law with the patent which he took out. No one other maker could produce a piano that played so fast and so accurately and which repeated so well. This is why a lot of the French composers from this time wrote pieces of music to show off this wonderful mechanism.

The dampers on the French Erard instruments are very special. Most makers have them on the top of the string, coming down naturally by own gravity, like a modern piano. Erard had this idea of having the dampers under the string, which is a little bit crazy. What does this construction mean? Every damper has to be held against the string quite firmly by a spring inside. If that spring breaks, the damper just falls down, which is fatal. So, what is happening, when you play the instrument? The hammer comes up and strikes the string, the damper begins to move but as it moves further down, the more resistance there is from that spring. So, if you are playing fast you don't notice it that much. It is more noticeable if you want to play soft or slow, when you are slowly pushing against those damper springs, which draws back with that action. As the key starts to go down, it goes lightly and easily for the first half of the way, until the damper begins moving down, but the closer you are to the bottom of the key (which is 7½ mm deep on this Erard, the heavier it is.

According to my measurements, there is very little resistance on the first 5 mm of the depth, and the finger is only taking the weight of the hammer. Then, right at the bottom, you suddenly get to the damper weight, and then you have to push to get through that resistance of the damper spring. When you press the sustaining pedal, the dampers come off the strings, downwards and that will make the action easier and lighter again.

Only Erard had this rather bit weird system. It does cause problems and it is not as good as the modern system. The damping is very much like the early English pianos - it still has that ring. The bass register sounds very dramatic on Erard grands, that is actually more effective for some pieces of music than on a modern grand piano where all the registers sound much more even, controlled and dryer, but not so dramatic – on this piano you can really get a rather frightening noise in bass!

Many Erard Grande pianos from 1840d-1860s have well preserved mechanics, but, as with most of the period pianos, these instruments have been used a lot. The felt on the hammers had been worn out, so the sound was getting very hard and unexpressive, especially when you played it a little bit vigorously!

Until recently anybody who restoring a period piano would either leave the old hammers, which probably wouldn't sound very nice, or throw them away and put new hammers on. Both solutions would change and diminish the sound quality.

There were only two alternatives; one was to stretch the hammer in order to put the felt on by hand. It is really risky, because you have to pull, and the hammers are very fragile, so you risk breaking them. The other alternative is to say “Ok, we can’t make hammers like this any more, so we will throw these out and put new hammers in of the same size”. But these hammers made with a single layer of felt, and also the quality of the felt is very different, so the sound will never be close to an authentic one.

After investigation of the musicological and mechanical display of the relevant topic, I made an attempt to establish several artistic projects in which I could employ historical techniques on period instruments, and reflect on them.

### Restoration.

During my course at Finchcocks Instrument Museum, one of world’s most famous piano builders Christopher Clarke made a little revolution with this Erard instrument. He took the outside layer of felt on the original old hammers off, and re-covered them in the special, original way that they used in the 1850s.

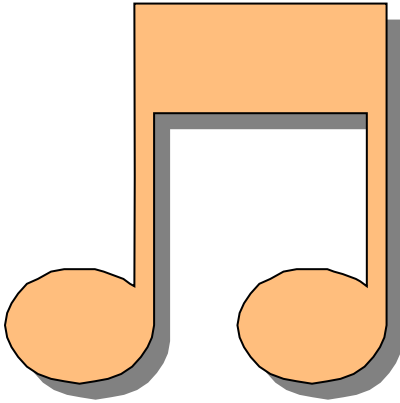
The felt he used was also specially made. The felt in those days was softer than the felt that is used in modern pianos. It was also a lot thinner, because in modern pianos the felt is actually put on in one single layer with huge presses exerting many tons of pressure whereas in the old days hammers were built up in several layers: when the leather or felt got worn out and the sound became unpleasant, it was usually time to re-cover the hammers. The modern method involves putting a single, really thick layer of felt, whereas the Erard hammers here were built up with several layers on the wooden core, and then a separate layer of felt put over the top. At that stage - by the 1850s – 1860s - in France and also in London (with the Erard firm especially) they needed special machines - hammer coverers - to cover the hammers, because they were using quite thin felt by then. By that time in France the piano-making was extremely sophisticated, so actually the covering on the hammers of older pianos was produced more or less by hand, using just hand-tools. Dealing with pianos of this date you absolutely have to use the same machines that they used because modern machines and the big fat single layers of felt are not subtle enough.

Chris Clarke has made a replica, a copy of this special machine – a hammer-coverer - from the Musee de la Musique in Paris (original about the same date as the piano, 1860-1870), involving a combination of archeological work with a surgical operation in order to change the leather on the hammers in exactly in the same way as it was done in Style Brillante period.

This mechanical hammer-coverer almost reproduces the motion of human hands in fact – it is a kind of pantograph, with jaws which hold the felt inside them. The piano builder needs to put on the hammer cover and put some fish glue all over the hammer except at the tip (because the glue doesn’t make a very nice sound). Then he has to put it in the jaws and push it down. 15 kilos of lead weights underneath the bench are attached to a pedal, and in the moment when the pedal is pulled

on with a piece of gut, the jaws will shut, a little shaped detail slides back, the jaws come together and bring the felt onto the hammer with a precise force.

The chance to re-construct an exact copy of a combination of the hammers and the authentic leather allows us to come as close as possible to the authentic sound and demonstrate to the listeners what a wonderful, warm and rich tone this instrument had in reality.



### Muzio Clementi project

As a part of the first year 2007/2008 research, I started to work out and improve the chosen method: to connect a concrete historical treatise to every performed piece, and try to realize its main principles in interpretation.

Stylistic transition means a way from a point to a point. One of the important figures in late Classical era was Muzio Clementi. Often called "the father of the pianoforte", Muzio Clementi was not only a methodist and composer. He also founded a piano-building company, and was active in the designing of and developing the pianos that his company built. The Clementi piano firm was later renamed Collard & Collard in 1830, two years before Clementi's death.

Clementi added an interesting feature called a harmonic swell. Introduced a kind of reverberation effect to give the instrument a fuller, richer sound. The effect uses the sympathetic vibrations set up in the untuned non-speaking length of the strings. Here the soundboard is bigger than usual to accommodate a second bridge (the 'bridge of reverberation'). These improvements indicate Clementi's attention to sound and colours.

This is why concert tour programme 2007, performed in Norway (among other places at the Norwegian Academy of Music), Italy, Spain, and England, with a high-lighting concert at Wigmore Hall on January 3, 2008, contained among other works Muzio Clementi's Sonata in F minor op.26 nr.2. Interpretation underlined to be based on his *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Piano Forte* as the main source of information on his playing style. However, C. Czerny's *Diaries about the lessons with Beethoven*, Hummel's *Ausführlich theoretisch-practische Anweisung zum Piano-forte Spiel* and Sandra Rosenblum's *Performance Practice in Classical Piano Music* have been topics for investigation during the preparation period as well.

Muzio Clementi's *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Piano Forte* (1801), published in London and republished eleven times in French, German, Spanish, and

Italian, influenced the playing style of the most pianists in Europe. Clementi describes different touches:

The best general rule, is to keep down the keys of the instrument, the full length of every note

(p.8).

Clementi says, that when the contrary is required, the notes are marked either staccato (2 variants), staccato with a legato bow, or legato. There are descriptions of staccato and legato that are particularly interesting:

Staccato denote distinctness, and shortness of sound; which is produced by lifting the finger up, as soon as it has struck the key...

...The notes marked legato must be played in a smooth and close manner, which is done by keeping down the first key, 'til the next is struck; by which means, the strings vibrate sweetly into one other. N.B. When the composer leaves the legato, and staccato to the performer's taste; the best rule is, to adhere chiefly to the legato; reserving the staccato to give spirit occasionally to certain passages, and to set off the higher beauties of the legato. (p.8-9).

Interestingly, his description of touches is different from the previous treatises. He insists in holding a note its full length, not a half-length what seems to be obvious in those times. As well, description of legato is basically what was meant as over-legato in harpsichord technique. Actually, Clementi introduces the touches the way how we perceive those touches in our days.

Since Clementi played such an important role for among others L.Beethoven, C.Czerny's *Diaries about the lessons with Beethoven* was a part of the creative process of building up an interpretation.

Beethoven was adoring Clementi, and mentioned that Clementi meant more for the development of the piano than Mozart, who was not among Beethoven's favourites.

My idea was to draw a line between Clementi and Beethoven, and show that Clementi's wide dynamic range, use of legato, mechanical development of the instrument have many analogies with later Beethoven' style.

For example, Clementi uses accents in forte, that, on the Broadwood instruments of those times, should give quite hard and glass-like sound:

The image shows a musical score for piano, consisting of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble clef part is a complex, fast-moving melody with many notes and some accidentals. The bass clef part is a simpler accompaniment with fewer notes. The second system continues the piece, ending with a 'dolce.' marking. Dynamics like 'fz' and 'f' are indicated throughout.

As well, I did some research on Hummel's *Ausführlich theoretisch-practische Anweisung zum Piano-forte Spiel* and Sandra Rosenblum's *Performance Practice in*



Classis Piano Music (selected chapters) to analyse the embellishments and the possible way for improvisation. I did improvised in repetitions, and whole second movement was used as a harmonic sketch for the further improvised embellishments on stage:



In several occasions I did use C.P.E.Bach's snap technique, likfor example the left hand in the first movement, bars:



Clementi bnever was a huge advocate of pedal use. However, we shoud remember that pedal use of that time did not impy refined Chopin's pedal, but had mostly 'on' and 'off' functions. Clementi's inventing, harmonic swell, gives an idea to use very soft, 'vibrating' pedal, imitating sound from the unturned strings and the bridge of reverberation on several occasions, especially in episodes of shifting dynamics:



My own ideas about the rhetoric, that will be later described in the chapter on Hummel, was also a source for investigation, and resulted in different rhythmical groups, according to the harmonic structure rather than to the down-beats of every passage.

I felt I found some right pattern. A method to combine work on a concrete piece with reading a relevant treatise seemed to work. I managed to combine two approaches and found a comprehensive way to enhance the musicological sources and the living piano practice. There is a way to get a book speaking.

The idea was to write down the commentary text, and let the audience read the main ideas of what will be performed. However, the combination of reading, searching for the best solutions for the sounds, and general practice took all my time. Combination of reading and practicing seemed to be perfect for a performer, but the combination of doing both practicing, reading and writing simultaneously has appeared to be just impossible. There are two different parts of the brain that should be used for the creative and logical thinking, and a strange activity usually called 'artist's inspiration', in reality consisting of many days (or weeks!) of continuous practice, does not combine so easily with the intellectual brain activity of writing. I have been more and more stressed out. I felt myself like in a drawing boat: if you try to save the one end, so another one immediately goes under the water. I try to practice- and getting worried for unprepared commentaries. I start to write – and get cold sweat of a thought: "You have a concert at Wigmore Hall, in two weeks, and all the octaves are still dirty. And what do you do? Writing?" After some days of execution in this manner, I had to drop the writing and kept focus on the realisation of all my creative ideas in music only. I decided that I rather perform them on the possibly highest artistic level, music is a language itself, and does not need any additional words.

I have been prepared in time, concert was success and interpretation of Clementi brought quite interesting results. Sonata got a good response from the audience and a review, published in a minor web-source.

My CV was not on the programme notes, and the writer could not know anything about my research on historical techniques, and even not about my being in the west. Basing only on my surname, he decided that I just left St.Petersburg for coming to London with this concert.

So he wrote:

*A Norwegian pianist of Russian origin, Natalia Strelchenko clearly thrives tackling music of ferocious technical difficulty...*

*The Clementi Sonata continued the link with England (he lived at 128 Kensington Church Street). Like Horowitz or Pletnev and their affinity with Domenico Scarlatti's sonatas, Clementi's works seem to have lived-on in the Russian piano tradition although it has to be said that, festooned with decorations and given the full late-Romantic treatment, on this occasion his F sharp minor Sonata hardly sounded like the work of a man born in 1752. Still, with its quirky Presto finale sounding like early Beethoven, it was hugely entertaining, albeit occasionally rhythmically wayward.*

Interestingly, the author recognizes the originality of interpretation that I was trying to indicate. Link to Beethoven was heard. Rhythmical difference was perceived. The

author did not dare to trust that I really meant things I did. Musical language provides information, but apparently we need words to guide the listener. This was a valuable experience that made me understand importance of written commentaries on most original ideas, additionally to artistic realisation of them on stage.

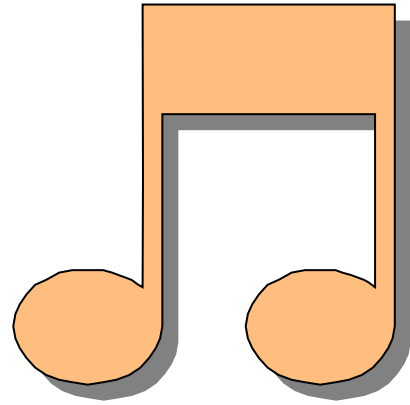
Above all, such a record demonstrates the momental photography of the aesthetic of our time, and may be interesting for the next generation of musicians.

One of the greatest pianists of our time, Alfred Brendel, in his book "Musical thoughts and afterthoughts" explains some ideas about how to reproduce the timbres of different instruments on the piano. The reproduction of the sound of the harp is described as follows:

"Do not forget that the harp is a plucked instrument! The pianist should play harp notes with round, tensed fingers – sempre poco staccato – within the sustained pedal. In rapid, sharply ripped-off arpeggios, the finger-play is assisted by movements of the wrist. Harp figuration has a smooth outline; its dynamic curves are of geometrical precision. The rhythmic and dynamic spacing of the notes needs the utmost control. Harp arpeggios are the opposite of careless, chancy arpeggio playing".

Of course, we can hear this timbres in his playing. But for being able to listen them we need to be "tuned" to the same mental wave, to think with the same allegories. In short, the text commentaries do not substitute the living impression of music, but makes the ideas easier to understand in a way performer himself interpretes them.

Artistic choices, turning points and employment  
of the musicological and mechanical material:



I have chosen to divide the main project into the series of minor projects. Following of the overnamed treatises have been a base for an artistic project within the main topic:

Muzio Clementi project  
Jan Ladislav Dussek / Ignace Pleyel project  
Johann Nepomuk Hummel project  
Friedrich Kalkbrenner / *chiroplast hand guide project*  
Friedrich Kuhlau project  
Frederic Chopin project  
Sigismund Thalberg project  
ThomasTellefsen project  
Subsidiary research:  
Baroque/Classical period transition  
Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach project  
Romantic/Impressionism transition period  
A.B.Grøndahls project  
Historical forms for a piano recital (benefit-concert, virtuous-concert)

In a start stage, work with these minor projects has not been proceeded chronologically. Every of the overnamed composer-performers has been an issue for a minor artistic project, with a thought to summarize the achieved information closer to the final performance. During the research period I have noticed some predominant ideas repeating in each minor topic. For example, my idea of a romantic figurations as a transformed elements of Baroque ornamentation, that I have got during my minor Hummel's project, seemed to be important and necessary to be applied into every further minor project to be proved. As a result, every next topic has been based on a common result of a previous one, so that every next topic was more and more in depth than the previous one. At the same time, an increased focus demanded a narrower chronological frames, since every little detail, investigated in depth, took much longer time and grew into a larger topic than it seemed to be from the primary overview.

An important turning point was my studies on period instruments at Finchcocks Instrument Museum. Knowledge on period instrument mechanics put a new perspectives on investigation of historical technical principles.

Structure of an artistic activity, based on concerts, or projects, gave me an opportunity to come back to the primary topic with a new knowledge, and improve the interpretation. For example, my interpretation of Clementi program as I performed it at the concerts at Finchcocks Instrument Museum i 2009, was significantly different from my interpretation of the overnamed programme at Wigmore Hall concert in 2008.

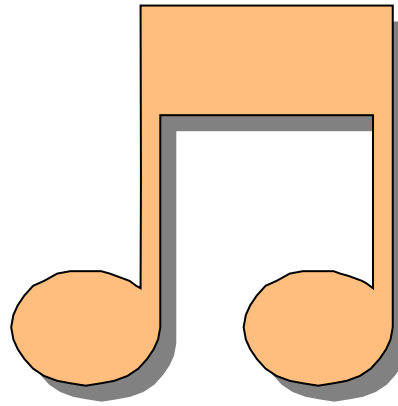
On the final stage of the research I dedicated some time to classify previous topics into the chronological frames, and reflect on the achieved results. This is why the final description of those minor project does not list the chronological list of performances, but rather gives a summarized reflection on the material.

Work on my final project and work on critical reflection had quite a few common problems. Both in a lecture-recital and in writing, there is slightly unclear who are the target group. Addressing a lecture to a group of highly educated professionals, a performer chooses a relevant language, and takes some topics as a granted. Addressing the lecture to a wider audience, it could be appropriate to choose a lighter style of speech and include some curious details.

The writing is even more complicated. A written PhD of 80.000 has equal length to this production. A PhD has a clear rules for choice of academic language, text structure and even layout. In a work on PhD a musicologist has a chance to dedicate 3 full years to writing only, and has plenty of additional support and learning in writing process.

Music is an abstract concept. During the artistic process, an artist often works in intuitive, subconscious level. Often the process is not defined by words, but by a direct connection between the symbols and a physical realisation of them.

Additionally to this, our programme did not offer yet any courses regarding writing or text forming. This is why my final solution regarding the critical reflection was to persuade to main goals: to answer the required questions, and to draw the main ideas expressed in every minor project in a form of sketches on each of them. Every sketch, presented in this reflection, is not a finalised musicological text, but a collection of ideas that a performer gets during and after a completion of a project. Each of those topics can be, should be, and will be developed in a further research.



Jan Ladislav Dussek / Ignace Pleyel project.

My study on Jan Ladislav Dussek's (1760-1812) style were based on several Sonatas and his main treatise Instructions on the Art of Playing the Piano or Harpsichord. Sonate op.77 in F Minor 'L'invocation' was performed on several concerts.

Art of Playing the Piano or Harpsichord, published in London in 1796, stresses the same scope of topic that seems to be standard from those times. He recommends to avoid shifting of fingering more then necessary. This make indicate the next stage in fingering development: turning the thumb under the other fingers has been so natural and obvious that one can recommend to not to do it more then necessary. At the same time, a trend to keep a fixed position of 1-2-3-4-5 fingering wherever it is possible indicates limited use of arm and forearm. Mechanics of instruments from that period was still light and fragile, and it was still no need to include the arm weight in the process of playing.

Dussek gives fingering for broken thirds, sixths, arpeggios, and parallel thirds and sixths, as we can find them later in the Sonatas:

Dussek - Sonate op.77 in F Minor 'L'invocation', 1<sup>st</sup> movement



In Sonatas, Dussek uses broaden scope of technical elements, presenting most of the elements that will appear in High Romanticism. There are passages - presecors of Mendelssohn's style:

Two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system shows a treble clef with a melodic line and a bass clef with a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system continues the piece with similar notation. Fingerings and dynamics like 'ff' are indicated throughout.

Ibid

Dusseck uses widely tremolo figures:.

Ibid:

Musical score for a piano piece by Dussek, marked 'con anima'. It features a treble clef with a melodic line and a bass clef with a rhythmic accompaniment. The score includes fingerings and dynamics like 'p'.

Way to use tremolos anticipates Schumann's figurations.

R.Schumann -Sonata Nr.2 in G-Minor Sonata, 4<sup>th</sup> movement:

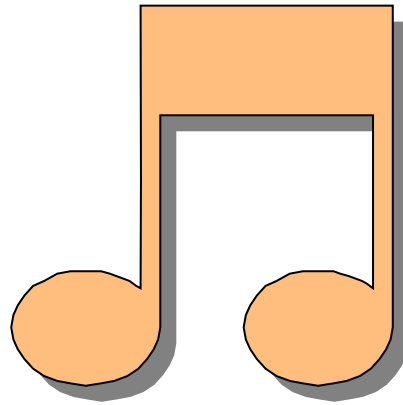
Musical score for Robert Schumann's Sonata No. 2 in G-Minor, 4th movement, marked 'Presto. M.M. ♩ = 160.'. It features a treble clef with a melodic line and a bass clef with a rhythmic accompaniment. The score includes dynamics like 'sf' and a 'Pedal' marking.

There are arpeggios and unusual technical skips in Liszt's spirit:

The image displays four systems of musical notation for a piano piece, likely a sonata by Franz Dussek. The notation is written for a grand piano (treble and bass clefs) and includes various dynamic markings and performance instructions. The first system shows a forte (*sf*) chord followed by a decrescendo (*dim.*) and a piano (*p*) section. The second system features fortissimo (*ff*) chords, a piano (*p*) section with a *dolce* marking, and a *sotto voce* section. The third system is marked piano (*p*) and contains intricate sixteenth-note passages. The fourth system includes fortissimo (*sf*) chords and a decrescendo (*[dim.]*) marking. The piece is in a key with three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor) and a common time signature.

An attempt to employ Dussek's predominant pianistic ideas in pianistic practice was resulted in several performances, among others in Girona (Spain, 2009), Bergen (Cross Church, 14.July 2010), The Norwegian Opera Summer Series (Oslo, 24.07.2010)





Johann Nepomuk Hummel project.

Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837), a pupil of W.A.Mozart and one of the most important predecessor of Chopin, is one of the classic examples of the composer-performers from the Early 1800s. Staring his *Ausfürlich theoretisch-practische Anweisung aum Piano-forte Spiel* with countless amount of short exercises on various combinations of finger grip, Hummel gradually develops these combinations into the ornamentation groups, which of each gets a shape of an artistic interpretation of a single technical figure. Further on, the author tells about the art of improvisation as a obligatory skill to possess, and finally gives the example of his Piano Concerto in A-Minor op.85, as a logical artistic goal for the previous exercises:

The image shows a page of musical notation for a piano solo, consisting of four systems of staves. The notation includes various technical markings such as fingerings (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5), slurs, and dynamic markings like *p*, *cresc.*, *sf*, *f*, *espressivo*, and *sfz*. The piece is marked "SOLO." and includes measures numbered 2, 8, 31, 34, 48, and 81. The notation is complex, with many slurs and fingerings, indicating a technically demanding piece.

Hummel, perhaps more than anybody other, gradually and detailed shows technical development, and the logical connection between the work of the technical elements and their use in an artistic output.

I did go through the exercises, and it was logical to perform Hummel's Piano Concerto in A Minor using the described technical patterns as a final of this study. Plan was to use a period instrument for the performance. However, during the work on the treatise and Concerto, two unexpected problems have arisen. The first one was use of improvisation as a particular technique of that time, the second was phrasing as a stylistic identification of this piano concerto, Hummel's works, and in Early Romantic music in general.

Phrasing in Romantic piano music.

Being a performer, my playing has always included a naturally integrated stylistic interpretation. Performers most often use style intuitively, at the symbolic level. If you ask a performer about a formal definition for a stylistic concept s/he will find this much more difficult than if you ask whether Liszt's music should be played and sound differently from Mozart's, and ask him/her to play it stylistically differently.

A musical style may be defined by pianistic technique in the context of the content and spirit of the music. Technique is an attribute of style.

The musical aesthetic has changed since the Romantic era. The process of instrumental education in those times included counterpoint, numerous technical exercises (that often took many hours) and obligatory study in improvisation. Performances of works that we now consider to be notated “in stone” in modern editions could include a combination of these three elements: an improvisation over some easier harmonic structure (a given theme or melody) using technical elements practised through the exercises. The most essential improvisation elements are prelude, ornamentation of the musical material, interludes and cadenza.

Hummel mentioned importance of improvisation in his method treatise. C. Czerny’s “Kunst der Improvisazione” treats improvisation as one of the elements of technique. In early 1800s, both composition and improvisation was a natural part of the daily music practice. Somebody, who could not improvise, could not be meant a proper musician. Composition talent influenced general renommée as a musician. Being one of the most brilliant players of 19<sup>th</sup> century, Sigismond Thalberg was criticized for not being good musician because of imperfection of his compositions. In Style Brillante period there were invented special forms for compositions that implied improvisation: paraphrase; such a form as fantasia has been developed. Many scores from that times are potential source for improvisation. Which different in the way to play could this bring?

The modern performer’s approach to a cadenza is completely different that of composers and performers in the Classical and Romantic periods. Now it is most common for a performer to memorize cadenzas by earlier composers, or – occasionally – to compose a cadenza in a style of a given composer. Originally, the purpose of a cadenza was not to imply a stylisation but was rather a moment for the performer to show his/her personal tone, his/her reflection on the played material. Hummel’s cadenzas to Mozart concertos stylistically reflect Hummel, not Mozart; the same can be said of Beethoven’s cadenzas. *Although it was rare for concertos to be performed by soloists who were relatively contemporary to the composer, a cadenza was intended and expected to be contemporary to the performer.* The main harmonic functions (T-S-D) of the original themes on which a cadenza is based should be preserved, but the harmonic structure may be varied and complicated.

If we take these principles to a (currently) unusual conclusion, we could for example construct a jazz-inspired cadenza to the 3<sup>rd</sup> movement of Hummel’s Concerto in A-Minor, op. 85, based on the subsidiary theme:

Cadenza's identity has changed since older times. Now we either use already written cadenzas or – seldom – somebody improvises a cadenza in the author's spirit. But neither first nor second variants answer to the original idea of the cadenza: demonstrate taste and abilities of the performer, whether he/she performs his own concerto or somebody else's. The idea has changed a vector 180 degrees since that time. The concept of cadenza is meant to be a *contemporary* piece, presenting the performer, not the composer. It's why we dared to make this exciting experiment and to perform Hummel's Concerto with a modern cadenza. The concert was performed twice, first on December 18, 2008, at the Leeds College of Music (Leeds, UK), on April 3, 2009, at the Norwegian Academy of Music, and recorded for the Norwegian Radio. The CD with the radio program is attached in the documentation.

If we keep the original theme and use the main technical elements in the texture, we might arrive at a cadenza like this (see score example).

There are some jazz elements implied in the above music example, and this is based on an idea that may be a source for an interesting experiment. If a classical pianist with no knowledge of jazz tries to interpret a jazz score without any reference to or help from recordings or expert advice, but with the help of the anthology *Jazz among the discourses* by Krin Gabbard, Bernard L. Gendron, Steven B. Elworth, and Nathaniel Mackey, the result can be expected to have the same relation to a standard jazz interpretation as our interpretation of Romantic music has to the original interpretation of those times.

# Cadenza draft

Veloce e legato

The musical score is written for piano and consists of six measures. The first measure (measure 1) is marked 'Veloce e legato' and features a complex melodic line in the right hand with many accidentals and a wide interval. The second measure (measure 2) continues this line. The third measure (measure 3) introduces a triplet of eighth notes. The fourth measure (measure 4) continues the triplet. The fifth measure (measure 5) continues the triplet. The sixth measure (measure 6) concludes with a triplet of eighth notes. The score includes dynamic markings: 'p' (piano) and 'cresc.' (crescendo). There are also markings for '8va' (octave up) and '8va' (octave down) in various measures. The piece ends with a fermata over the final note.

Musical score for measures 8 and 9. The piece is in a key with one sharp (F#) and one flat (Bb). The music features complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and sixteenth notes. The right hand has a melodic line with triplets and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with triplets and sixteenth notes. There are dynamic markings like *v* and *mf*.

10 **Strepitoso** *stringendo molto* . . . . .

Musical score for measures 10 and 11. The tempo is **Strepitoso** and the instruction is *stringendo molto*. The music consists of a steady, rhythmic accompaniment in both hands, primarily using eighth and sixteenth notes.

Musical score for measures 12 and 13. The music continues with a steady, rhythmic accompaniment in both hands, similar to the previous section.

14 *ff* *velocissimo* *Andante comodo* *p dolce*

Musical score for measures 14 and 15. Measure 14 starts with a fortissimo (*ff*) and *velocissimo* section. Measure 15 begins with a new section marked *Andante comodo* and *p dolce*. There are performance markings *lunga* and *Rit* with an asterisk.

17 *poco cresc*

Musical score for measures 17 and 18. The music features a melodic line in the right hand with triplets and sixteenth notes, and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The instruction *poco cresc* is present.

20 *Veloce - ad libitum*

*mf*

8<sup>va</sup>

8<sup>va</sup>...

3

21

*ff*

3

22

*subito pp* *cresc*

23

*fff*

8<sup>va</sup>

24

*p* *ff*

8<sup>va</sup>



The Romantic era is the last period in which musicological research is necessarily “deaf”. From the 1880s onwards we have access to recorded examples, and it becomes possible for us to compare performing styles without the use of guesswork. Performing traditions from the pre-recording epoch are forever doomed to be “decoded” only from manuscripts, printed music or treatises and other writings. But interpretation is a very changeable and sensitive process – as is teaching. Even though we often talk about “dynasties” and “schools and traditions”, we can see that even the closest links do not display evidence of smooth, step-by-step development. The most famous example would be that of J. S. Bach, C. P. E. Bach and J. C. Bach, father and sons, the elder of whom studied with the father himself, and the younger with his older brother. What could be closer? However, if we compare the styles of J. S. Bach and J. C. Bach, we can see that the gap of one generation divided them into two different worlds.

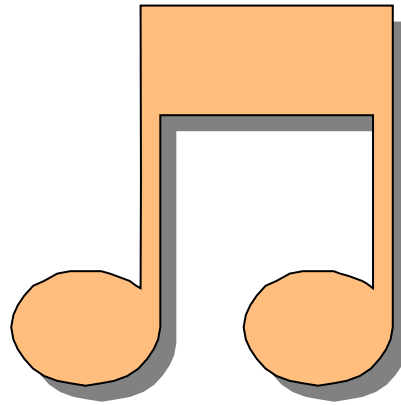
And here we see the change in just one generation; how much “original” information would be carried through five or six waves of highly creative generations? Artists collect the information, but then enrich it with their own experience and transform this into something else, which renders the idea of “tradition” quite dubious. We cannot know for sure whether the interpretation we choose is “right” or not.

How much we can experiment? Phrasing should be judged by our aesthetic sense. The problem is that our aesthetic sense belongs to our own time, whether we like it or not [, and we can only judge aesthetic standards from other eras from a contemporary perspective.]

When I waited backstage before a recent performance at London’s Wigmore Hall, I looked at the photos of great artists of the past, made-up and dressed to be photographed. It struck me that the appearance of people from previous eras does not always seem to be so attractive for us aesthetically. The aesthetic standards of beauty from the time when the Venus de Milo was created have changed in comparison to the aesthetic standards of the 1920s, or, for example, modern standards.

Without judging what is best – they present different aesthetic epochs, and whatever we feel to be right, we feel only in the framework of the aesthetic of our own time.





Friedrich Kalkbrenner / *chiroplast project*.

In 1814 (eighteen fourteen) Johann Bernhard Logier constructed a machine called hand director. The mechanism consisted of two parallel rods with the holes for the fingers in between. This mechanism was widely popular in the first part of 1800 (eighteen hundreds), and such figures as Ludwig Spohr, Friedrich Wieck and Friedrich Kalkbrenner used them in the lessons. Even those musicians who were concerned about the hand director, expressed their concern with a degree of reserve. Sandra Soderlund in her book “How did they teach? How did they play?” cites how Ignaz Moscheles expresses his impression of Logier teaching system:

I could not share the admiration of his newly invented system, although Logier and his wife are clever and artistic people. Would I have any one follow this system? I hardly think so. The mind should work more intensely than the fingers, and how can there be a question of mind when two pupils play the same piece at the same time?

As it can be seen, Moscheles reacts to the procedure of a lesson and questions the extreme focus on the technological aspect of piano practice, on the contrary to the idea of conscious practice that will be a model in the 20<sup>th</sup> (twentieth) century, but does not react on a mechanism itself. Early 1800s (eighteen hundreds) was a period of extreme development in mechanics, and there was a lot of enthusiasm for mechanical inventions.

Another influensive figure of early 1800s was Friedrich Kalkbrenner. In his Complete Course of Instructions for the Piano Forte With the Assistance of Hand Guides (1831) he presents his own version of Logier machine.

Construction of Logier machine consists of two parallel metal bars, one under the wrist and the other under the finger guides. The whole idea of these things was to

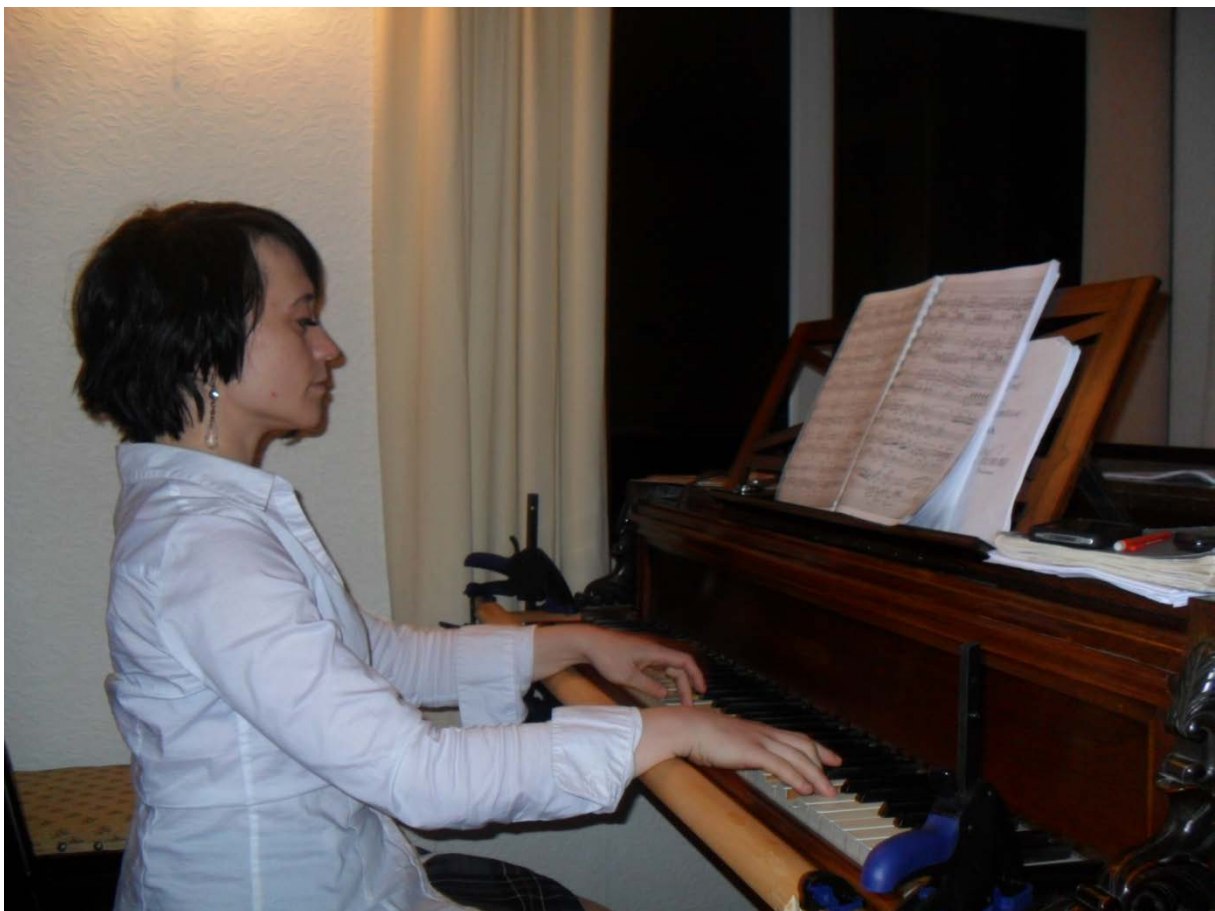
keep the wrist in a high position and not to let any arm weight be used in the playing. The goal was to strengthen the fingers so that they would be able to play evenly. Obviously the ideal was that the wrist would remain in a level position, rather higher than in modern piano technique, and not enter into the play except to move the hand from side to side. Actually, most early technique was this way. On the harpsichord and clavichord the wrist is held so that the top of it is on a level with the hand and arm and the playing is from the fingers only, grasping the keys rather than striking them and often releasing toward the palm of the hand. This way of playing was used on the early piano as well, and even into the nineteenth century. Clara Schumann was described as "squeezing" the keys rather than striking them. The wrist began to be used for chords and staccato playing, etc., as the nineteenth century went on and piano action became heavier.

Idea of the *chiroplast* hand-guide accurt Kalkbrenner when he was resting his arm on top of a chair arm. So, the bar does go under the arm, not over it. Logier's guide also supports the arm, but with the finger holes as well. There is difficult to imagine trying to play using something like that in our days. However, that really tells you something about how Kalkbrenner played. It was more widely used than one would think, especially in France.

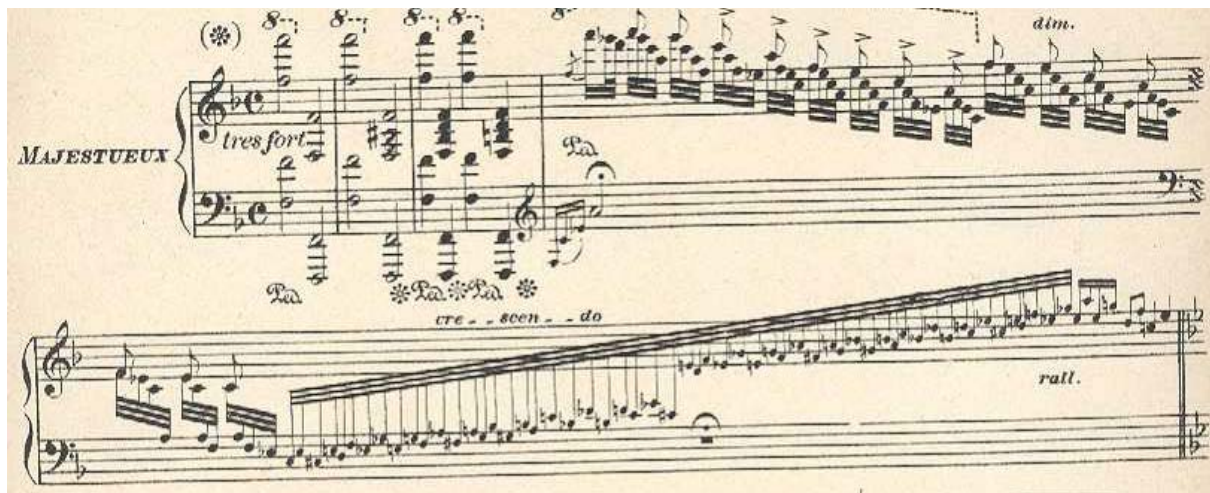


Kalkbrenner's mechanical hand-guide can in many ways explain his playing style, based on active finger technique, parallel horizontal arm movements( along the assistant bar, without use of the arm weight, and with exceptional attention to arm muscle relaxation.

With help of piano technician David Daniels, I managed to build up a replique of chiroplast machine, and used it under practice on F.Kalkbrenner's most famous work – Le Fou (The Mad). Position of the wrist resting on the bar does changes technical approaches quite significantly.

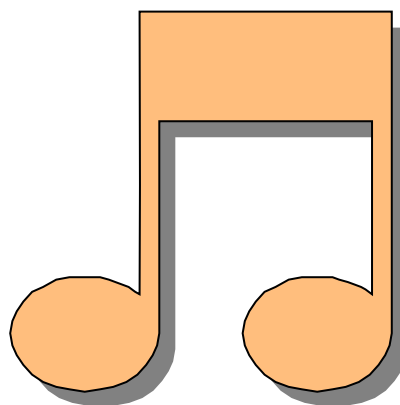


Combination of jeu perlé passages and various form for octave technique seems to be most attractive for Kalkbrenner. Using chiroplast, octaves can be produced only from the wrist, and getting lighter in touch. However, the skips will keep strictly horizontal direction aside, that safes time and erases possible unnessesary amplitude up, that destroys skip passages so easily. Jeu perlé passages sound light and somehow substanceless:



Kalkbrenner simplified and improved Logier's hand director, and called it chiroplast. Chiroplast consists of only one rod, for resting the wrists. Kalkbrenner got the idea for it when he was sitting in the arm-chair, sawing the arm off a chair.

This example gives an indication of which technique will be used in his teaching and performance. Turning to the experimental evidence on chiroplast, it can be seen that Kalkbrenner's style presents wrist technique, that has been a transition from Hummel's finger technique to weight technique of the High Romanticism.



Friedrich Kuhlau project

Among Scandinavian composer-performers, there are three particular names I would like to mention in my project. There are Friedrich Kuhlau, Thomas Tellefsen and Agathe Backer Grøndahl.

Friedrich Kuhlau (1786-1832), born in the North German town of Uelzen, near Hannover, in a family of a musician in a military band, studied composition in Hamburg with Schwenke, and lived in Copenhagen since 1810, obtained an appointment as a non-salaried musician in the Danish Court in 1812. He supported himself by giving recitals and teaching music.

Kuhlau has not left any method books, however he is well remembered for his piano music, particularly because of its pedagogical value. His sonatas and sonatinas are not difficult pieces of a mixed style, spreading from Classical to Early Romantic periods, and offer musical an excellent training ground for the more challenging works.

Almost all of the first publications of Kuhlau's sonatinas contain detailed fingering and precise pedal marking, which is quite unusual for publications of that era:



The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano sonatina. Each system consists of a treble and bass staff. The first system begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic in the treble staff and a piano (*p*) dynamic in the bass staff. The second system continues with piano (*p*) and pianissimo (*pp*) dynamics. The third system includes the instruction "smorzando e ritard." (diminuendo and ritardando) and features dynamics of *pp*, *mf*, *p*, and *mf*. A specific dynamic marking in the bass staff of the third system is *p*<sup>5</sup>. The notation includes various fingering numbers (1-5), slurs, and articulation marks.

This allows concluding that sonatinas were intended as guidance material for the students. These works represent a kind of transitional stage between exercises and artistic works. Analysis of fingering gives an opportunity to examine hand position on the keyboard, turning of the thumb and dependence of melodic passages of a phrase's harmonic structure.

Kuhlau had a certain amount of artistic production. Employing the principle from his instructive pieces into his artistic works, this is possible to find a way to find out a connection how a methodic element becomes an artistic one. This is just the same ideas that is described in J.N.Hummel's Treatise. For example, simple arpeggios in his Sonatina in A Major op.59, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement, in a very condensed way prepares a hand to several technical elements - double thirds, passages, arpeggios, pedaling, tremolo:

The image displays four systems of musical notation for a piano concerto, likely in C major. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The notation is highly technical, featuring extensive arpeggiated passages with numerous fingerings indicated by numbers 1-5. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano), *f* (forte), *cresc.* (crescendo), *ritard.* (ritardando), and *sf* (sforzando). Performance instructions such as *a tempo* and *legato* are also present. The first system includes a *sf* marking and a *p* marking. The second system features a *p* marking and a *cresc.* marking. The third system includes *f ritard.*, *a tempo*, *p*, and *f* markings. The fourth system has a *p* marking and a *legato* instruction. The notation is dense and intricate, characteristic of a virtuosic piano concerto.

All those elements are used widely in his major works, such as his Piano Concerto op.7 in C Major.

Arpeggios are developed over the whole keyboard:

This musical score consists of four systems of piano music. The first system includes the instruction "solo" above the treble clef and "delicatamente" above the bass clef. The second system features "poco a poco cresc" above the bass clef. The third system includes "Ped" above the bass clef, "f" above the treble clef, and "decres" above the bass clef. The fourth system ends with "V. S." above the bass clef. The score is marked with various dynamics including *p*, *f*, and *smorz*. The piece is in a key with three flats and a 2/4 time signature.

Scales and tremolos are developed into difficult octave passages:

This musical score shows two systems of piano music. The first system includes the instruction "cres" above the bass clef. The second system includes "cres" above the bass clef, "Ped" above the bass clef, and "P" above the treble clef. The score features complex octave passages and tremolos. The piece is in a key with three flats and a 2/4 time signature.

As previously mentioned, improvisation was one of performer's techniques in early 1800s. This is why I decided to use repetitions in slow movements in Kuhlau's Sonatines as exercise in improvisation. For example, here is the simple theme from Sonate op.22 no.1 in C Major:



Andante

*p dolce.* *pp*

*pp* *p* *cresc.*

*dim.* *p dolce.* *pp* *p*

Rondo

One of possible variants of improvised repetition is presented on my CD La Clochette – Selected Sonatinas by Friedrich Kuhlau (enclosed in the documentation).

As a conclusion, it is possible to see, that his instructive Sonatinas are a middle step between the instructive exercises and artistic works. He presents all the major technical elements in a simple, understandable form: passages, arpeggio, skips, tremolo, repetitions, octaves. He lists all the major type of touch that are still in use in our says: wrist staccato, short slurs and long legato slurs, portamento touch. Kuhlau's instructive pieces are so valuable that they found a technical base for the most of pianists in their early year yet. More, in his works he presents a taste (even in use of pedal!) that is adequate for the modern playing tradition.

A perfect legato is impossible on single action pianos. Any legato passage will be only an illusion legato, like for example in this excerpt from the Sonatina op.60 nr.3, 2<sup>nd</sup>.movemnet, variation nr.4:

Allegro molto

Var. 4

*p* *3* *3*

*3* *1 4*

An accompanying left hand will always need to get out of the key after every note (Sonatina op.88 nr.1, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement):

Shortly disappearing tones demand some action to survive. In slow movements, like this one that is listed above, I did include ornamentation and improvisation in repetitions. To find out suitable ornaments, I did an inversion: used the virtuous passages from Kuhlau's artistic works to find the common pattern of what type of passages these tones can be divided with.

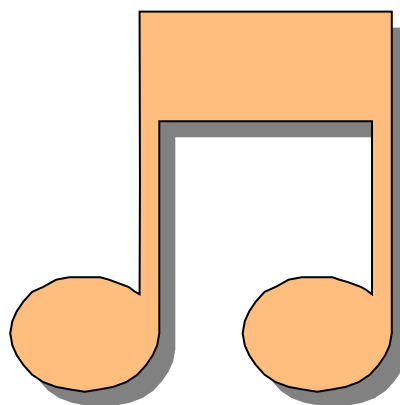
Sonatina op.88 nr.3, 1<sup>st</sup> movement, presents an interesting stylistic fusion:

Melodically, this sounds both as a cite of Beethoven's 'To Elise', Mozart's Sonata in A Minor and an early Chopin's Nocturne. Changing instruments, it is possible to turn the stylistic interpretation of this piece. Using Viennese Graf this will sound as Classicism, on first instruments with double-escapement action this will transform into Early Romantic. This is fully possible to interpret in in a common modern tradition on the Steinway, and get a sound of High Romanticism.

Different between single and double escapement actions creates the style identification, dividing Classicism and Romanticism.



My artistic project on Kuhlau contented performance and a recording of selected Sonatas with improvisation elements, and virtuous *Le Clochette - Rondo sur le motif favori du Paganini*. I used Bekmann's repique of fortepiano from 1820s.



Sigismund Thalberg project.

The essence of Liszt's rival Sigismund Thalberg's (1812-1871) pianism seems to have been his tone. In contrasting the playing of Liszt and Thalberg, Ernest Legouve wrote:

Liszt was incontestably the more artistic, the more vibrant, the more electric. He had tone so far delicacy that made one think of the almost in audible sparks of fire. Never have fingers bounded so lightly over the piano. But at the same time his nervosity caused him to produce sometimes effects a trifle hard, a trifle harsh... Thalberg never pounded. What constituted his superiority, what made the pleasure of hearing him play a luxury to the ear, was pure tone. I have never heard such another, so full, so round, so soft, so velvety, so sweet, and still so strong!

In some ways, Thalberg had a bad luck to be born in early 1800s, when the art of performance practice was so tight connected to improvisation and composition. Critique that he met (especially from Liszt) was aimed against his abilities as a composer, that were somehow limited. His skills as a performer never were an issue for any doubts, and his main contribution to piano practice is located in the area of technique development, not in the area of composition. The issue of tone is crucial to the performance of romantic piano music. Whereas pianists of the classical era often used the instrument in imitation of the orchestra, and pianists of the early twentieth century played it like a percussion instrument, nineteenth-century pianists attempted to imitate the human voice. Thalberg was a devotee of the opera and studied for five years with the eminent vocal instructor Manuel Garcia. He was also married to the daughter of the famous bass Lablache. In his review of the famous Liszt-Thalberg concert, Janin wrote, "Never has Thalberg sung with greater verve or tenderness"(emphasis added). Henri Blanchard had commented a year earlier, "None have ever sung on the piano like Thalberg." Even Liszt acknowledged this aspect of his rival's technique by saying, "He is the only man I know who plays the violin on the piano. Arthur Pougin credited Thalberg with discovering the tonal possibilities of the piano. In his memorial tribute to the pianist he wrote: It is Thalberg who, for the first time we had seen, made the piano sensitive, who made it, like all the others, an instrument capable of producing and communicating emotion. The

following charming and happy and true word is cited on this subject: Rubini, the celebrated tenor, said to him one day, after having heard him play," But where did you learn to sing in such a manner?" "From hearing you," responded Thalberg. The technical means by which Thalberg achieved this singing tone can be ascertained by an examination of Thalberg's own piano method, *L'Art du chant applique au piano* [The Art of Song Applied to the Piano].

*L'Art du chant* provides the best analysis of Thalberg's goals and techniques as a pianist. The work consists of a series of operatic transcriptions, only a few of which feature the infamous three-hand technique. The stated intention of the collection is to teach the student to develop a singing tone. The author addresses the primary issue in the opening paragraph of the introduction: The art of singing well, said a celebrated woman, is the same on whatever instrument to which it is applied. In effect, one must make neither concessions nor sacrifices to the particular mechanism of each instrument; it is up to the interpreter to bend this mechanism to the will of the art. Since the piano cannot, rationally speaking, translate on gin its most perfect aspect, that is the faculty of prolonging tones, it is necessary by force of will and art to destroy this imperfection, and to produce not only the illusion of tones sustained and prolonged, but also that of tones inflected. Sensitivity renders one ingenious, and the need to express what one feels can create resources which escape the mechanism. The remainder of the introduction involves specific suggestions for creating the illusion of sustained tone on the piano. He gives twelve guide-lines, which codify his method of legato playing. These guidelines cover various aspects of piano technique and are worth quoting:

One of the first conditions for obtaining breadth of execution, a beautiful sonority and a great variety in tone production is to rid oneself of all tension. It is therefore indispensable to have in the forearms, the wrists and the fingers, as much suppleness and diversity of inflection as an accomplished singer possesses in the voice. In songs that are broad, noble and dramatic it is necessary to sing from the chest, to demand much of the instrument and pull from it all the sound it can give without ever striking the keys, but attacking them from very close, pushing them down, pressing them with vigor, energy and warmth. In simple songs, sweet and gracious, it is necessary in a sense to knead the key-board, to press it with a boneless hand and fingers of velvet; the keys, in this case, should be more sensed than struck. The singing part must always be clearly and distinctly articulated, and brought out more clearly than a beautiful human voice over a very soft orchestral accompaniment ...

The indications of piano or pianissimo, placed beside the melody, will only be taken as relative, and in no case should they inhibit it from standing out and dominating, only with less intensity. The left hand should always be subordinate to the right, except when it sings, since the opposite can occur. In all cases, the accompaniments should be softened in such a way that one hears more the entire harmony of the chords than each of the sounds of which they are composed. It will be indispensable to avoid, in playing, that ridiculous manner and bad taste of delaying with exaggeration the striking of the melody notes long after those of the bass, and producing thereby, from one end of a piece to the other, the effect of continuous syncopation. In a slow melody

written in long notes, it is effective, especially on the first beat of every measure or at the beginning of each phrase, to attack the melody after the bass, but only with an almost imperceptible delay. Hold the notes and give them (unless otherwise indicated) THEIR FULL VALUE. One must, for that, almost constantly make use of finger substitutions, especially when one plays several parts. In this regard, we could not insist too much on the good results of the slow and conscientious study of the fugue, because it is the only thing that can lead to good playing of many parts. Another remark to make, is that generally one concentrates only on the actual execution of the note, and one neglects the signs of nuance which serve to complete and translate the thought of the composer; signs which are to a musical composition what light and shade are to a painting. In the one case as in the other, if one suppresses these necessary accessories, there exist neither effects nor oppositions, and the eye, like the ear, tires very rapidly of the same nuance and of the absence of variety. The use of the two pedals (together or separately) is indispensable for giving breadth to the execution, sustaining similar harmonies, and producing, by their judicious use, the illusion of tones prolonged and inflected. Often, for particular effects, one must only employ them after the attack of long melody notes; but it would be difficult here to specify general cases, since it depends in part more on sentiment and sensations than on fixed rules...

My project on Sigismond Thalberg's technique was focused around his piano paraphrases, particularly Grand Fantasia op.22 over the theme "God, save the Queen".

Comparing Kalkbrenner's and Thalberg's playing tradition, a player can notice that a proper legato, that Thalberg style demands, increases use of arm weight. The repetitions are executed not by a wrist movement but by vibrating inside the key using double escapement action of the piano mechanism. Thalberg's Third hand effect underlies a lot of skips, that might lead to the gaps between the phrases, since the hand needs time to jump from the chord to the next one. I found interesting to solve skip problem not only by active practising but also on the mental level. If you try to play the skips over 10ths phrasing them as follows:



it will be much more difficult to realise them, if you mentally form them like this:



Even if in reality you play them absolutely evenly rhythmically:



Thalberg's Fantasia was performed several times, and has got several international reviews, among others a 5 stars review in Independent on January 9, 2009:

*In juxtaposing two recitals by thirtysomething Russians, the Wigmore Hall has reminded us that the golden age of Soviet pianism is not dead: Evgeny Samoyloff cut his teeth in the Special Music School of Novosibirsk, while Natalia Strelchenko fledged in the St Petersburg conservatory, and both employ a brilliant technique to pursue keyboard poetry.*

*When Natalia Strelchenko skips on like a carnival Pierrette, fun is clearly on the agenda, but she opened with the grave seriousness of Ravel's "Tombeau de Couperin". This irresistibly theatrical performer presented the hieratic mysteries of Ravel's First World War memorial with tender warmth, before launching into an iridescently-shimmering "Ondine".*

*She then played a wonderfully weird virtuoso fantasia by Sigismond Thalberg on the theme of "God Save the Queen". After creating splendour with its fireworks, she zapped us with a towering performance of Liszt's "Dante Sonata". Would there be an encore? This game little trouper gave us three, and the more she played, the less we wanted her to go, because the whiff of the circus was steadily growing.*





ThomasTellefsen project.

The figure of Thomas Tellefsen and relationship between Frederic Chopin and Thomas Tellefsen has not been widely investigated. My second year project was focused on employing knowledge on period piano mechanics into artistic field of performance practice. Tellefsen project exemplified my method of working on one particular treatise per concert/project. In Tellefsen's occasion it is his own sketch for Chopin's piano method, that I discovered for myself in Ringve museum and translated into English.

Chopin dreamed of writing his piano method. Unfortunately, his far too short life ended too early to let him complete it. We have some sketches (it is printed in as complete form as it exists in the appendix in Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger's great book "Chopin – pianist and teacher"). Chopin's and Tellefsen's texts have striking similarities, which may allow us to think that Tellefsen, who followed Chopin very closely during his last trip to England and Scotland, tried to revitalise Chopin's notes.

Tellefsen's close friendship with Chopin was previously mentioned; rough drafts of Thomas Tellefsen's piano school are reminiscent of the rough drafts of Chopin's own piano school. It can lead us to suppose that, Tellefsen, regarding himself as a faithful heir of Chopin, presumably intended to make notes concerning Chopin's piano method. Since he was following Chopin during his last trip to England and Scotland, it may be reasonable to suppose that he could be even asked to do so by Chopin.

The notes are very fragmented in the beginning. It starts from the very beginning, and on the first pages describes mostly how to find the note in the Treble clef(G clef). The information is so trivial that the reader may even wonder whether the writer really means seriously what he writes. Why would Thomas (and Chopin) write so much elementary, basic information?

There could be two answers to this. Firstly, both Chopin's, and later on Thomas's method were possibly meant to be really complete treatises, and thus they intended to start from the very beginning and go very thoroughly through every element of the problems of piano technique. So far as the treatise did not go further than the very beginning, this result was not achieved



Another answer could be that both Chopin and Tellefsen represented the first generation of “free artists” who actually lived by earning money from giving piano lessons. Among Chopin’s, and Tellefsen’s pupil (as we already mentioned, Thomas inherited most of Chopin’s pupils after Chopin’s death in 1849) there were quite a number of aristocratic names. Many of them were certainly accomplished pianists, but the very elementary substance of information in these methods could also suggest that the general requirements of these students were also quite elementary and that both Chopin and Tellefsen simply taught quite a number of complete beginners and needed to undertake all this elementary work with them.

In any case, when we continue through Thomas’s notes, at the very end, just before the text finishes, we are given two very interesting ideas which make all of the first part worthwhile. The first idea is the idea of *conscious practice*, an innovatory idea for that time, that was later to be continued by Joseph Hoffmann in his book.

This stands in striking opposition to what the virtuoso masters from that time advised, when even the great Franz Liszt (though admittedly only at the age of 24,) advised his pupils to read a book whilst they were practising boring exercises for many hours (!) (Gerig – Famous Pianists and their Technique, Indiana University Press, 2007). This is also quite a different concept from the endless volumes of Etudes Tellefsen undertook during his period of studies with Charlotte Thygesen.

The second, even more exciting idea, is the idea of what Tellefsen describes as *individual tone*, which is a combination of the mastery and individual use of weight – that surely anticipates the creative use of modern (for that time) instruments. It is interesting that he does not talk about a general beautiful tone, but definitely prefers originality.

The most interesting idea there is Tellefsen’s (and presumably Chopin’s) approach to the tone production in general:

The hand should find its point of balance on the keyboard, just as the foot finds its point of balance on the road when we walk. The arm hangs from the shoulder, with perfect flexibility, and the finger finds the positioning on the keyboard that supports the whole. This weight, the sum of the weight of the arm and the hand, is the course to the volume and beauty of the sound. This explains why “Le Guide Main” is not good, because here the balance point would become dislocated. With “Le Guide Main”, the main balance point is the wrist, but in this way one will never produce anything other than a thin ‘plinking’ sound, and never what we could call an *individual* sound. Every person, whether he wishes it or not, has an individual, heavy or light, way to go, fuller or thinner, right up to the weight of the whole body, which is supported by the feet. The fingers on the keyboard play the same role as the feet do on the road. The individual sound is produced by the common weight

of the arm and hand. This individual sound corresponds to the natural sound of the voice, the sound one uses when one talks about the daily things, the sound that gets stronger or weaker, depending on the passion which one wishes to express. There is an even, quiet, and non-passionate sound, on which music is based, and which very few musicians are able to achieve. If the wrist, as in "Le guide de main", isolates the weight of the arm and the hand, the result will be a thin and inconsistent sound. As long as a suitable mechanism is lacking, another one will be required to compensate, in this case making the wrist stiff, as a result of a lack of any support

Thomas gave his first official recital in his hometown Trondheim in the spring of 1842, and the same year moved to Paris, where he studied first with Charlotte Thygeson and then later with Friedrich Kalkbrenner. In 1844-1847 he was taught by Frederic Chopin, who became his friend for life, and also influenced his musical style.

Since giving his successful debut in Paris in 1851, Tellefsen has been regarded as one of the most significant pianists of his time, and in particular he was the subject of appreciation as Chopin's interpreter. Tellefsen inherited some of Chopin's notable pupils after Chopin's death in 1849, including Jane Stirling and the Polish Princess Marcellina Czartoryska, who was an accomplished pianist, intelligent musician, concert arranger and a patron

During the 1850s and 1860s Tellefsen was touring around Europe with, was touring in Norway 10 times in the period 1843-64 (in 1843, 1846, 1847, 1850, 1851, 1855, 1857, 1860, 1863 and 1864), enjoyed great success and was regarded as one of the significant European pianists.

Tellefsen distributed his published works to Norwegian libraries; this is why the only complete collection of his piano works may be found at the Science Museum (Vitenskapsmuseet) in Trondheim, the Ringve museum and the National Music Archive in Oslo. In total, Tellefsen left 44 opus's of different compositions, most of which are piano works.

In his concerts, Thomas performed many improvisations and virtuoso variations over Norwegian folk melodies. Generally speaking, he was a classical example of the composer-performer. Huldt-Nystrøm gives us a detailed description of his concert programs in Norway:

*"In the period 1851-60 there is information about 55 of Thomas's performances, from which there are 32 program notes preserved in whole or in part. These 32 concerts presented in total 157 pieces, with many repeats. He uses:*

*Most of all – his own compositions – 88 times comprising 56% of the total number of works*

*Chopin's work – 39 items or 24%*

*Bach, Couperin and Rameau 7%*

Mendelssohn, Weber 7%

Mozart, Beethoven 5%

*“His playing is spiritual like Chopin’s and his own compositions reveal an unmistakable talent and a strongly marked sense of rhythm, melody, and harmony, they are (as so many compositions are not), rich in spirit and as far as we can judge without knowing them well, very artistically executed. ... His Introduction and March seems to us to vastly surpass ordinary virtuoso compositions, ornaments and all sorts of mannerisms are not essence but detail and the piece is created not merely to display technical skills. This is even more valid for the wonderful and lovely Mazurka which he performed last in the series of concert pieces in the second part. Here T. made it perfectly clear that he might become just as spirited a composer as an excellent performer. There was an enchanting mixture of Nordic sound and of the Chopin school in this little musical poem”*

(Fra H. Kjerulfs kritikk av konserten i Frimurerlogen, 9. juli 1846, trykket i *Den Constitutionelle*, 13. juli 1846)

Tellefsen’s technical and musical abilities as a pianist were always met with great enthusiasm by the Norwegian critics. However, when we consider the critical reaction to him as a composer, unfortunately, this era of Norwegian national romanticism expected a deeper integration of national elements into the musical material rather than just superficial virtuosity.

In 1842 19 years old Thomas Tellefsen came to Paris. His first teacher in Paris was the female Scandinavian female pianist Charlotte Thygeson, who was one of the star pupils of Kalkbrenner. Tellefsen describes his practice at this time in his letters to home:

Paris the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1842

*... I begin with 5 notes and sit still and practise with them; I practise on these 5 notes I practise at least 3 hours a day. Then, I play the first volume of Cramer’s Etudes, but now I play them differently than before; absolutely correct up to the tiniest nuances, every note with the appropriate expression; - it costs me a lot, it’s true, but I have such enjoyment when I notice that it’s getting better, and that Mrs Thygeson is satisfied with me. I wished you could listen to how I play the Etude nr.4 in C minor; I believe you would be surprised how my style has changed.*

*Charlotte Thygeson played 3 Preludes and Fugues by Johann Sebastian Bach for me, namely the brilliant Prelude and Fugue in n B flat Major that you know, a Fugue in C sharp Minor (the most delicious I have heard of Bach) and one in D minor. All of them were superbly played - so I was full of admiration when I shouted: Oh, I wished my parents and the old (Lindeman) would be here, to say what they think about it!” I heard the theme coming through so clearly,*

*either in Tenor, Bass or Descant, the Theme forte and all another voices piano. It entails being able to control the fingers fully!*

In the letter from Paris written on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 1842 Tellefsen describes his first impression of Franz Liszt:

*"... I have heard Liszt!! I sat just close to him, while he was playing, shouted bravo to him, behaved myself like a madman, but one cannot do otherwise way when you listen to him, because his playing makes you mad! . first I will describe his outer characteristics, then his inner ones, Imagine a tall, thin man, with sunken cheeks, eyes deeply in the skull, long black hair, sharp sight, green-yellow facial colour, old black clothes, that is Liszt. His portrait is very simplified. His dexterity is limitless to the extent of being miraculous, he has a marvellous equalness of touch, so it is impossible to play any better. His octaves, thirds and sixths and so shining and equal, his trills , trills in thirds and in sixths are so round, his scales are so fluent that it is impossible to imagine – you would have to hear it to understand it. His left hand playing cannot be compared to anything , in short – it was a pinnacle of perfection. And what a performance! He played Robert de Diable, and it was as if all the devils were dancing around there – I trembled and wanted to shout at the finale – Liszt looked at me, smiling, and nodded to me! His playing is so limitless, colossal, so you would think , he will beat the instrument into many different bits. It was divine, holy. Furthermore he played Erlkonig, so telling, with such an expression, so divine that I trembled with joy. Then it was the Fantasia on Don Juan , so elevating and marvellous, that myself, together with other people shouted: C'est charmante, divine!" I got a goose-bumps and my hair stod on end, I had such enthusiasm ..."*

Tellefsen worked hard on his own playing, and a clear stylistic difference became apparent between the way he played before and the way he was is absorbing music now:

*"... What about my own playing, so now I understand that I could not play at all, not even a little , it was so atrocious and uneven, and without performance, unclear too... I could not play legato at all, it would have been better for me if I did not play before at all, now it costs me a lot to correct the wrong touch, to put it shortly – all the erratic things in my playing. "*

On October the 4<sup>th</sup> Thomas describes the situation between Kalkbrenner and Liszt in a letter to his parents:

*"... To demonstrate how annoyed Kalkbrenner is with Liszt, I tell following story: in this soiree Kalkbrenner played his own composition called "Le Fou" ("Madness") . When he finished, Liszt said: It is nice, but your madness is not mad enough. And Kalkbrenner answered: - You don't necessarily need to break the strings in order to convey madness"*

Tellefsen describes thus his own program for his concert in Norway. This is a great improvement in comparison to the 5-finger exercises he was obliged to practise in his first lessons:

“The pieces I will play when I come back to Norway will be: Liszt Robert le Diable, the most difficult piece I have ever seen, Thalberg’s Fantaisie on the Menuette and Serenade from Don Juan, also very difficult; Chopin’s Concerto in E Minor and La Lutte interieur by Rosenhain, some of Schubert’s Arias arranged by Liszt, Beethoven’s divine Concerto in C minor; I have enough with this, because I should not forget my Studies, I have played 2 Volumes (2442 Etudes) by Cramer, and started with Kalkbrenner’s Etudes preparatoires, after them I will continue with his Etudes in “Methode”, and after that with “24 Grande Etudes melodiques”, and, finally, his “25 Etudes de Concert”. Then I will start to play pieces by Ries, Beethoven, Hummel etc and then Bach, Albrechtsberger, Handel Sonates and Fugues then pieces the orchestra arranged for piano and as a finale, Paganini’s Etudes for violin on the piano and so – I will be ready. It takes about 3-4 years, and I should just about hold on up to the end.”

It looks like Tellefsen made good progress, and may have also finished with Charlotte Thygeson during that year. In November 1843 he indicates, without any complaints that he already seems to work almost on his own, and uses coaching in composition more than in piano playing:

*“... Now about the music. I already work actively with my Etudes, and Charlotte Thygeson has, since don’t have a flat , offered me free supervision; but I won’t go with her longer then until January, I am so advanced now that I can now work as well alone. “*

So, Tellefsen’s admiration for the Paris pianistic gods calmed down a bit. All the time he kept thinking about the main goal of his long musical odyssey to Paris: Chopin.

13 years later in a letter written to his brother Johan Cornelius for the Norwegian magazine Illustreret Nyhedsblad, 25 august 1855 he wrote down some memories of this time:

*“It was in 1836 that I started at the Latin School, where the first 2-3 years went so well both in respect of studying and discipline, and I started to play the piano; I made my first attempts in singing. When some years later I heard Boieldieu play Chopin’s Concerto in E minor, my musical mind woke up with abnormal strength, without anybody’s help I learned both his Concerti. From that time it was the start of this struggle – the struggle between the real vocation on one side, and my parents’s and teachers’ advice from another side; struggles and excitement, which, I suppose, influenced my mental health, because I became very nerve-wracked and sore. Fortunately, it ended with my escape from the school and I remained the firm recipient of my father’s anger. Anyway, I had some ideas about what proper art*

should be, I felt I could do nothing and the only chance was to travel abroad; my enthusiasm for Chopin brought me to Paris, and after two concerts where I managed to save some money for travel and to borrow 100 Spd from one very good man, who gave it to me just on my good word, I travelled to France, and from that day a new epoch in my life began. Without speaking a single word in French, without any advice, without knowing in Paris, I came to the country where I studied with Kalkbrenner for some months, I felt I got something I really needed, but it was Chopin who was in my thoughts all the time, even if it was really difficult to get close to him. The money was eventually gone, and I went back to Norway in 1843, played some concerts over 3-4 months, earned some money and went back to Paris again. Then a strange episode occurred, which has been fatal for all my life. It was Sunday, November 1844, I walked in the streets of Le Havre waiting to travel to Paris on Monday, when suddenly a man in the street stopped me and asked whether I am a Norwegian. I told him who I was, and he told me that he was an Assessor, coming to France to deal with the case of his late brother. "I go now to Honfleur to Conclude this" he said, "Would you like to join me and see this little town?" We travelled together. I met this respectable family Tiis and told to the counsel, who since then was my best and oldest friend in France and who became my father and brother for the last 12 years, about my plans. Being an experienced man, he was impressed by my courage, but nonetheless still painted Chopin for me as an unreachable man. However, he promised me immediate help and wrote a letter of recommendation to Romance Digter Barateau, with which I travelled to Paris a day later; after my arrival I brought the letter and spoke quite openly and honestly, with a sincere attitude about my case. I told him that the money I had was 600 Francs, from which I reserved 200 Francs for contingency and would never touch them except in the case of an emergency, that I was hungry and thirsty; with this money I could have 10 lessons with Chopin at 1 Louis a lesson, and that would be all, and that the most important thing for me was to get close to Chopin. He said he admired me (I did not admire myself at all, I found my way to deal with everything quite natural), and told me that he knows one of Chopin's friends with whom he could talk a day later. He did so, the friend being the famous Henri de Latouche. Latouche seemed to be nice and was quite touched; he promised me that he would talk to this man on whom now my destiny depended. A day later I went with a letter from De Latouche inviting me to come in the afternoon to be introduced to his friend, who was the famous writer George Sand. I never forget this meeting; she saw something heroic in this decision to quit Norway and come to France, without knowing the language, without having money, to come to there just out of the enthusiasm for art and for Chopin, and ended by telling me that I was as of then Chopin's new pupil. Such words! I was as if drunk with happiness. Some days later I had my first lesson with Chopin, and from then on I was more and more treated as his friend, and these relations lasted until his death in 1849, and became even closer after his travels to London and Scotland in the Summer 1848, where I did not leave him alone for a single moment. .. I have been in the Hotel Lambert every year since 1850 playing concerts; every 14<sup>th</sup> day I play some chamber music..."

Since the time Thomas met Chopin in 1846 he became his faithful disciple. Many times he indirectly mentions it in his letters, as here, from October the 11<sup>th</sup> 1847:

“... I have been here (in Honfleur) in 14 days; I have started some work here, and should not leave this nice town before the end of October, Chopin is already in Paris and of course I should hurry up to go back there”...

The long, difficult years in Paris were at last fruitful. From 1850 Tellefsen played a yearly benefit in Paris, always with a great success. 29<sup>th</sup> April 1851 Tellefsen played a concert at the Hotel Lambert. The program was as follows:

### Concert

Donné par Mr Tellefsen

Mardi 29 Avril 1851 , a 8 heures du soir

A l'Hotel Lambert

Avec le concours de Madame Dorus Gras, Mr Alard Franchomme, Rene Franchomme et Casimir Ney

### Programme

1. Quatuor de Beethoven executé par Mr Alard Franchomme
2. Air de Robert chante par Mrs Dorus Gras
3. Nocturne et Valse de Chopin executé par Mr Tellefsen
4. Solo de Violoncelle executé par Mr Rene Franchomme
5. Theme original et Variations composees et executees par Mr Tellefsen
6. Serenade! Bolero Paroles de Voctor Hugo musique de Besozzi; chante par Mdm Dorus Gras
7. Polonaise pour piano et Violoncelle de Chopin executé par mr Franchomme et Mr Tellefsen
8. Trois Mazurkas composees et executees par Mr Tellefsen

Prix du billet: 10 Fr

8<sup>th</sup> May 1851 Thomas wrote to his parents about his success at this concert:

“... As I wrote before, Prince Czartorysky has let me borrow his superb gallery in his Residence (it is called the Hotel Lambert...). This is a great fortune that in Paris now all the artists should give concerts in the official concert halls. I cannot describe what an effect it created. 20 times I was called for an encore: the first time alone when I played the Nocturne and Valse by Chopin, and then other time together with Franchomme after Chopin's Polonaise. I had to play my Mazurkas twice, and my success was complete and brought me high status in Paris as a pianist and as Chopin's inheritor...”

Tellefsen's production is homogenous; he does not have any major stylistic change during his life. His style based on a combination of Chopin influence and Norwegian

elements. This fact was attractive for my project concept. I investigated his complete piano works. Type of his works contains a certain amount of piece of the same style: an order of waltzes, an order of mazurkas, pieces like Ballades, Rondos, Capriccios. Tellefsen project made an attempt to change the techniques in according to Viennese, English and French piano mechanics.

I used three period instruments that belong to Tellefsen's epoch, and introduce three main - and very different - schools of piano making. These are a Graf Grand Piano from 1827, a Broadwood Grand Piano from 1843 and an Erard Grand from 1866. The choice of two of them is indubitably appropriate. Having lived most of his life in Paris, Tellefsen naturally used mostly Pleyel and Erard instruments, October the 4<sup>th</sup> Thomas wrote to his parents about his instruments:

*"... Now I will leave Pleyel and rent an instrument from Erard (an old saying in Paris says: a violin of Stradivarius and a piano of Erard stand on the same stair ) but it costs 25 Francs – God know how I will survive in Paris – one cannot earn money , and there are expenses all the time here..."*

*In 1848-49, during his trips to England , he hired Broadwood instruments for the concerts, as we can see from the contemporary Broadwood instrument rental registers, which are kept now at the Finchcock Musical Museum in Goudhurst, Kent (UK).*

During my artistic project, I often performed both Tellefsen's and Chopin's piano works on a Viennese Graf. Tellefsen was a faithful admirer and pupil of Chopin, and proud kept the title of being an inheritor of Chopin's playing tradition. In 1830 the twenty year old Chopin left Warsaw for Austria, intending to go to Italy. The outbreak of the Polish November Uprising seven days later, and its subsequent suppression by Russia, led him becoming an expatriate of Polish emigration, and he stayed in Vienna for a year. Even though Chopin was unhappy and lonely in Vienna, one contact was very important for him in those times: he met Hummel, whose works he was playing, and who influenced his compositional style. Chopin wrote about Hummel with great respect, as in this letter:

"Chopin maintained that Clementi's Gradus ad Parnassum, Bach's pianoforte Fugues, and Hummel's compositions were the key to pianoforte-playing, and he considered a training in these composers a fit preparation for his own works" (quoted in: J.J.Eigeldinger – "Chopin pianist and teacher", p.61)

".. As many different sounds as there are fingers – everything is a matter of knowing good fingering. Hummel was the most knowledgeable on this subject..." (the same, p.40)

"...He was the first with whom I played Hummel's splendid duet (the Grande Duo in A flat op.92) ...It was marvellous to hear him accompany, no matter what compositions. From the concertos of Hummel to those of Beethoven..." (the same, p.63)



Chopin created a new approach by expanding of Mozart and Hummel's pianistic tradition, by developing a new dependence on the pedal, left hand technique, and rubato. As we can see, there are some striking similarities between the works of Chopin's and Hummel, that allow us to draw a line of descent from Mozart-Hummel-Chopin-Tellefsen. For example, look at this comparison between Hummel's concerto in A Minor and Chopin's Concerto in E minor:

Maybe Thomas Tellefsen might have played on an older Graf instrument and his Chopin-inspired compositional style can work on a Viennese instrument.

Chopin's technique and style in piano works by Tellefsen.

Being in the Finchcocks Instrument Museum, I have played the Mazurkas op.1 and op.3 were played on an Erard Grand piano from 1836. The middle register on these period instruments has a much more concrete sound than is the case on the modern instruments, and the pedal does not last so long, which creates an unusual effect for the modern ear – a “non-legato effect” in the left-hand accompaniment.

It is difficult to keep the accompaniment sounding quieter, and the long melody notes tend to disappear and so it is also difficult to obtain a proper legato between them. So, maybe, instead of regarding it as being a shortcoming of the instrument and trying to struggle with it, we should turn the problem upside down, and rather appreciate it as one of the instrument's individual qualities, and make some use of it?

A tradition that has been lost during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and in more recently rediscovered again, is the idea to let the hands to play non-synchronously. If the right hand is “floating”, “flying” over the left hand, while the left hand is, still as Mozart described it, a conductor, then this diminishes the roughness of the chords. We can listen to examples of this principle in the recordings of Paderewski and Godovski. In some ways this tradition continues the Baroque harpsichord playing tradition, where the long arpeggiated acciaccatura would sound like a diminuendo, and a quick arpeggiated acciaccatura would have a crescendo effect. Similarly, the asynchronously played, or slightly arpeggiated, chord would sound more tender and refined. On the modern Steinway, which has a much more sensitive mechanism and allows us to make the tiniest pianissimo, this effect would be unnecessary.

This cycle of Mazurkas op.3, is full of sharp accents, and by contrast suggests an exact and distinctive performance. As in op.1, these Mazurkas also were composed before 1849, while Chopin was still alive.

There are some clear parallels between the first and the fourth Mazurka in this cycle and Chopin's mazurkas, both thematically and harmonically. However, tellefsen's works have more of the atmosphere of a general “remembrance of Chopin”, rather than slavishly following melodic ideas. The main interpretative question will be timing. In record of Chopin's contemporaries we can see information of his way to

play his Mazurkas. There were many who meant that he played them with so strong tenuto on the second beat that a piece did sound almost on 4/4, not on  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Tellefsen, being a Chopin's disciple, was likely to inherit this tradition.

In the modern days players have lost an intuitive understanding of the 19<sup>th</sup> century dances, and their pulse has disappeared from our bodies. The only relevant point for us is rhythm, that is easy to confuse with the pulse.

Francois Couperin wrote in his "Art de toucher le Clavecin":  
"I find that we confuse Measure or Time (i.e. number of beats or pulsations in a bar) with what is called Cadence or Movement (i.e. Tempo, the degree of speed, together with accent phrasing, etc. in short "Expression" or "Feeling").

Different use of pulse creates different aesthetics. Romantic aesthetics require another kind use of pulse than is the case with baroque or jazz aesthetics.

Pulse is never absolutely rhythmical. It will be the same in any kind of dance: for example, a waltz has  $\frac{3}{4}$  measure but presumes a prolonged first step. It is the same as in poetry – the attempt to pronounce interchanges of longer and shorter syllables in the strophe of the poem in an absolutely strict rhythmical way will sound almost meaningless. This is why the mechanical rhythm machines used in modern pop-music can actually sound non-rhythmical: rhythm and pulse are not one and the same.

During my concerts at Finchcocks Instrument Museum, I have got an experience of performing Tellefsen's pieces on Wiennes instrument from 1820s. The keys are thinner and longer than on the modern instrument. This Graf has a sustaining pedal (placed to the left!), a una corda, which was highly unusual on the Viennese instruments, a moderato pedal and the very special bassoon pedals. In the Mazurkas op.14 all the four pedals are used in different combinations.

The original strings from that time are retained on this instrument. They were made in a different way, and a peculiarity of the string is that after being struck, the string slightly changes frequency, which is impossible to control. This is why even when newly tuned, the piano sounds out of tune to the modern ear. The hammers rebound immediately, and sound comes straight out. This can explain why the recording may sound sharper and even louder than is the case with the Erard. In reality the touch should not be at all strong (it is actually IMPOSSIBLE to strike the string strongly, it "kills" the string, and you get a weaker sound as a result), just very precise. The sound is much more dramatic, nuanced and colourful, even though there are different colours than those that can be obtained on the modern instrument. It was a different aesthetic, and it may take some time to acclimatise the ear to this.

If you feel carefully for what the period instrument would like to give you, you can feel two polyphonic lines – one in the left hand, and one in the right one, rather than the traditional interpretation of a homophonic melody with something unclear down below. We can hear that the different registers on the Erard have different colours.

The very light and clear character of the upper 2 octaves and the somewhat coarser, bassoon-like lower octave does not allow you to hide the accompaniment since the left hand will always be quite loud – the aim is to find a 50-50% balance between the hands – and not to give prominence to the right hand

Interpretative problematic of timing in Valses is slightly similar to Mazurkas. The Viennese custom is to slightly anticipate the second beat, which conveys a faster, lighter rhythm, and also breaks off the phrase. The younger Strauss would sometimes break up the 'one-two-three' of the melody with a 'one-two' pattern in the accompaniment. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, numerous different waltz forms existed, including versions in 2/4 (sauteuse), and even 5/4. Malcolm Bilson in his DVD "Knowing the score" gives an example of playing a Viennese Valse in the style and rhythm of a serious musical body of work, and brings this idea to the music of composers who emerged out of early Romantic Era, as well as giving an example of Prokofiev playing his Gavotte using a sharp rubato underlining the articulation that he wrote in the score. I think this idea is absolutely right and should be applicable for most composers, and definitely for Tellefsen.

Chopin's vales were clearly not intended to be used as dance music. He transformed the valse into a distinct, serious compositional genre for performance in the concert hall. The dimension which Chopin and later Tellefsen retained, was a special approach to rhythm and pulse. Even though there is  $\frac{3}{4}$  measure, the real pulse will never be even. Just in the same way as in Mazurkas, everything is about the timing in the Valses. So, these Valses, having  $\frac{3}{4}$  measure, could be mostly interpreted as a  $\frac{6}{8}$  piece with a tenuto on the first beat of  $\frac{6}{8}$ , with a lot of rubato involved.

Do these Valses belong to the so-called Salon Style? Being an active participant in Paris salons, Tellefsen could be fairly labelled as a salon composer in the literal sense of a person who was playing in the salons. Often the salon owners played a role as music entrepreneurs and patrons as well, as for example did Madame Chartoryska. Hence, it was a most conventional and practical way to maintain a performance practice. However, as we can see from his letter describing his benefit concert in Paris in 1851, he was clearly happy to play concerts in this new form. As we know, in the second part of the 1800s Chopin himself was promulgated in Russia by members of Balakirew's Music Society as a modern, ground-breaking composer and quickly became a national hero in Poland, whilst in Germany he was for long time described as being a salon composer, and in England his music was regarded as being suitable repertory for amateur pianists (!) ( See: A.Schwarz: Chopin as a modernist in nineteenth-century Russia" and A.Ballstaedt "Chopin as a salon composer in nineteenth-century Germany criticism" in Chopin Studies 2 , red.J.Rink and J.Samson, Cambridge University Press, 1994, pages 18-34 and 35-49). It would be really interesting to be able to hear the way that the Germans and Englishmen

played Chopin at that time, it could be a perfect picture of how an interpretation could totally change the piece. These Valses are a typical example of Style Brillante epoch.

Even though Tellefsen's Valses ask for a deeper, Chopinistic interpretation, then Thalberg's and Kalkbrenner's Style Brillante pieces, Tellefsen doubtless belonged to the Paris salon milieu. Salon music was a popular music genre in Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, usually written for solo piano, and often performed by the composer at events known as "salons". Salon compositions were usually fairly short, while these pieces of Tellefsen's represent quite substantial body of work. Nonetheless, these pieces have another clear attribute that salon music required.

Rondo from op.10 has a staccato accompaniment in the left hand, and virtuoso passages in the right hand. There are no pedal marks in the score. Unlike the modern Steinway mechanism, which has full iron frame and longer crossed strings (9 feet, or 2,75m), period instruments have straight stringing (and also all pianos were smaller at more or less 8 feet in length or 2.35m). According to Malcolm Bilson, these attributes of the modern instrument would create not simply a bigger tone, but also a tone that develops slowly, in which the most intense, loudest, moment of every note comes a little later than the moment when the note is struck.

It is certainly true that the acoustic curve of the sound on the Erard is a bit shorter, the loudest moment of the string comes a bit sooner and is more direct, and that gives this particular combination of staccato and quick passages *senza pedale* a sound quality and brilliance that would be impossible on the modern Steinway.

*Theme originale et fantasia* follows a typical sub-genre of salon music, namely the operatic paraphrase or fantasia. Usually multiple themes from a popular opera were used as the basis of the composition, but fantasias over the original themes are not such a huge exception. It has an over-effectuated introduction, sentimental variations, and an operatic Adagio Cantabile with vocal coloratures.

Performing Tellefsen's smaller pieces, I tried to use all range of pedals on Viennese pianos. The moderato pedal on the Viennese instrument gives an absolutely special, indescribable, type of sound, different from that of the *una corda*.

In the Grand Polonaise op.18 Tellefsen presents himself as a faithful heir to Chopin:



As we can see from Tellefsen's letters, he admired Liszt, and Liszt's influence created an additional, virtuosic dimension in his composition style. This Polonaise could be seen as a sort of stylistic fusion of Chopin and Liszt.

The challenge with Viennese pianos action is the legato passages. The single action requires a use of a different technique for legato than is needed on instruments with a double-escapement action. Which one to use?

Ingrid Loe Dalaker, the Norwegian researcher on Tellefsen, quotes a French article written by A. Farrence in the preface to a treatise on the early 19<sup>th</sup> century "Le Trésor des Pianistes" (volum 1, Paris 1861), where the author conveys that the pianist should use the style of playing called *jeu lié* when playing older music. The description of the position of the hand here is clearly related to the technique used on the harpsichord. However, the meaning of Farrence's *jeu lié* appears to us today as somewhat unclear and may hardly be understood as legato playing in our sense of the word. Since legato playing only achieved its break-through in the 19<sup>th</sup> century it would therefore seem paradoxical if Farrence, during the course of his efforts to establish an authentic style of playing, should recommend a technique from his own century.

*Jeu lié* consists of the independent movement of the fingers, very rarely lifting the fingers and keeping the key depressed during the whole note value. *Jeu lié* does not allow for any movement of the wrist or the arm. This produces a sound that is more beautiful, softer and at the same time rich. *Jeu lié* is a necessity in order to make the piano sing, it encourages the beautiful performance of all types of music. The works of Bach, Haydn, H and M will lose character and part of its charm if this technique is not mastered. The concept of *jeu lié* in the written sources of the 19<sup>th</sup> century apparently can be connected to a known style of playing from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This style was attached to a contrapuntal thinking, where it was important to emphasize



each voice by means of a clear articulation. There is every reason to believe that Tellefsen, who himself had been taught the harpsichord, had a clear view of what the concept of *jeu lie* implied and that he tried to transfer it to the playing of the different types of pianos of his time. Tellefsen's early style of playing was probably influenced by harpsichord and organ technique. He writes himself about the change of style he had to undergo when arriving in Paris in 1842."

What could *jeu lie* mean in practice? The description sounds not so different from a description of the conventional technique for over-legato playing on the harpsichord. Passages in Baroque music evolved from the ornamentation of chords (for example, *accacciatura*). An arpeggiated chord is easier to play than a passage, consisting of the same notes. Listening carefully to the recordings of Rachmaninov's *Liebesleid* played by the composer, and the same piece played by Horowitz, even though they play it quite differently, reveals one thing in common. Their phrasing does not follow the standard scale scheme, but rather the harmonic structure, so passages are not perfectly even, but consist of a combination of broken chords. There is a tiny difference when you listen to this, but this way of thinking creates a much easier technical approach to playing passages. To play an arpeggiated chord is technically easier, making the fingertips more controlled, and gives a different, more natural phrasing, than a passage consisting of the same notes. If they still kept this tradition which emanates from the Baroque, then the playing of pianists from the Romantic Era would have been even closer to those times. When you play on a piano with a single action, this approach to playing passages could be much more beneficial. It is possible, that it could be in part the difference between Kalkbrenner's and Chopin's school: ideal evenness of independent, separate finger movements (with Kalkbrenner) - and singing, UNEVEN sound production with Chopin and, later on, Tellefsen.

*Sonate op. 13* is one of Tellefsen's most substantial works. An important attribute of the thematic development in Tellefsen's sonata movement is his use of an eight-bar-long phrase as a structural building item. The symmetrical phrases are underlined by a harmonisation according to the harmonical principles, where the phrases resolve with a full cadence. The thematical material, mostly diatonic, reinforces this structural method. An interpretation which adhered only to these structural principles, would be fatally boring, and as a performance would fail. There is quite a lot we can achieve with the dance element in his music: as in his waltzes, we can think of the written  $\frac{3}{4}$  as a sort of 'alla breve', which could create a different pace and rubato than if it would be the case with a standard  $\frac{3}{4}$ . It would also help us to think in longer stretches, going across the phrase-structure. There are also some quaver pauses and sforzandi that deserve attention, and can suggest the idea of mazurka elements, hidden in a sonata form.

Second movement is a beautiful Adagio; the middle section here is based on a quasi-orchestral development of the main motif. The magical pianissimo is reminiscent of the opening waldhorn motif from Wagner's *Tanhauser*:

*Con moto.*  
*p*

*Cres.*

*ff* *Ped.* *Ped.*

*Maestoso.* *ten.* *estinto. pp*

*pp* *p*

It is interesting to compare the second part from his piano Sonate with the Adagio Cantabile from his "Theme originale et Fantaisie":

Cantabile.

ADAGIO.

*dolce.*

*m.s.*

*m.d.*

*p*

*cresc:*

*maestoso*

*8*

1154 R.

These two pieces have a combination of two similar technical elements, namely rhythm and somewhat similar melodic lines:

However, the way to interpret these two piece would be completely different. There is an analogy with Italian operatic arias in the Fantaisie which requires a singing sound production in the Sigismund Thalberg tradition, whilst the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement of the sonata



arouses analogies with Beethoven's sonatas, calling for a much more concentrated and condensed sound, and even a different instrument.

The finale is a virtuoso tarantella with some splendid minor-key episodes, with a sort of Beethovenian humour.

The last part of the *Melodies Ecossaises* op. 42 sounds as if it is based on the Scottish Reel, presumably from one of the numerous collections that were about at that time and were widely used by amongst others Franz Schubert, Ludwig van Beethoven and Frédéric Chopin. In Scottish country dancing, the reel is one of the four traditional dances (the others being the Jig, the Strathspey and the Waltz). Reel music is notated in duple time, either as 2/2 or 4/4 (*English, Welsh, Scottish & Irish Fiddle Tunes*, 1976), each measure in both cases spanning the same part of the melody. All reels have the same structure, consisting largely of quaver movement with an accent on the first and third beats of the bar. A short section, just eight bars long just before the reel starts, is a rare example of piano improvisation from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

It is not the thematic material that is interesting but rather its function in the piece. The idea of preludes was to link different dances or shorter pieces together and the usual practice was simply to improvise them. Friedrich Kalkbrenner wrote his "Traite d'harmonie du pianiste, principes rationnels de la modulation pour apprendre a preluder et a improviser, Paris 1849). Being a pupil of Kalkbrenner's pupil, Tellefsen was doubtless familiar with these principles. So, these 8 bars then are actually not a requirement, but just an example of how these two dances could be put together. Any pianist of that time should have understood without explanation that you could play ANY interlude here, and even interpose another piece or even stop! (Martin Edin "Pianoimprovisation enligt Czerny och Liszt: 1800 – talets perludierings- och pianoimprovisationspraxis I analys och exempel" )

The interpretation of Exercise en sixtes op.43 will depend of two main challenges: phrasing and pedalling. It is possible to interpret this piece in the Kalkbrenner style, playing it without very much wrist movement and phrasing the semiquavers 4+4+4+4. Another opportunity is to phrase the semiquavers not according to the rhythmic form but rather to the melodic line, which in this case will be 3+4+4+3+2, and to rotate the wrist according to hand positions changes. The first variant could give an interesting historical approach relating to Kalkbrenner's playing style. The second dissolves the technical challenges of the double sixs, and increases both speed and expressivity.

My research on Thomas Tellefsen's Sketch for the method has started with a research at the Norwegian National Archive, continued by a period instrument course at Finchcocks, and should be completed by a recording of Tellefsen's Complete Piano works on period instruments at Finchcocks Instrument Museum.

Recording has been done, and I had to write short CD text of approximately 8 pages for the CD booklet.

Coming home after the Finchcocks course and a recording, I started writing, planning to finish it in a few days. Trying to put on paper ideas and information that I have got at Finchcocks, I wrote, wrote, wrote, and finally, in a couple of weeks of continuous writing, realised that I am getting close to hundred pages, and this writing does not remind 8 page long CD text. However, the CDs had to be sent to production, I had to complete the booklet and start with the next project. Combination of writing and practising was very hectic. Our programme does not imply a theoretician supervisor, and there is not an easy challenge to write a smooth text of 100 pages in a couple of weeks. As a result, my Tellefsen text has been a sketch on a sketch – I just used an opportunity to get as full as possible record of all the worthy information I have got from Tellefsen's manuscripts at the Norwegian National Archive and the period instrument course at Finchcocks Instrument Museum.



Frederic Chopin project.

First editions  
Chopin's style.  
Chopin's rhetoric  
Period instruments and Chopin's interpretation.

First editions.

Chopin was an important topic among others composers in this project, especially because of 2010 was Chopin's jubilee year. The main score source I used was the very last impact on Chopin: collection of his First Editions Online (CFEO), and consisting of c. 5,500 digital images in the CFEO archive were obtained from five lead institutions (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Bodleian Library, British Library, Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina and the University of Chicago Library) and seventeen other libraries. CFEO was directed by Professor John Rink (Cambridge University), Professor Marilyn Deegan and Professor Harold Short (King's College London). They write about this project:

Chopin's first editions pose major challenges to musicians and musicologists alike because of their considerable diversity and complex interrelationships, not to mention the practical constraints that to date have prevented the comprehensive comparison and evaluation required to understand their creative history. Inadequate copyright protection between the principal European countries during the early nineteenth century compelled Chopin to employ different publishers in France, Germany and England, thus giving rise to three 'first editions' of most pieces. Each is unique, as a result of his idiosyncratic editorial methods and ongoing compositional revisions. At different stages in his career Chopin provided his publishers with various types of *Stichvorlage*, including autographs, annotated proof sheets and scribal copies. In each case, the music continually evolved as autograph or scribal copies were prepared or proof sheets corrected, resulting in significant differences between the multiple first editions. Further differences arose from the interventions of house editors and proofreaders in successive impressions which until recently have simply been regarded as 'first editions' – an error of judgement that has undermined much Chopin scholarship. (For further discussion see *Publication histories*.) Only now is the importance of these differences fully realised – likewise that of the first editions as a whole, which constitute one of the principal sources of knowledge of Chopin's music. Until they have been thoroughly analysed and conclusions drawn about his developing musical conceptions as well as the nineteenth-century practices that surrounded them, his output cannot be understood in its historical context or its content accurately reproduced in any modern edition. The very identity of the Chopin work is at stake.

The *Annotated Catalogue of Chopin's First Editions* represents the most ambitious and comprehensive attempt to date to unravel the extraordinary complexity surrounding the first editions. It begins with a survey of the publication history of Chopin's music within each of the countries concerned, and by offering some observations about music publishing in the nineteenth century more generally. Although focused on the Chopin first editions in particular, the conclusions that it presents are potentially relevant to the music of his contemporaries, all of whom released their compositions under the same conditions and often with the same publishers.

Chopin's style.

Chopin's early piano works are usually interpreted in the light of his later style. However, his Concertos have striking parallels with J.N. Hummel's Piano Concerto op.85 in A minor, both melodically and technically. A comparison of the introduction sections already shows common aspects.

Hummel, Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 85, 1<sup>st</sup> mvt, b.1-13:

The image shows the first 13 bars of the introduction to Hummel's Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 85. The score is written for piano and is in 2/4 time. It begins with a *TUTTI.* marking and a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and slurs, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes. The key signature has one flat (A minor).

Chopin, Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11, 1<sup>st</sup> mvt, b.1-15:

The image shows the first 15 bars of the introduction to Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. The score is in 2/4 time and marked *Allegro maestoso* with a tempo of quarter note = 126. It is labeled as the *1<sup>er</sup> Concert.* The right hand starts with a *f* dynamic and a *risoluto* marking, featuring a melodic line with slurs and accents. The left hand has a *marcato* marking and a *cresc.* dynamic. The key signature has three sharps (E minor).

The first theme of Chopin's Concerto No.1 op.11 in E-Minor, 1<sup>st</sup> movement, bars 155-163:

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. The top system is marked 'SOLO.' and features a treble clef with a melodic line and a bass clef with a chordal accompaniment. The bottom system continues the piece, with a treble clef melodic line and a bass clef accompaniment. There are various musical notations, including slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like 'p' and 'cresc.'.

...is reminiscent of the first theme of Hummel's Concerto op.85 in A-Minor, 1<sup>st</sup> movement, bars 152-158::

The image shows a musical score for Hummel's Concerto op.85 in A-Minor, 1<sup>st</sup> movement, bars 152-158. The score is in two systems. The first system has a treble clef with a melodic line and a bass clef with a chordal accompaniment. The second system continues the piece. There are various musical notations, including slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like 'p cantabile', 'p', and 'sf'.

In my previous project on J.N.Hummel's Piano Concerto I have illustrated how Chopin built his pianism on the priceless foundation of the composer's work. The current study of Chopin's Concerto intends to do the opposite: to analyse the eclectic stylistic elements in Chopin's work, which he inherited from previous eras. This work is not in a high-Chopin style, but rather an example of Style Brillante Epoch, with stylistic elements taken from Classical (for example the beginning of the second movement, bars13-15:

The image shows a musical score for the beginning of the second movement of Chopin's Concerto, bars 13-15. The score is in two systems. The first system has a treble clef with a melodic line and a bass clef with a chordal accompaniment. The second system continues the piece. There are various musical notations, including slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like 'p' and 'sostenuto'.

and Baroque practices (for example, in the 3<sup>rs</sup> movement, bars 100-115):



The question could be raised as to whether this baroque musical language elements are a stylization, or perhaps even the result of lack of personal ideas?

Chopin was a master of harmonization, and preferred to use unusual modulations in his expositions. For example, in the first movement, the exposition modulates to the tonic major, I-I, instead of the expected I-III. In fact, the Romance is the only movement where the second theme of the exposition fits the classical model of modulating to the dominant (I-V), although even there, when the second theme returns, it modulates to the mediant (III). However, it looks like he used pedaling to build up form and underline the harmonic progress. Every theme, returning in the reprise, receives much more pedal than in the exposition.

#### Chopin's rhetoric

The *stretto* mark in this extract is a topic for investigation. When performed, the effect may easily sound illogical and slightly artificial. The clue may be in the tempi. In all three editions Chopin is very precise to mention M=126 in the first movement, and write a *tempo primo* in the subsidiary theme. Following M=126 in the subsidiary theme, the texture does not only transform itself from Romance or Nocturne into *belcanto* aria with virtuoso coloratures, but *stretto* will allow the measure to go almost *alla breve*, with one beat in every bar. This creates a natural ornamentation in these passages:



In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the study of the principles and rules of composition was still combined with rhetoric - the study of writing or speaking as a means of communication or persuasion. In the art of rhetoric there are many different means and methods. One can employ, among others, imitation (i.e. the study of good exemplars for the improvement of ones's own skills), MIMESIS (subsume one's ideas in a concrete style to increase the sense of meaning of a phrase), ANAKLISIS (repeating another's words but changing their meaning), PARODY, HOMIOSIS (stylization), or ANACHRONISM (the conflation of elements which are historically incongruent).

Since that time our approach has changed. Only the ability to hear PARODY, IMITATION or ANACHRONISM remains. This may account for why some romantic pieces which are stylised in a baroque language can seem to be so worthless to us. But maybe it is the case that the composers of the 1800s still employed a wider palette of these meanings and it is not so much that they were incapable, but rather that we have forgotten something they knew? It is interesting however, that this principle of composers employing quotation, with intentions which are other than PARODY and ANACHRONISM has been re-emerging during the late 20th and early 21st centuries in some post-modernist contemporary music, for example as in the violin theme in Alfred Schnittke's Concerto Grosso Nr.1.

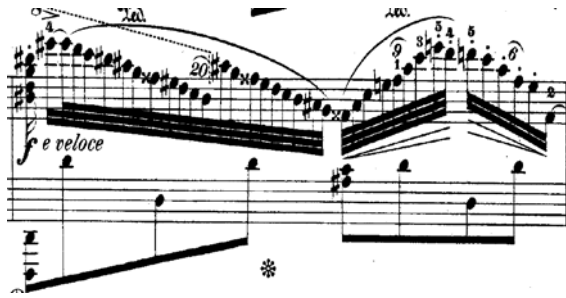
It may be that the solution is to use the old romantic approach to viewing baroque music, as is, for example, presented in Czerny's edition of Bach's Well Tempered Klavier. This edition opted to use long slurs instead of detailed articulation. Themes and countermelodies are not distinguished either by different type of touch nor by sound, there is a lot of romantic rubato, and furthermore crescendo and diminuendo are employed instead of terrace dynamics.

In case of this little Baroque episode in Chopin's concerto, we get not a stylisation, but perhaps a rare example of a 19th century romantic musician's perception of baroque music, or a musical ANAKLISIS.

Period instruments and Chopin's interpretation.

The use of a period instrument usually means an attempt to revitalize authentic sound patterns from the early 1800s. Authentic mechanics conduct their own principles for interpretation. The piano is a percussive instrument. Regardless of how masterful the legato produced on it, an ideal legato, - legato per se – will be an illusion. On Pleyel and Erard from 1830s we already have double escapement action. However, the sound does not last as long as on a modern piano. The hammers are lighter, making the touch quicker and more responsive. Considering these factors alongside the nature of the texture in this work, indicates *jeu perlé* as the most relevant technique in most episodes. This transforms legato to a phrasing element more than a form of articulation. Some *legatissimo* passages call for the use of snap technique as it is described in C. P. E. Bach's 'An Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments', that will bring them almost to glissando effect (2<sup>nd</sup> movement, bar 94):





The comparison with C. P. E. Bach is not accidental. Chopin seems to absorb and integrate previous technical playing patterns. As I mentioned above, not only melodic elements, but technical elements in Hummel's and Chopin's concerti look very similar as well.

Hummel, Piano Concerto op.85 in A-Minor, 1<sup>st</sup> movement, bars 138-140):



Chopin Piano Concerto op.11 in E-Minor, 1<sup>st</sup> movement, bars 623-626:



Or for example here:

Hummel, Concerto op.85 in A-Minor, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, bars 234-236:



Chopin, Concerto op.11 in E Minor, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, bars 374-378:



The number of possible examples is abundant, and they are really very similar. What makes them sound stylistically different? First of all. Chopin's unique legato technique, additionally to his revolutionary pedal experiments.

Being a pioneer in use of legato, along with Chopin utilized an old technique here, called the carezzando technique. Carezzando technique involves the production of a legato sound by non-legato touch with extensive use of pedal, mostly in cantilena. In this case the hammer is relieved quicker, the overtones last longer, and it is possible to obtain a legatissimo by binding not the tones but the overtones. It could be that this technique, which was well-known and popular in the 1840s, but almost forgotten now, is possibly the only viable solution in order to actually play this piece.

The Concerto is dedicated to Friedrich Kalkbrenner. Interestingly, even though Chopin has made a gigantic step forward Kalkbrenner and other Style Brillante Epoch's virtuosos, his technical approach does not seem to conflict with their approach, but rather somehow to grow out of them.

Chopin's legato passage technique, especially in the final movement of this Concerto, asks for an extremely flexible wrist, but this wrist flexibility will be directed horizontally, along the keyboard (Chopin Concerto No.1 in E-Minor, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, bars 128-132):



Speed in the production of double notes and arpeggio passages is dependant on wrist flexibility. Analysis of Chopin's score gives us some hints of her outstanding wrist -flexibility. How do these passages change in dependence of choice of hand positions:

Choice of technique connected with choice of the hand position.

There are three natural hand positions a pianist presumably uses on the keyboard:  
 C-D-E-F-G (advised by Czerny)  
 E-F#-G#-H#-H (advised Chopin) or  
 F-A#-C#-D#-E (advised by Breithaupt and used by Safonov's Russian school)



C-D-E-F-G



E-F#-G#-H(#)-H

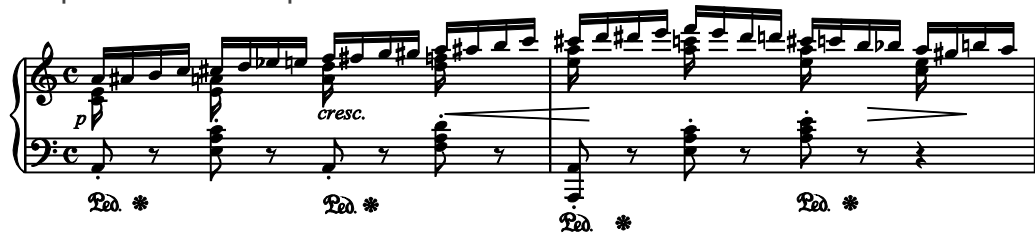


F-A#-C#-D#-E

All three of them are good in different type of ABGs music, and might be combined between each other.

It is interesting to notice how the slight turn of the hand “outwards” as in the Breithaupt hand position (right hand to the right and left one to the left) makes the wrist free and increases the comfort (and speed!) in playing passages, double thirds and double sixths. It also gives the performer the opportunity to use an easier hand-rotation which increases the ability to continue playing the same technical element without the muscles becoming tired. This is not only applicable to this Concerto; absolutely the same principle is required for Chopin’s Etudes, for example nr.2 op.10 which is much easier if the fingers to play “forward” than “aside”:

Chopin Etude nr.2 op.10 in A minor:



Chopin seldom uses *martellato* or tremolo technique (on the contrary to Liszt). Hand movements up and down or from side to side are directed against the *legato* idea, while the whole nature of Chopin’s technique, both in passages and cantilena, is focused not on power, nor even on weight, but on *legato*. Paradoxically, it is even possible to perform this whole Concerto using Kalkbrenner’s Chiroplaste Machine, and the nature of the required hand movements won’t conflict with it, but just absorb it as a curiosity. This would be absolutely unthinkable with Liszt.

The audible result of this research has been presented on various concerts. Among highlights there are performances on October 20 with Minsk Chamber Orchestra and wind section from the Norwegian Academy of Music, and performances with quintet version, among others at the final concert in the Norwegian Academy of Music on January 21, 2011.

Turning to the experimental evidence of this artistic research, it can be seen that this concerto is actually a fantastic example of a stylistic transformation from the Classical to the Romantic period.

Subsidiary research:

Baroque/Classical period transition. Style Galant.  
Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach  
and Johann Christian Bach project



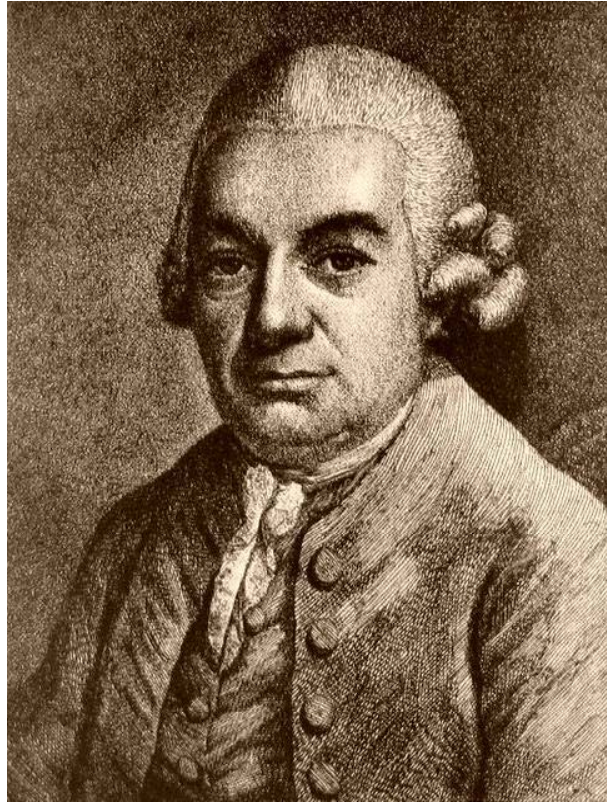
My studies on Transition period of early 1800s is a bridge between the Classicism and Romanticism, or Style Brillante, is not a completion of a well-researched area, but a new concept. Therefore, there are not so many points of reference in this topic. That was why it was important for me to make some parallels with other transition epochs, such as Baroque/Classical transition (Style Galante) or Romantic/Impressionistic transition.

These two researches were not a main subject, but a completing studies. The main goal with them was to find some stylistical transitions within the other styles, to check whether the whole idea of gradual technical transformation could be relevant there. Additional argument for making the additional investigation in Style Galant Epoch was a treatise that made a foundation for the further development of piano technique, and was still influential in Style Brillante Epoch, written by one the most renowned performers and teachers of Style Galant epoch, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1791). His keyboard style was renowned for its expressivity, and the keyboard instrument that could reflect it in the best way was clavichord. His *Versuch ober die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen (Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments)* is one of the very first method books on keyboard playing that still were related to the challenges a performer overcome in early 1800s. C.P.E.Bach mentions three major factors related to the true art of playing keyboard: correct fingering, good embellishments, and good performance.

Among the various fingering he mentions that his late father suggested 1-2-3-1-2-3-4 or 1-2-3-4-1-2-3 as two ambivalent variants for the scale fingering. This makes sense. For example, use of 1-2-3-4-1-2-3 fingering on up-going A-Minor scale makes a position of the hand on the keyboard more comfortable and corresponds with the harmonic structure of the scale (4 notes in T/S + 3 notes in D).

The author stresses the passing of the thumb under the other fingers, that was quite revolutionary for that time, motivating this with the nature of the thumb that is constructed to be naturally adept at turning under. The idea of searching for the natural ways of playing is very important and was later on slightly lost in the virtuoso fever of early 1800s.

One of the techniques C.P.E.Bach mentions is a snap technique (from the German word *schnellen*): '...After the stroke the upper joint of the finger is sharply doubled and drawn off and away the key as quickly as possible' (*Versuch*, p.101). He mentions it often during his treatise, as a regular technique, along with legato and staccato, but does not give a particular description of the technique. Possibly, this



Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach



Johann Christian Bach

technique was so obvious for his playing that he did not feel the need of a thorough comment on it.

His description of legato is following: 'Notes which are to be played legato must be held for their full length' (Ibid, p.149). This description gives space for over-legato technique as a technique that now is mentioned as a legato.

Even though C.P.E.Bach writes about a hand position while playing the keyboard, the best description of his hand position seems to be given by Nicolaus Forkelm who was very well familiar both with J.S. and C.P.E.Bach, and meant that those used quite similar touch:

According to Sebastian Bach's manner of placing the hand on the keys, the five fingers are bent so that their points come into a straight line, and so fit the keys, which lie

in a plane surface under them, that no single finger has to be drawn nearer when it is wanted, but every one is ready over the key which it may have to press down. What follows from this manner of holding the hand is:

1. That no finger must fall upon its key, or (as also often happens) be thrown on it, but only needs to be *placed* upon it with a certain consciousness of the internal power and command over the motion.
2. The impulse thus given to the keys or the quantity of pressure, must be maintained in equal strength, and that in such a manner that the finger be not raised perpendicularly from the key, but that it glide off the forepart of the key, by gradually drawing back the tip of the finger towards the palm of the hand.
3. In the transition from one key to another, this gliding off causes the quantity of force or pressure with which the first tone has been kept up to be transferred with the greatest rapidity to the next finger, so that the two tones are neither disjoined from each other nor blended together.

This tight correspondence between the harmony and melody is somehow lost now, partly because of the modern instruments that have more robust but less sensitive keys. Transformation of the keyboard has been also the cause to disappearing of such techniques as over-legato and snap, that are less effective on the modern instrument mechanics. The question in which grade these techniques were kept in the Romantic era will be investigated in the chapter on Hummel.

Another indispensable attribute of this treatise is the fact that there is maybe the most famous method book written in a transitive stylistic period, even though of different stylistic transition: from Baroque into Classicism. This link was used in the research as a subsidiary line together with J.C.Bach's Method book of piano forte playing. I made a comparative study of C.P.E. and J.C.Bach selected keyboard works. There are two projects on C.P.E. and J.C.Bach's work that were completed during the research period: a concert of C.P.E. and J.C.Bach's Concertos (accompanied by a string quartet) and a solo recital of C.P.E. and J.C.Bach's piano Sonatas:

Sommerspillene på Geilo Stavkirke, 24.07.2010

Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel - Harpsichord Concerto, Wq.23

Bach, Johann Christian - Keyboard Concertos, Op.7, Nr.2,4 and 6



Sommerspilleen på Geilo Stavkirke, 18.07.2009

J.S.Bach – Aria variata alla maniera italiana in A Minor

C.P.E.Bach -

Sonata in D minor, Wq.57/4 (H.208)

Sonata in E minor, Wq.61/5

Sonata in G minor, Wq.65/11

Sonata in F Major, Wq.50 Nr.1

Bach, Johann Christian - 6 Keyboard Sonatas, Op.17

Mozart, W.A. – Sonata in B Major K.333

C.P.E.Bach, Johann Christian's much older half brother, belonged to Rococo style and was one of founders of Classicism. His piano sonatas, tend to invoke certain elements of his father at times, especially with regard to the use of counterpoint (C.P.E. was 36 by the time J.S. died).

However, even though he uses counterpoint, the pianistic content of his work is full of invention and, most importantly, extreme unpredictability, that makes his works difficult to place stylistically.

C.P.E. was moving toward the cyclical and improvisatory forms that would become common several generations later, that opened possibilities for rubato, that was important for Baroque and Romantic epochs.

Among other techniques in his instrumental works he uses *parlando* style, as a resembling of vocal recitatives. One of the earliest examples is found in the slow movement of Vivaldi's violin concerto in D, RV 208 which is marked 'Recitative', although it is perhaps more virtuosic and flashy than most operatic recitative.

C.P.E.Bach included instrumental recitative in his "Prussian" piano sonatas of 1742, composed at Frederic the Great's court in Berlin. *Parlando* has been a popular technique in Style Brillante Epoch and has been a base for such music forms as Paraphrase and Fantasia.

C.P.E.Bach was probably the first composer of eminence who made free use of harmonic colour for its own sake since the time of Monteverdi and Gesualdo. Use of complex harmony actively as a colour also brings him closer to Romantic ideals than to Classical, based on simplicity.

C.P.E.Bach – Sonate Wq.50 Nr.1

Johann Christian Bach's father died when Johann Christian was only fifteen. This is perhaps one reason why it is difficult to find points of similarity between the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and that of Johann Christian.

Johann Christian's highly melodic style differentiates his works from those of his family. He composed in the *Galante style* incorporating balanced phrases, emphasis on melody and accompaniment, without too much contrapuntal complexity. Somehow, ideas of *Galant Style* were appropriate for later *Style Sentimentale*, that was a part of Early Romantic *Style Brillante*. The *Galante style* movement opposed the intricate lines of Baroque music, and instead placed importance on fluid melodies in periodic phrases. It preceded the classical style, which fused the *Galante Style* aesthetics with a renewed interest in counterpoint.

#### J.C.Bach – Sonate Op.XVII Nr. 4

The image displays the musical score for Johann Christian Bach's Sonata Op. XVII No. 4. It consists of three systems of piano and bass staves. The first system is marked with a '4' and a 'mf' dynamic. The second system includes a 'p' dynamic marking. The third system includes a 'mf' dynamic marking. The score features various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingerings (e.g., 5 1 2 1, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1).

There is much easier to interpret J.C.Bach's Sonatas, since a significant amount of his melodic ideas was used and developed by his pupil – W.A.Mozart. Practising on J.C.Bach's Sonata Op.XVII Nr.4 in G Major, I could not avoid to include in the concert programme W.A.Mozart's Sonata in B flat Major K.333.

#### W.A.Mozart – Sonate no.13 K.333





The stylistic similarity of these two works is striking. The similarity is based both on melodic line and choice of technical elements (passage type, type of accompaniment).

The idea with the performance of those works was not to make a thorough study on any of these exciting composers, but rather to draw a sketch of stylistic transmutation from J.S.Bach, through Bach-sons, to W.A.Mozart, to demonstrate the transformation step by step, and create an artistic reflection on Style Galante keyboard technical solutions.

Some of technical elements from that time (snap, over-legato) have been employed in my Style Brilliant interpretations. The most important idea I have got from this investigation was the concept of Romantic figurations as a further transformation from the Style Galant ornamentation. This idea has been a red thread, following through all the minor topic to the final summarizing concert.

More detailed analysis of Style Galante is planned to be a topic for a future project, in form of Post Doc or a part of a further PhD.



Subsidiary research:  
Romantic/Impressionism transition period  
A.B.Grøndahls project

During the period 1750-1890, there were three transitions, when stylistic epochs were undergoing change in piano music: namely the periods between Baroque and Classicism, Classicism and Romanticism, and later between the Romanticism and Impressionism.

Focussing around Style Brillante period, I had to make some parallels with different stylistic transition epochs. Along with project on F.Chopin's disciple T.Tellefsen, it sounded reasonable to bring a second thread, by investigating F.Liszt disciple – A.B.Grøndahl. Making this additional research, I aimed to find out some patterns of technical and stylistical interaction in Romantic/Impressionistic transition period, and, simultaneously, to shape some patterns of further transformation between Chopin's and Liszt's school, for a possible future project.

ABG was born in 1847 and belonged to the second of these periods. She was 36 years younger than F.Liszt, 28 years younger than Clara Schumann, 14 years younger than Brahms, 4 years younger than Grieg, 6 years older than Teresa Careno, 7 years older than Albeniz, 15 years older than Debussy, and 15-17 years older than Liszt's most famous pupils – Eugene d'Albert and Moriz Rosenthal. Romanticism had just passed its climax and impressionism was soon to come. Musical language and piano technique surely did not both change suddenly in one magic moment, but instead gradually developed from the 1850s to the 1900s. Liszt's use of poetical metaphors, literary ideas and program music, and his poetical paintings are still reflected in impressionistic ideas – Ravel in particular continued and developed Liszt's tradition. Debussy protested against being labelled as impressionist. He wrote in a letter: "I am not an impressionist. I am a realist, but realist of other realities".

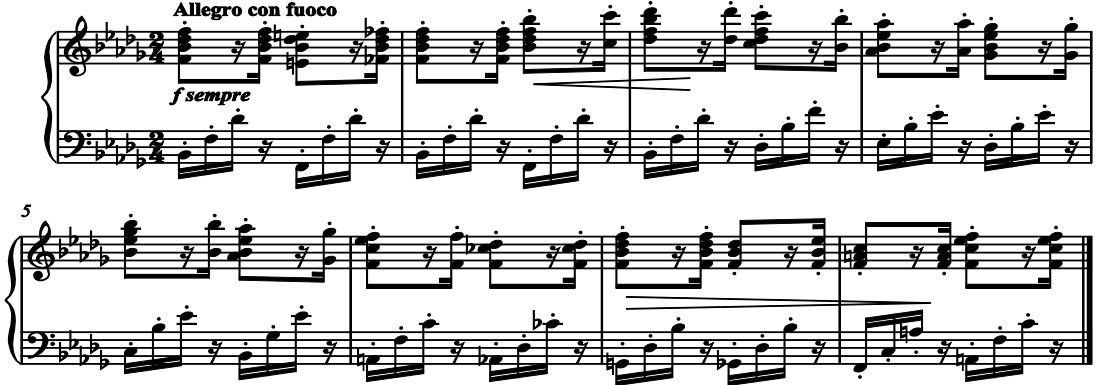
In interpreting unknown or unfamiliar works the only tangible points of reference are the score and critical comments of the composer’s contemporaries. All people and their music belong to their particular epochs, and hence may be informed and influenced by the common conventional streams which are peculiar to that epoch. At the same time, the unique worth of each successful composition is defined by the composer’s ability to explore (or even to destroy) the limits of such conventions. Music students taking classes in formal analysis typically study schematic rules and principles to better understand how one should compose in early 1800s, and they then go on to study concrete musical examples in order to analyse how all these rules in reality are broken and principles de-constructed. Hence, the first interpretative questions created by these scores obviously are: which style is it, what is the nature of her genre? And finally: what is unique in it?

A cycle of “6 Concert Etudes” op.11 was ABGs first published work for piano, published in 1881 by Carl Wartmuth. Critics and pianists have different (and often opposing) opinions about level of difficulty of ABGs Etudes. Of course, this level depends on the performer’s choice of tempo.

There is neither legato no staccato marks in the Etude nr.1 in B flat minor:



The choice of articulation will change the interpretation fatally:



Using legato:

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. The title is "Allegro con fuoco". The music is in B-flat minor, 2/4 time. The score consists of two systems of staves. The first system starts with a treble clef and a bass clef. The right hand plays chords and broken arpeggios, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment. The instruction "f sempre" is written below the first staff. The second system continues the piece, with a measure number "5" at the beginning.

When considering the structure of technical elements (such as chords and broken arpeggios), we can notice how important is the flexibility of the wrist is for these type of chords, “gliding” along the keyboard at different angles in relation to keyboard, naturally indicates a choice of legato, and creates deeper expression and increasing speed. It is also an interesting parallel in choice of use of technical elements informing the music, with two first movements of Chopins’s Sonate in B flat minor:

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. The title is "agitato". The music is in B-flat minor, 2/4 time. The score consists of two systems of staves. The right hand plays chords and broken arpeggios, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment. The instruction "agitato" is written above the first staff. The instruction "Ped." is written below the first staff. The score includes a measure number "5" at the beginning.

The texture is homogenous. However, the middle part of this Etude, including bars 31-50, beginning with Crescendo from mp in bars 30-38, presents the possibility to change the type of touch and pedalling non legato marcato in fortissimo sempre on the climax in bars 39-46 and, as a consequence, construct a better musical form and avoid monotony.

In the middle section, Tempo un poco animato, in addition to the augmentation of the tempo, the accompanying passages in sixths become more elaborate and virtuosic and subsequently, the sixths are augmented to octaves in a process of textural expansion. The tenuti in the treble voice melody in reprise invite the division of the melody into a polyphonic texture with different, colourful levels.

In the Etude nr.3 in G minor ABG is a real virtuoso of style transformation, and she uses such stylisations with real mastery. The beginning of this Etude has a flamenco rhythm and plenty of articulation marks (staccato+tenuto+bow+dynamics sighs) which reminds of another pupil of Liszt’s pupil 13 years her junior - Isaac Albeniz. Technically it has some interesting parallels to Goyescas by Granados: Fandango del Candil:

Etude nr.3 in G minor

**Allegretto Scherzando**

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a piece titled "Allegretto Scherzando". The first system begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. The music is marked with a dynamic of *mf*. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass). The second system starts with a measure number "3" above the treble staff and continues with two staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Goyescas by Granados - Fandango del Candil:

*Allegretto  
Gallardo  
un peu lentement avec beaucoup de rhythm*

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a piece titled "Fandango del Candil" from "Goyescas" by Isaac Albéniz. The tempo and character are indicated as *Allegretto Gallardo un peu lentement avec beaucoup de rhythm*. The first system starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The music is marked with a dynamic of *p*. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass). The second system starts with a measure number "3" above the treble staff and continues with two staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some markings like "7 3" and "7 3" under the notes, possibly indicating fingerings or specific rhythmic groupings.

In the second section of this Etude (bars 9-16) the articulation changes. The syncopating 3/4 rhythm in the left hand creates a Polonaise rhythm and the virtuoso thirds in the right hand again suggest the 'Style Brillante'. The middle part of Etude g minor op.11 nr.3 ( bars 32-52) with its maestoso character, doubled basses, virtuoso chord and octave passages in the right hand has even more clear associations with Chopin's Polonaises:

## F. Chopin – Polonaise in A major

The image shows the first four measures of Chopin's Polonaise in A major. The score is in 3/4 time and A major. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and slurs. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth-note chords. Dynamics include a forte (f) marking. There are trill-like ornaments in the left hand and a triplet in the right hand in the fourth measure.

## ABG - Etude nr.3 in G minor

The image shows the first four measures of ABG's Etude nr.3 in G minor. The score is in 2/4 time and G minor. The right hand has a complex texture with many beamed notes and slurs. The left hand has a steady accompaniment of chords. A dynamic marking of piano (p) is present. The piece is marked with accents and slurs throughout.

The Etude nr.4 in F major presents one of ABG's favourite technical elements – double sixths. There can be a danger of slowing down the tempo by sitting and trying to pronounce each interval. The melody is in the left hand, and it is the melody that must conduct the choice of tempo, not the challenges posed by a difficult accompaniment. It may be a good idea to try to find the right pulse for this piece in the middle section, beginning from bar 38, where the treble melody is accompanied by more simple passages, and then to transpose this pulse to the opening section.

The double thirds in the bars 46-49, which is a transition section leading to the tarantella beginning in the bar 50, may be technically challenging. However, they are marked *P staccato leggiero*, and may still be interpreted lyrically. The use of gentle pedal on these staccati creates a soft colourful effect and gives the pianist an opportunity to pronounce them clearly without changing the tempo.

The change of articulation in bars 50-60 - accents and short slurs - can indicate a real change of character. The arm and wrist, drawing the slur lines, easily create a sharper articulation, changing the character to a jocular tarantella and even allow the pianist to continue with the tempo, developing music to the big dramatic climax in bars 61-73.

## The fifth Etude in E flat

The bass octaves in the middle section, beginning in the bar 22, do not have any legato marks, but the legato in the treble melody renders them not as jumping wrist octaves, but rather as being very close, gliding into the next one. The principle involved in playing here is similar to what Chopin uses in Etude op.25 nr.10:

*Allegro con fuoco* (♩ = 72)

*P poco a poco cresc - - - - -*

*fz fz fz fz fz fz fz fz*

The last Etude in this cycle, A-major, is a lyrical piece, thematically in the Lisztian tradition: :

*Allegretto grazioso*

*mf legato*

*Ed.*

It is comparable with Liszt's *Liebesträume* nr.3:

*Poco Allegro, con affetto*

*dolce cantando*

*5*

The choice of a homogeneous texture which exploits one kind of technical element (broken arpeggios) is, however, more typical of Chopin's Etudes than of Liszt's. The use of a wide dynamic scale and of a clear formal development serves to avoid any sense of monotony. A good example of how technical elements can physically create a musical expression of calm is demonstrated in both the melody, which is cast in long-winded phrases and passages in the accompaniment which fit comfortably under the hand, exploiting logical fingering patterns and pendulum-like movements of the arm.

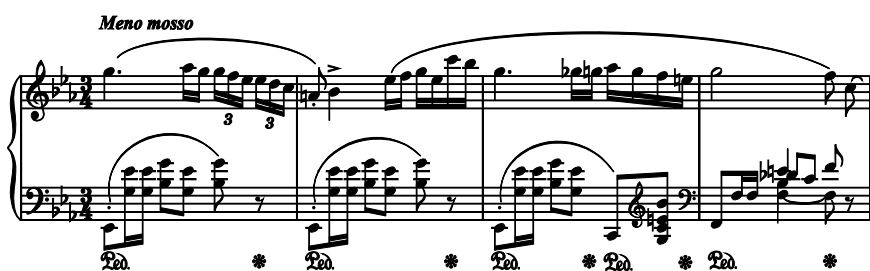
"Au Bal" op.15 is a beautiful piece written in an old-fashioned, but still elegant, *style brillante*. The metronome mark is quick (crotchet=126), but the texture is pianistically comfortable, and overall it gives a chance for the musician to realise the resultant

technical ambitions. The middle part – intermezzo – is polyphonic. Two voices develop in parallel in different registers (bass and descant), with the marking *sotto voce*, creating the picture of a two human voice in a dialogue.

Compare the musical language of this piece to Chopin’s “Grande Polonaise brillante and the preceding Andante spianato” op.22:



Chopin - Grande Polonaise Brillante op.22



The Sketch op.19 no.2 in A flat Major, has interesting steps upwards in sixths in the left hand that:



This, together with the phrasing in the right hand, creates an interesting syncopation, a kind of jazzy rhythm, anticipating Debussy’s “Golliwogg's Cakewalk” from Children’s Corner:



*tres net et tres sec*

5

*p* *f* *molto*

Sketch nr.3 in A minor contents some musical ideas, making transition to Post-Romantic music of 20<sup>th</sup> century:

5

*p*

For example the musical language of Scriabin's Prelude in A minor may be anticipated here:

*Allegretto M.M. ♩ = 138 rit. a tempo*

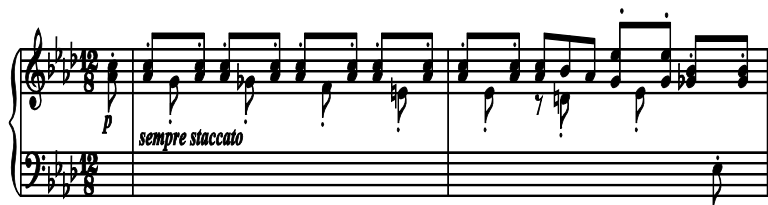
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*p* *rit.* *a tempo*

*rit.* *a tempo*

There are two neo-classical Preludios in ABGs output: the Preludio from Suite g minor op.20, and the Prelude and Grande Menuet op.61. The clearly Bachian sequences of the Preludio op.20 make it similar to the baroque style and suggests the use of an active finger technique and of polyphonic voiceleading .

In the first of the Three Concert Etudes op.22, published in 1888, Etude in A flat Major, there are different ways to phrase the melody. In the score there is the marking 'sempre staccato', and the measure 12/8 indicates an uninterrupted, perpetuum-mobile-like, pulse.



However, there are no staccato marks in the third bar, which may give space for a little phrasing slur just there and in some further analogous places. This little slur, supported by the natural use of the wrist movements in these chords, will change the pulse to 4/4 and create a tarantella character (a dance that was widely used by ABG in other pieces), also giving an opportunity for another, maybe more varied, interpretation of this piece:



The second Etude nr.2 A-dur is entitled “Au Rouet”-“At the spinning wheel” – this is a Norwegian *Allegro Moderato* Mendelssohn’s “Spinnerlied”

In technical terms this is an excellent example of the old “jeu perlé” technique in the tradition of Clementi’s “Gradus ad Parnassum”:

Title to ‘Novelette’ from Trois Piano Pieces op.25 (Novelette-Gavotte-Intermezzo) is cast in a German romantic musical language, and has well-crafted form with an intense development toward a climax.

The middle part, Andante espressivo, is technically reminiscent of the Second Movement of Schumann’s Kreisleriana:

Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch (moderato con espressione.) (♩ = 80)

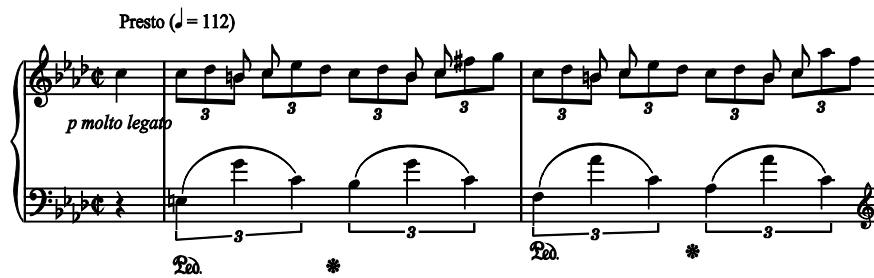
Allegro scherzando op.35, is a German style Konzertstück, with some 'jeu perlé' passages in the middle part. An augmented second in the climax (bars 19-20) is the first hint which anticipates the further thematic originality of her later compositions:

Albumblad, being still a romantic piece, has some interesting colouristic details, providing the opportunity to use of different colours in the piano sound. There is, for example, a harmonic contrast between B flat major of the outer section and D major of the middle section, and between the seconds of the rising "questioning phrases" in the reprise, and the long pedal on the melting passage pp in the end.

The technical challenges of the third piece, Impromptu in E flat Major, reflect the 'style brillante', and particularly reminiscent of Chopin's Impromptu and Etude nr.2 op.25 f minor.

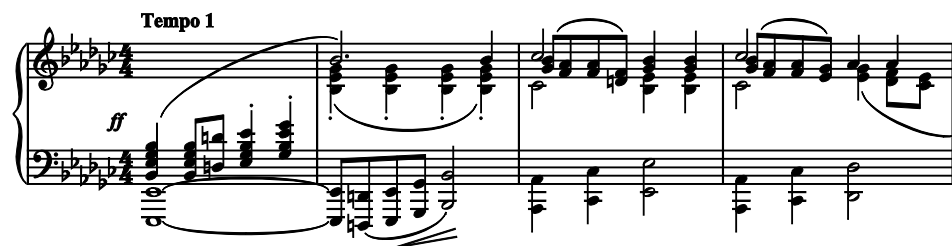
Vivace Grazioso M.M ♩ = 84

ABGs does not have Chopin's polyrhythmic interplay between the hands, but it has the same hemiola winding in the melody:



Use of Tenuto on these notes creates a polyrhythmic effect, thereby increasing the expressivity of the melody and avoiding the monotony of barrel-organ music.

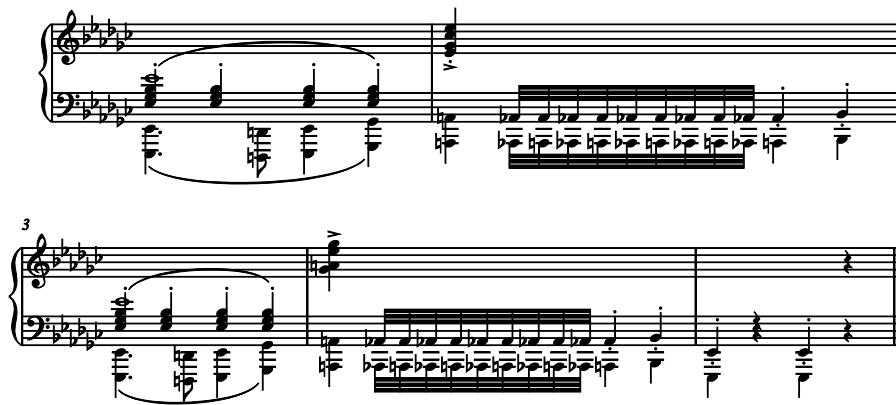
The famous “Ballade” op.36 presents a fusion of Norwegian rhythmical and thematic elements and Romantic style. The Ballade is one of the oldest forms of Norwegian art. The genre emerged in the Middle Ages, in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest Norwegian Ballade, *Visa*, which is about Falkyör Lommansson, concerns a war between two brothers which took place in 1288, and the oldest Norwegian ballade that is available in manuscript dates from 1612 (“Friaferdi til Gotland”). As is the case in a typical Ballade, this piece has foreshortened, alternating four-stress lines (“ballad meter”) and a simple repeating rhythm. *mP*, *pesante*, march rhythm, *andante* (“walking”) tempo mark, and absence of any rubato marks excepting one *sostenuto* between the sections, which invites the player to interpret the Ballade not as a lyrical piece, but as a severe *March funebre*:



The type of sound production is close to Chopin’s 3.movement from his Piano Sonate in B flat minor:

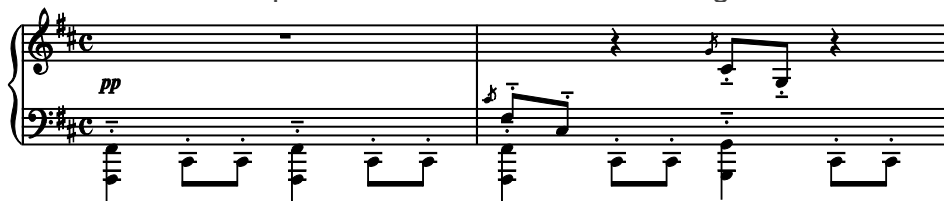


A theme which is cast with tonic chords and has a ‘waldhorn’ type motif in rising fourths *PP una corda piu animato* recounts an archaic story from the past about knights in armour, and in the reprise it comes back as a *March funebre*, now *ff* and with drum-like tremolos in the bass:



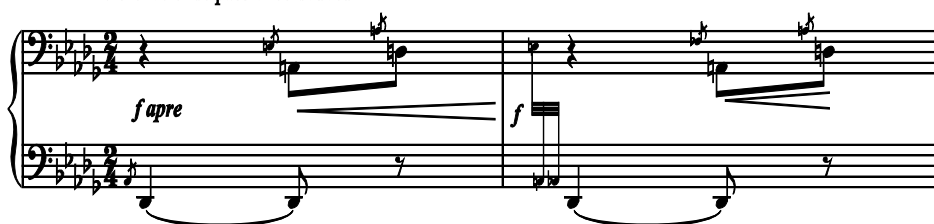
The increasing amount of international contact in the music world and the wider dissemination of music during this period allowed composers to develop a greater awareness of different national styles. Thomas Tellefsen wrote polonaises and mazurkas, Liszt's pupil Grøndahl wrote Hungarian Dances: nr.1 op.55 nr.2 and op.55 nr.7, "Three Hungarian Studies" op.38. The interest for Hungarian music was awoken by concerts of "Hungarian Capella" conducted by Ignacs Beorecz that created a furore in the 1890-s. Beorecz was excited by her "Three Hungarian Studies" op.38 and immediately used them on subsequent concerts – the music having been learned by ear, without recourse to notated parts.

The fantastic images in "Marche Fantastique" op.38 nr.3 reminds the listener both about the fantastic phantoms of E.T.Hoffmann's nightmares of Friedrich Kreisler:



and also anticipates dark intensity of Debussy's Puerto del Vino:

**Mouv't de habanera**  
 avec de brusques oppositions d'extreme  
 violence et de passionnee douceur



It presents an interesting idea which exploits increasing dynamics, starting at PP, gradually reaching the climax in a bewitching pulse of tempo non rubato, and finally gradually receding and disappearing – as if the character was concealing himself again.

It is interesting to compare use of particular techniques in her early Etude in A major Au Rouet, which was written in the technical tradition of Clementi's Etudes, with a later work, "Swallow Soaring" ABG by this time was 48 years old, and her style had

become more simple and – paradoxically - more original. At first sight it seems that in “Swallows soaring” ABG uses the same finger technique as she used in this Etude:

**Allegretto leggiero M.M ♩ = 160**

ABG was always very precise with articulation marks, and in this respect this is mostly the case here too. However, by comparing these two pieces, we can see that she increasingly begins to use indications of sound: a lot of long pedal markings are combined with una corda pianissimo dynamics. Use of the same, older finger technique together with long una corda pedals and colourful, rich dynamics (pp – rinforzando – sfz – PP ) totally transforms the musical expression. The individual use of technical elements creates a new touch along with new colours and sounds and as a consequence, transforms the musical language, the style and the aesthetics.

Like Liszt, who was a founder of the use of programmatic ideas in music, ABG also uses literary allusions. “Jet d’eau” (“The Fountain”) was inspired by a Vilhelm Krag’s poem:

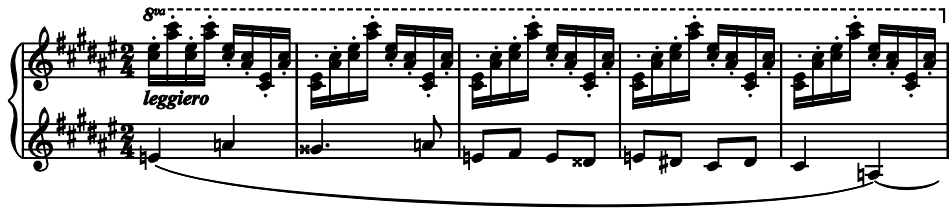
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Mais au fond du bosquet de palmiers  
 Si frais et silencieux  
 Deux petits jets d’eau ruisselants,  
 Rayonnent au soleil dans la solitude

**Allegretto leggiero M.M = 144**

Technically this piece is reminiscent of Liszt’s “Jeu d’eau” – “Fontains de Villa d’Este” - too:

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ABG experiments with new form of sound-painting. The combination of staccatissimo and long una corda pedals creates a miraculous expressive effect. The extended melodic lines serve to convey the sense of a static image in the best impressionistic traditions.

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Pieces in this cycle do not only paint pictures. The scores themselves also tell stories. Without sinking into quasi-literary descriptions, the best way to describe ABGs own markings of the next piece with the title “The bird’s song in the winter”:  
 1<sup>st</sup> part: F # minor - PP - staccato dolcissimo - una corda  
 middle part: G-major leggiero piu animato  
 3rd part: F# minor - tempo primo – PP – meno mosso – PPP – morendo...

The pianistic structure of “Withered” reflects the title: PP, dry staccato senza pedale, and also a tragic morendo at the end.

“La Valse” is another good example of style transformation within the same piece. The first section is reminiscent of Chopin’s Valses. But the bars 17-32 this allusion is destroyed. Marked ‘staccatissimo’, with the metronome mark 96 for a whole  $\frac{3}{4}$  bar creates a special, nervous pulse. Furthermore, in each bar the passages and chords in both hands are very comfortably located in the same narrow hand position, which has the effect of creating an accelerando of the pulse by itself. The stylistic transformation continues; the middle part in f-minor is reminiscent of Debussy’s “Le plus que lent”.

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The development of ABGs finger-technique principles is even more clear in the Etudes op.47. Equal accompanying passages in the left of the first Etude in D major, and in the right hand of the third Etude in E major are impossible to produce using the Theodor Kullak finger-technique. Instead it is necessary to play the whole chord in the one position, In D major Etude – as a trill, prolonging the main D note, using arm and wrist movement outside, in Etude E major - using the double-escapement action.



Allegro M.M. ♩ = 152

It is especially

3

clear in the end in the Etude E major, where the even descending and ascending passages can be played PP *velocissimo con pedale*:

*velociss. m.g. m.g.*

*ped.*

*dim*

*a tempo*

It presents a new technical playing style which bears comparison to the 'Chromatic Etude', "Movements" from "Images" or "Feux d'Artifice" by Debussy:

**Moderément animé**  
léger, égal et lointain

The Etude in G-minor op.58 nr.2, the last of the ABGs 19 Etudes de Concert, as is the case with the earlier Etude de Concert in D major op.47 nr.1, is meant to be one of her most monumental Etudes with advanced pianistic challenges continuing the symphonic thinking of Liszt.

The metronome mark of crotchet = 76 per is possibly meant to be understood as alla breve, i.e. minim = 76 since otherwise the movement is too slow. It is a response to the tempo and musical language of the D-major Etude (m.m. crotchet =152).

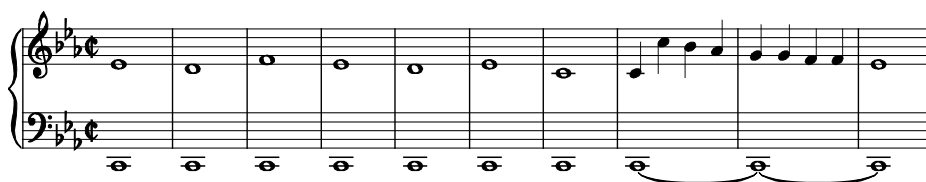
ABGs increasing interest in colours and different kinds of touch makes the pulse logical. In both of these etudes the semi-quavers in the left hand must be thought of not as a technical challenge, but as a colourful background to the melody, as in Liszt's use of colourful effects in Chasse-neige, initially presented as *p*, then growing and repeating as *f* and then *ff*.

**Allegro con fuoco M.M. ♩ = 76**

The middle part is a choral marked religioso, a kind of pilgrim march starting pianissimo, moving on (crescendo), passing by (p*iu f*), and disappearing in the distance (diminuendo - *pp*).The accompanying semiquavers are now moved to the lower octave making the semiquavers into a rumbling roar, which underlines the colouristic idea of the piece. The similar idea of a growing choral is used by ABG in her Lullaby (Ved Vuggen) op.59 nr.6, where the calm prayer grows up to a triumphant hymn.

There is some logic in the combination of *molto rubato* in the left hand accompaniment (tenuto on the first part of the bar, and then *accelerando* during the second part of it) with a strict *non rubato* in melody.

An interesting dilemma posed in Etude in G minor is the relationship between rhythm, pulse and phrasing. The accompanying semiquavers may not be produced by the finger technique in the Czerny tradition, but only by narrow finger vibration inside in the key, using the double repetition of the piano mechanism. The semiquavers are presumably intended to be colouristic ornamentation; trills and tremolos on the main tone. The melody follows the slow changes in the harmonic structure that creates an effect of a monumental and actually very slow work. The analogical effect is created by Chopin in Etude nr.12 op.25 c minor, that has actually the slowest development of the melody of the whole opus 25:



There is some logic in the combination of *molto rubato* in the left hand accompaniment (tenuto on the first part of the bar, and then *accelerando* during the second part of it) with a strict *non rubato* in melody.

The Little Menuet in e-minor op.59 nr.1, presented on this CD, perfectly illustrates ABGs skilful abilities with stylistic transformation within the same piece. The first 16 bars are in a Neo-baroque style, with a melody in a clearly defined  $\frac{3}{4}$  metre and characterised by a trochee accentuation:



Then, in bars 17-38, it transforms magically into a romantic valse.

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The accompanying figure changes here, having the effect of modulating the rhythmic feel to 'alla breve'. The accentuation of the melody also shifts and now becomes iambic in nature. The thematic development has the effect of transforming the music to a valse in the technical mold of Chopin.

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The increasing interest in sound-painting demanded the development of techniques for the conscious reproduction of the timbres of different instruments.

Sound-painting techniques in turn pose the question to the interpreter of which technique should be chosen in order to achieve a particular sound, especially for such conscious re-production of the timbres of different instruments.

Technical problems in respect of the Piano have already been thoroughly researched through the development of performance practice and through the theoretical works of researchers, which have been carried out to a high standard. It is, however, difficult to demonstrate, and even just to describe in written words how the application of a particular technique sounds. The process of attempting to decode what is really meant in such written texts about sound-painting techniques is almost a kind of archeological work.

In his book "Musical thoughts and afterthoughts" Alfred Brendel explains some ideas about how to reproduce the timbres of different instruments on the piano.

The reproduction of the sound of the harp is described as follows:

"Do not forget that the harp is a plucked instrument! The pianist should play harp notes with round, tensed fingers – *sempre poco staccato* – within the sustained pedal. In rapid, sharply ripped-off arpeggios, the finger-play is assisted by movements of the wrist. Harp figuration has a smooth outline; its dynamic curves are of geometrical precision. The rhythmic and dynamic spacing of the notes needs the utmost control. Harp arpeggios are the opposite of careless, chancy arpeggio playing".

This description can make sense for reproducing the timbre of the mandolin as well:

*leggierissimo*

A concrete story that may be read in the score of the little “Lullaby”. The piece begins a metric, quiet song, which is not too refined, continuing and finally ending the second phrase in free, improvising romantic arpeggios (in bars 17-19). Then, after a fermata, comes the second attempt, in form of a choral PP religioso una corda, coming three times with increasing dynamics. The idea of a growing choral, where the calm prayer grows up into a triumphant hymn, is quite similar to the middle part of Etude in G minor. The climax suddenly stops on the harmonic subdominant F fermata, then the characteristics of the technical elements change completely, and lines of flowing semiquavers almost graphically draw the curves of a baby’s chaotic movements:

The baby is awoken by its loving, but quite young and inexperienced mum, who had been getting too inspired by her own singing. And then the lullaby resumes with the third attempt, finally decreasing in a subtle PP... the baby is sleeping now... and then the piece suddenly resolves in a Vivo leggiero party, where the mother is clearly relieved and glad of the conclusion of the prolonged process of her baby falling asleep.

The rhythmical, articulative and dynamic profile of "Dance burlesque" op.64 nr.1 retains a kind of Kreislerianian madness:

Ibid

Musical score for "Dance burlesque" op.64 nr.1, measures 1-8. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The first system (measures 1-4) features a piano (mp) dynamic and a *poco pesante* tempo. The second system (measures 5-8) features a *leggiero* tempo. The notation includes chords in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand.

Schumann:

**Sehr lebhaft (molto vivo.)** (♩ = 168)

Musical score for Schumann's "Sehr lebhaft (molto vivo.)", measures 1-8. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The first system (measures 1-4) features a piano (pp) dynamic. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the piece. The notation includes a complex rhythmic pattern in the right hand and a steady accompaniment in the left hand.

Valse Caprice, written in 1904, anticipates impressionism:

Con molto anima M.M. ♩ = 76

6

The beginning technically and even thematically anticipates Debussy's *La plus que lente* that was to be written in 1910:

### La plus que lent

Valse

*lent (molto rubato con morbidezza)*

*pp*

6

*mf*

In the second section, beginning in the bar 34, the Valse develops into the wild whirling, likened to Ravel's *La Valse*, that was to be written in 1920.

*Andante quasi allegretto* was written in 1869 in Berlin the 22 year old ABG as a studying work for Kullak's *Akademi der Tonkunst*. The title *Andante* indicates that it is not a virtuoso work and could have been intended as a second movement of an unfinished Piano Concerto.

Andante quasi allegretto

*mf*

Vi, Vii, Vla

*pizz*

*p* Vc, Cb

*p pizz*

This piece is a good example to how the choice of tempo changes the stylistic approach. The measure of the piece is 2/4, but the pulsation may actually be counted as either 2/4 or 4/8. The strings, which begin pizzicato in the first bar, will usually count 2/4 and create too quick a pulse; this will create difficulties for the, quiet singing demi-semi- quavers in the piano part in the succeeding bars. The result of this is that the tempo is pushed, which in turn requires the dotted rhythm to be sharper making the interpretation into a sort of Allegretto Marche, reminiscent of Shostakovich's Bb minor Prelude from "24 Preludes":

Counting the pulse in 4/8, on the other hand creates a real Andante feeling, rhythmically and thematically reminiscent of Schubert's second movement from his Piano Trio E flat major:

Andante con moto

*p*

*p*

The monothematic idea, based on the first motif which is in seconds is very clear in this work. The main and subsidiary themes do not conflict with each other, but instead gradually transform into each other. ABG realises this transformation either by placing the upper leading voice as a lower counter-melody of a subsidiary theme (bars 12-14 and 19), or by subsuming the main thematic elements into the accompaniment and fusing both themes together (piano: bars 58-65, 129-133, cello:



bars 163-173), or by submerging both themes in figurations (side theme, bars 51-64, 150-158).

An interesting moment is the harmonic gap in the cadence on dominant in bar 18 with the following theme starting in the subdominant in bar 19. There are some comments from ABG's contemporaries about "harmonic UNBEAUTY" here and there in her works, for example Clara Schumann's letter about ABG:

Ich habe mit Interesse die Kompositionen der Frau Grøndahl kennen gelernt, und daraus eine schoene Begabung gesehen. Ueberall merkt man ein warm empfundenes Herz, und mochte ich Frau Grøndahl raten in Zukunft die Werke, ehe sie drucken last, von einem Musikaer durchsehen zu lassen, der sie auf harmonische Unschoenheiten, hier und da, aufmerksam macht – es bedurfe zuweilen der geringfugigsten Aenderung eine Harte zu vermeiden, die einem den Genuss raubt.

This piece was performed by me and Minsk Chamber Orchestra for the first time in Norway, and for the second time since Grøndahl performed it herself in Berlin.

There are many different means can the pianists use for the indication or transformation of style. We will try to analyse the most essential of them: notation, articulation and character signs, along with the use of particular techniques, rhythm and pulse. My idea with these comments was to utilize both pianistic, stylistic and musical analyses to show how these elements are interwoven in Agathe Backer Grøndahl's piano production.

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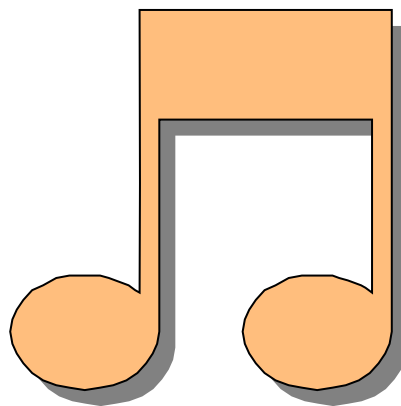
ABG, lived at a certain remove from the biggest legends and monsters of the 19<sup>th</sup> century's musical world, whilst at the same time touring extensively around Europe. This offered her the felicitous opportunity to synthesise the prevailing musical streams and traditions without copying any concrete aspects of the styles of those great musical figures whom she encountered. It would be tempting to dub her as being Liszt's inheritor, however in reality the duration of her studies with Liszt was only 3 months (during the summer of 1873), and even though she surely benefited from a great deal of interesting pianistic advice that will have helped her later to win over European musical opinion, her compositional style and the technical principles which she employed in her music never slavishly reflected those of Liszt.

ABG's earlier compositions synthesized the predominant pianistic and stylistic ideas of 1850s-Europe. In certain other pieces, especially in her later years, however, her compositional style transformed and anticipates some ideas of 20<sup>th</sup> century musical language. This very personal approach, developed by her during her life, anticipated some 20<sup>th</sup> century impressionistic ideas and led to her being promoted by the famous Norwegian composer Pauline Hall (1890-1969) as the first Norwegian impressionist.

This is why the analysis of her works can perfectly help us to continue discovering the missing link between these two huge epochs – romanticism and impressionism.

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## Study on piano pedaling



An important part of historically informed interpretation is study on pedaling.

The sustaining pedal, or damper stop, called also hand-stop, was first controlled by the hand, and was included on some of the earliest pianos ever built. Stops operated by hand were inconvenient for the performer. I have to continue playing with one hand while operating the stop with the other. If the player performs a piano concerto authentically, he/she has to conduct additionally to playing (see chapter on Chopin about this). This gives me an idea of performance practice in those times. Combination of conducting, playing, and changing hand stops trains a brilliant coordination, but makes it impossible to perform absolutely perfectly. The player often has to take one hand away from the keyboard, even though for a short period.

The only piano Mozart ever owned was one by Anton Walter, 1782-1785. It had two knee levers; the one on the left raised all the dampers, while the one on the right raised only the treble dampers. A moderator stop to produce a softer sound was located centrally above the keyboard. Mozart speaks highly of pedal's functionality in a letter to the inventor of knee lever, Johann Andreas Stein: "The machine which you move with the knee is also made better by [Stein] than by others. I scarcely touch it, when off it goes; and as soon as I take my knee the least bit away, you can't hear the slightest after-sound". This letter is also a confirmation of the fact that Mozart did use pedals.

The una corda mechanism, invented by Bartolomeo Cristofori in 1722, was the first stop invented to modify the piano's sound. This function is typically operated by the left pedal on modern pianos. However, on period instruments there are no fixed location to any pedals. On Cristofiri pianos there was a stop, operated by hand, on later grand pianos pedals were placed in a free order. I presume, it was easier for a performer of late 1700-early 1800 to relate himself to the unpredictable placement of pedals, since there were no patterns done yet. Now pianists are too used to have sustaining pedal to the right and una corda to the left, that makes it very confusing to use the pedal on the instruments where pedals are placed vice versa. The common name many use today for the una corda is the soft pedal, which is not an entirely accurate description of the pedal's function. The una corda primarily modifies timbre and color of the tone, not just the volume of the tone.

When the una corda was activated, the entire action shifted to the right so that the hammers hit one string (una corda) instead of two strings (due corde). On the modern Steinways there are 3 strings in total, and una corda pedal changes them to two, not to one. Additionally to this, change to one string often implied change of tone

colour, that is lost on modern instruments. So full una corda effect can be achievable only on period instruments now.

Among other pedals, especially popular on Viennese early pianos, are the lute stop, moderator or celeste, bassoon, buff, cembalo, and swell. The lute pedal created a "pizzicato-type sound". The moderator, or celeste mechanism used a layer of soft cloth or leather ... interposed between hammers and strings to give a sweet, singing and muted quality. The piece of leather or cloth was graduated in thickness across its short dimension. The farther down one pushed the pedal, the farther the rail was lowered and the thicker the material through which the hammer struck the strings. With the thicker material, the sound was softer and more muffled. Such a stop was sometimes called a pianissimo stop.

During the late eighteenth century, Europeans developed a love for Turkish 'Janissar' music. 'Janissar' refers to the Turkish military band that used instruments including drums, cymbals, and bells, among other loud, cacophonous instruments. Owing to the desire of composers and players to imitate the sounds of the Turkish military marching bands, piano builders began including pedals on their pianos by which snare and bass drums, bells, cymbals, or the triangle could be played by the touch of a pedal while simultaneously playing the keyboard. At the concert in Finchcocks Instrument Museum (Kent, UK) I did perform Mozart's Rondo alla Turca, from Sonata K. 331, written in 1778, on Graf piano with 6 pedals, using these Janissary effects.

There are three main method books that were first to mention pedaling: *Die wahre Art das Pianoforte zu spielen* by J.P.Milchmeyer, *Méthode ou principe général du doigté pour le Forte Piano*, by L.Adam, and *L'art d'enseigner cet instrument* by D.Steibelt. Two first of them have not left any compositions. However, I did research on their books, since they are the most important treatises on pedaling of those days. Artistically, I did experiment with their ideas in the works by D.Steibelt on the concerts during my third working year, in 2009/2010, particularly his Etudes op.87 and Concerto in E Minor, called *Concerto pour le Piano Forte avec accompagnement d'un violon ou le tout l'orchestre, ad libitum*.

Johann Peter Milchmeyer (1750-1813) in his *Die wahre Art das Pianoforte zu spielen*, is firmly convinced that fortepiano (he mentions primarily a square piano) is the best instrument to play on, blaming harpsichord for having too stiff action and the lute for being too soft. Legato technique, as described by Milchmeyer, seems to be an over-legato in reality: '---The legato style, which is indicated by a small half-circle for a few notes or by a line curved at each end for several measures, requires a soft, as it were, melting touch. All players of the pianoforte should generally, for the sake of the instrument, choose the legato style, since knicking and hacking notes do not suit the instrument, but rather it must be caressed in a tender manner...' (p.18).

Milchmeyer is a significant advocate of wrist technique. His description of Staccato presents the very first reference of wrist motion: '... Good execution this [detached] style requires that one lift the finger from the first key before striking the second, the finger from the second before striking the third and so on. All notes in this style, whether single or double notes, are made by a small motion of the hand, without moving the arm' (p.19-20). His description of an octave technique refers directly to the wrist: '... The octaves must be played without the slightest strain, without movement of the arm, only with the wrist...' (p.69).

Milchmeyer gives so many different variants for fingering, that it is getting clear that there was not a common pattern for a playing the scale. Using different fingering on the scales and passages gives more variety to connect a particular passage to its harmonic content, as it was previously described in case of C.P.Bach's fingering. However, conscient choice of fingering for every particular scale inhibits the dexterity, that is a mechanical process. Further extension of length of piano keyboard followed to possibility to produce longer passages, that demanded equal fingering for the scales, and, as a consequence, draw attention away from the harmonic content of every passage.

Among the new techniques Milchmeyer presents *tremolando*, that makes a path to the romantic piano style. He calls this technique *tremando*, and describes the production of it as a performance of written notes with a certain trembling as fast as possible. Nature of piano texture from that period indicates that tremolando and pedal were often used simultaneously.

This treatise contents one of the first referances on pedaling. The author describes effects that different pedals can bring, suspiciously poetically (such as rising sun, a dispersing cloud etc).

An example from D.Steibelt's piece with a weird title *Allegorical Overture in Commemoration the Signal Naval Victory obtained by Admiral Duncan* can illustrate the way pianists used pedal then:

Beat to Arms

The image shows a page of musical notation for two pieces. The first piece, 'Beat to Arms', is in 2/4 time and marked 'Allegro, ff'. It features a driving, rhythmic melody in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. The second piece, 'Setting the Sails', is also in 2/4 time and marked 'fz'. It has a more complex, melodic right hand and a bass line with some chromatic movement. The score includes various dynamic markings such as 'ff', 'p/p', 'cres', 'Sempre cres', and 'fz'. There are also performance instructions like 'Setting the Sails' and 'a'ya'.

Milchmeyer stresses the topic of an appropriate performance in general: '...A female performer should play modestly, without showing the slightest demand for praise and adoration, for she should not be like an actress on the stage; her playing should be respectable, natural, and free, without stiffness or force'... (p.25-26). However, when talking about pedaling, there is no record of appropriate use of pedal or any special rules for it. The discussion was about to use pedal as an effect in general or not to use it at all. According to method books, the overnamed score

example should be played with a pedal down, as there is ostinato C in bass. The more specific use of pedal was not developed yet by that time.

The first piano method book to come out of the Conservatoire was *Méthode ou principe général du doigté pour le Forte Piano* (Method or General Principles of Fingering for the Fortepiano) by Louis Adam (1758-1848) in 1798, revised in 1804. Adam insists on the light touch that was the characteristic of French pianism throughout the nineteenth century:

It is essential never to strike the key with the force of the arm, but only with the strength provided by the muscles of the fingers. These muscles must never be tense and must be allowed free movement....The fingers must be curved and the muscles relaxed and supple, for all muscular tension blocks freedom of movement and makes it impossible for the hands to extend and contract the fingers promptly, which one needs to be able to do at all times...  
...It is only by means of touch that one can draw out beautiful sounds; therefore it is necessary to become accustomed to using only the strength of the fingers to bring out the *forte* sounds as well as the *piano*.

Daniel Gottlieb Steibelt (1765-1823) in his *Méthode pour le Piano-forté: ou, L'art d'enseigner cet instrument* (Paris, 1805), along with a general information on finger position (curved) and some basic technical exercises, presents two main issues that are fairly new and revolutionary for the piano technique. First of those is tremolando technique, called vibrando in several critical reviews of that time. The second important subject that he stresses is pedaling. Steibelt was a huge advocate of using pedals. He writes:

I will show especially that this addition, important to the instrument, serves to bring out the colours, to mark the shades and gradations, and that the means of using them are subject to rules that taste has laid out' (p.4).

Further on the author describes different pedal and their basic effects. He stresses the importance of pedal techniques and rules for using the pedal but however does not list any of those.

There is still very early times in piano development, where the pedal technique was not refined yet and the performers were still divided in two general camps: pro- and contra-pedal. Unfortunately, because of his passion for using pedal, Steibelt was labeled to be a charlatan, especially in German music environment, preferring non-pedal playing.

Steibelt suggests some variant for pedal indications mark, but does not use them widely in his pieces. German negative critics, describing his long pedaled tremolo passages, played a fortunate role, because now we know where Steibelt used pedal.

Steibelt, Concerto in E Minor, 1<sup>st</sup> movement:

All? Moderato

*fp fp fp fp*

CONCERTO

The image shows a page of musical notation for a piece titled 'CONCERTO'. It features three systems of grand staff notation (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked 'All? Moderato'. The first system includes dynamic markings 'fp fp fp fp'. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and common time (C). The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests.

Because of pedal discussions, we have at least two different ways to interpret this work. There is possible to try to imitate Steibelt's own pedal, that was approximately 'dirty'. Another possibility is 'to follow the spirit and not the letter of the law'. Steibelt was a dedicated prophet of pedal, and, living several years later, he would of make use of all modern achievements in use of pedal. Playing this his work with so-called 'modern' pedaling, we get an example that stylistically sounds absolutely romantic:

Solo

Rondo

The image shows a page of musical notation for a piece titled 'Rondo'. It features three systems of grand staff notation (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked 'Solo'. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and 6/8 time. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests.

One of useful studies for this research is the eighth chapter from David Rowland's 'A History of Pianoforte pedalling', published in 1993 by Cambridge University Press, investigating use of sustaining syncopating pedal after 1800s in production and playing style of Dussek, Kalkbrenner, Clementi, Cramer, Hummel, Moscheles. In appendix author publishes excerpts on piano pedaling from three major piano method book of early 1800s: J.P.Milchmeyer, D.Steibelt and L.Adam.

He also gives a good description of Thalberg's three-hand technique and its dependence on pedaling. Following Rowland's cites from the authentic critics, Thalberg's and Chopin's pedaling was closest to pedaling we use in our days, while Liszt's pedal was either less delicate or just more various than pedaling of two first named. However, this chapter is very condensed and short. Therefore, Chopin's pedaling is taken as a whole, without diving in different time periods. Chopin's pedal indications in his piano Concerts, written in young age, are quite different from his pedal marks in later Nocturnes. Here is an example of pedal marking in the Nocturne in B flat Minor, op.9 nr.1:

The image shows a page of musical notation for Chopin's Nocturne in B-flat Minor, Op. 9 No. 1. It consists of two systems of piano and bass staves. The first system starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes markings for *smorz.* and several 'Ped.' markings with diamond symbols. The second system begins with a fortissimo (*sf*) dynamic, followed by *accelerando, dimin.* and *ritenuto.* markings, and continues with 'Ped.' markings. The page number '995' is visible at the bottom center.

Pedal follows the harmonic development, and marking is so obvious that it seems to be unnecessary to notate it in every bar. However, this type of pedaling was quite revolutionary in that time, and we have a fortune to use it in our days because of Chopin's investigation of pedals qualities.

There is unclear in which time direct pedaling has transformed itself into syncopating. I did experiment with use of both types in the chosen material. Pedals in Kuhlau's and Steibelt's works last so long (often in many bars or even many lines), that the moment of putting the foot down and up is not so crucially important. While changing the pedal every in the accompaniment, consisting of equal figurations, it is getting important to refine the pedal after harmonic changes.

There are, of course, very few pedal marks in Beethoven's works, even though we know that Beethoven pedalled a lot. Chopin used pedal marks in his works, but in any case pianists use much more pedal in his works than if they would only follow these markings. However, in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the establishment of pedalling principles was still in process. A. Farrenc in the previously mentioned



article "De l' emploi des pedales" in the preface to "Le Trésor des Pianistes", volum 1, Paris -1861, p.138):

"... Even if the proper pianist does not need to use any of these pedals in order touch his public (!), it would be wrong to avoid it at all, because in some occasions they could be used to vary the effects..."

Anton Rubinstein wrote a treatise called "Guide to proper use of Pianoforte Pedals", which was printed by Bothworth in 1897. This starts with some very elementary information, such as: "The use of the pedal demands two movements: a) the downward pressure b) the upward release", but then he goes on to describe:

- the primary (direct) and secondary (latter) pedal
- the pedal may be more readily used in descending scales than in ascending
- the pedal is used more often in forte and crescendo, than in piano and diminuendo passages
- use of *half pedal* on tremolo

Rubinstein still has different type of markings for the pedal, but he definitely intends use of the modern piano, and the full and conventional modern description of pedal use as it was thought during the whole 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a full use of the pedal in passages in Clementi Sonatas, that would never be recommended nowadays He are also puts conventional pedal markings in Beethoven's Sonatas, which are at odds with modern research on the specialities of pedalling on the older Viennese fortepiano.

Teresa Carreno in her "Possibilities of tone colour by means of the artistic use of pedals", published in New York by The John Church company in 1919, also gives a modern picture for understanding use of the pedal. As we can see, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century pedalling principles were already formed in a structure which they were to retain throughout the whole of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In earlier times, when piano-builders were experimenting and frequently changing the number and types of pedals, the very first treatises concerning the use of pedals had just started to emerge, making the very first common rules for use of the pedals. The years between these two schools of thought divide two different epochs during which pedalling-technique continued to develop. The absence of any pedal markings in a score could be either a signal for a pianist to use pedal carefully, or the suggestion to use it freely.

Another playing method, that might influence pedal improvement, was *carezzando* technique. Word *carezzando* comes from caress, and playing principle implies smooth gliding of the finger tip along the key instead of fixed finger position on it. Movement of the hammers both up and down is possibly slowest, that gives a chance to produce the richest amount of over-tones. This method was often used for producing legato, and gives more smooth legato feeling that a physical bonding of the leys. Piano is a percussive instrument, and there is not possible to fuse two tones physically into each other. Trying to bond the over-tones instead of the tones themselves, there is possible to achieve maximal *legatissimo* on the keyboard.

The three first editions of Chopin's 1st Piano Concerto in E Minor are the French, German and English one. Pedalling is the most striking element in Chopin's score, which clearly indicates a different approach to what is common in our day, and to what we find in Chopin's later works. In his Nocturnes Chopin very precisely indicates every pedal change, painting a pattern that seems to be fairly unnecessary: the pedal changes uniformly follow harmonic modulations or various bass progressions within the same tonality. Why is Chopin so precise in his notation? Historically, this is one of the very first examples of modern pedaling. What has become common-practice today was a real revolution in his time. When we analyse his early works, like Concerto No.1, op.11, we observe a totally different picture more reminiscent of Beethoven's pedal experiments than of normal Romantic pedaling. Generally, this way of pedaling creates a much richer sound than is usually applied in his works. Pedal is absent for long periods. When it appears, it may last for a few bars, often covering T-D harmonic changes.

Pedal is never used as a substitute for legato, but only as a sound effect (second movement, bars 63-66):



Using Chopin's original pedaling as it is written, we get a totally different sound, paradoxically, much richer and producing greater variety than we use now. We can find *legato* passages with pedal (fairly common now), non-*legato* passages *senza pedale* (2<sup>nd</sup> movement, bars 105):



*legato* passages *senza pedale* (2<sup>nd</sup> movement, bars 54):



...and *non legato* passages with pedal (2<sup>nd</sup> movement, bar 45):



*Legato senza pedale* sharpens the idea of finger legato that many pianists of Style Brillante Epoch were highly praised for, and that is almost out of use in our day.

Many *senza pedale* episodes come from the old tradition of *parlando* style. This phrase *senza* with the accents *senza pedale* makes the best sense just in case of *parlando* style interpretation (1<sup>st</sup> movement, bars 140-145):



Chopin combines *con pedale* and *senza pedale* effects masterfully, even to change colour within the same passage (1<sup>st</sup> movement, bar 232):



The use of original pedaling changes the breath, phrasing and timing. For example, here is the subsidiary theme in the reprise of the 1<sup>st</sup> movement (bars 605-608):



Played without any pedal, transforms the section into a typical *jeu perlé* episode.

There is a probability that Chopin used *carezzando* for producing legato with pedal. technique takes some extra time before every tone. Listening to early recordings of Padarewsky, Godovsky, Hoffman, we can notice that hands often play non-synchronic. This way is traditionally meant to be 'the old style' playing. I gather whether use of *carezzando* technique made a manner to play right hand later than the left one. A combination of taking extra care on the tone and non-synchronic playing may have been one of the courses to appearance of syncopating pedaling.

A comparison of these facts reveals to say that size of an accompanying orchestra was changeable, and it was a common practice to have one player per instrument, as we will do at the final performance on January 21th, 2011.

The interpretative solutions would change with use of smaller size orchestra.

Traditionally, critics fall into saying that, given that Chopin was a composer for the piano first and foremost, the orchestral part of this piece acts more as a vehicle for the pianist, with the individual instrumental parts being uninteresting to perform. Orchestra voices abound with long, empty notes. However, an interesting observation is that the pianist's left hand and the orchestra's voices play almost always in unison. Chopin is famous for his unique way to use polyphony, implying the subsidiary voices as polyphonic elements in the texture. His 24 Etudes have something common with J.S.Bach's Inventions: while playing his 24 Etudes with separate hands, you get 48 wonderful pieces with continuous melodic lines, just as it would of happened with Bach's 2-voiced polyphonic works.

In his Concerto, combination of left hand and the orchestral part would produce a continuous unison melodic line. The passages in the right hand are little more than just ornamentations of this melody. In an unusual reversal of roles, in this piece we see the pianist accompanying the orchestra, and not the orchestra accompanying the pianist.

The melodic lines in the orchestral parts are so long, that it is difficult to perceive the intended phrasing. Additionally to this, even though the orchestra and the piano's left hand follow each other, there are not as many dynamic marks for orchestral players in the score. An interesting experiment may be to transfer the piano dynamics into the orchestral parts. In doing this, we risk getting the opposite dynamic then it is used in a right hand's development. These sort of opposite dynamics are typical for Chopin and is used by him in numerous compositions.

Interpreting the piano's left hand and the orchestral part as a united element, we can see the Style Brillante playing tradition of unsynchronized hands, where the left hand is as precise as a conductor, while the right one flows rhythmically free above it. This would help the orchestra to avoid waiting during piano passages, focusing on meeting precisely on the down beat after the traditional "breath" on the bar line, for example in cadences (2nd movement, bar 98):

The image shows a musical score for Chopin's Concerto, 2nd movement, bar 98. The score is written for piano and orchestra. The piano part is in the upper staves, and the orchestral part is in the lower staves. The piano part is marked 'leggerissimo' and 'dim.'. The right hand is marked '26'. The score shows a complex melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic line in the left hand. The orchestral part is marked with 'x' symbols, indicating that it is to be played by the orchestra. The score is in G major and 3/4 time.

The melodic line can follow its own way, without trying to be 100% synchronized with the right hand. Unexpectedly, this will sound much more stylistically correct. This approach lest us interpret the work as a piece of chamber music, making J.Hoffman's transcription of the piece for string quintet and piano more than relevant.

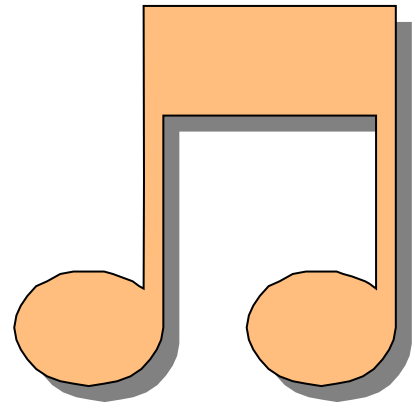
In this Concerto we find many unusual technical elements, which will be improved by Chopin later and integrated into his output. However, here they appear as sketches (2<sup>nd</sup> movement, bars 101-103):

The image shows a musical score for the second movement of Chopin's Concerto, specifically bars 101-103. The score is written for piano and consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The music features complex technical elements, including rapid sixteenth-note passages and intricate fingering. The tempo and dynamics markings are *leggieriss. dimin.* and *e rall.*. The score is enclosed in a dashed rectangular box.

What changes in technique would be required if a period instrument were to be used instead of a modern piano?

Concerto is performed on historical period Erard from 1860s, an instrument that stands possibly closest to Chopin's time.

Historical forms for a piano recital  
(benefit-concert, virtuous-concert).



Construction of my final performance has been inspired by a concept of benefit concerts of Style Brillante Epoch.

Even a poster for the concert has been a fusion of design that was used for Franz Liszt's Benefit Concert in London in 1840 and Thomas Tellefsen's Benefit Concert in Paris in April 1853.

Historically, Benefit (Fr. *benefice* - the income benefit) –means a performance hosted in honor of one of the theater actors or employees of the theater, either as a recognition of his skill, or financial assistance to any actor. Revenue from such representations used to be completely done in favor of this person - excepting the cost of the performance. The first benefit was held in France in 1735.

Eventually, Benefit turned into a kind of unofficial supplement to salary.

Nature of William Weber project at the Royal College of Music (London, UK) was a case studies on concert programmes 1800-1914. He writes:

Today we take for granted that an accomplished pianist, violinist or singer will periodically put on a recital where he or she will perform alone or with an accompanist. What many people don't realize is that such a concert did not arise until around 1840, or become at all common until 1870. What a musician did before that time was called a 'benefit concert', a very different kind of event. We will here look at examples of the benefit concert and the recital, to see the historical evolution from one to the other.

Schumann did called Clara Schumann's concerts a *Virtuosen-Konzert*, but it was in effect a recital. What she did was quite different concert from what we will see Johann Nepomuk Hummel or Franz Liszt did in the 1830s or 40s.

A musician, sometimes two, would put on a benefit concert for their own profit or loss, probably more often the latter. Such a concert was designed not so much to make money as to remind their patrons of what they had done and to look for new business both teaching and performing. The musician would send an announcement of the concert to patrons, perhaps by a personal visit, and expect that each one would buy a pair of tickets and hopefully attend...

The program would involve a variety of performers, the more the merrier in a sense, to show off the sponsor not so much as to performing excellence as high-level connections. A touring pianist would, however, do all possible to showcase his or her performing and composing talent.

The programme would almost always include both instrumental and vocal works, alternating between them and between genres. While such a programme would offer a much greater variety of genres than we are accustomed to hearing, it had a much narrower spread historically. In effect, as certain works began to remain in repertory, becoming called 'classics' by around 1830, the range of genres became less wide.

Gradually Benefit got a second, figurative sense of the word, various in different languages. In Russian thus came to be called any good performance - not just acting, but, say, sports team, and sometimes successful and became a dominant part in any case. In English Benefit concert now means a show or gala featuring musicians, comedians, or other performers that is held for a charitable purpose, often directed at a specific and immediate humanitarian crisis, and raising both funds and public awareness to address the cause at issue. These Benefit concerts typically feature popular performers working for little or no pay.

Investigation of programmes from the Style Brillante Epoch concerts does not give any indication of the typical orchestra's size in these piano virtuoso's concerts. The text on the front page of Daniel Steibelt's Concerto in E Minor says: Concerto pour le Pianoforte avec accompagnement d'un Violon ou de tout l'Orchestre ad libitum. Steibelt mentions that it is possible to choose between the whole accompanying orchestra and one accompanying violin.

In Tellefsen's programme from 1851 (see chapter on T. Tellefsen) a cellist performs a quartet: Quatuor de Beethoven exécuté par Mr Alard Franchomme, this makes it rather unclear as to whether the cellist performed a quartet somehow alone, or simply that this cellist was especially famous, by contrast with to some accompanying musicians.

The first English edition of Chopin's Piano Concertos is for piano solo, with tutti episodes written in the piano part. His Grande Polonaise Brillante précédée d'Andante Spianato is still performed in this type of transcription.

J.B. Cramer's Programme from his recital in London in 1786 lists both solo and orchestral pieces. Hummel's programme from 1839 looks as weird as Cramer's: there are just Mozart's Overture, Hummel's Concerto and Beethoven's Overture that are orchestral works here. The remainder of the programme is solo piano, terzett and song. Interestingly, Hummel finishes the concert alone. Every performer knows how difficult the logistics of orchestral concerts can be. Coming to a new country on tour, without internet and even decent transport, a player had to find a place (usually a salon or hotel hall) to play at, to hire a piano, find musicians capable of accompanying him, and to mount the performance. Trying to make an economical benefit from the concert, a pianist of that time had limited opportunities to hire a large-size orchestra. It was common practice to ask friends to accompany at the benefit concerts. The number of orchestra players and even instrument

arrangements was often done on an ad hoc basis. In the first performance of Beethoven's Leonore on March 29 and April 10, 1806, J.N.Hummel was asked by the composer to play timpani, since they needed a percussionist.

A comparison of various programmes reveals that the size of an accompanying orchestra was changeable from performance of a piano concerto solo, without accompaniment, or with accompanying violin, through to some accompanying instruments or up to full orchestral complement, and it was a common practice to have one player per instrument, as we will do at the final performance on January 21, 2011. This is why I have chosen to use Josef Hofman's version for piano and string quintet for this performance.

Interpretative ideas from Tellefsen's Violin Sonate will be appropriate for an interpretation of Chopin's Piano Concerto too. As described in the chapter on Chopin in my reflection, I make an attempt to show the chamber music nature of this piece. Using one player per instrument, we have a sextet, an ensemble that is not large enough to require a conductor, but large enough there to interventional difficulties within the ensemble. As a result, the authentic practice of a pianist conducting tutti episodes feels most natural and even necessary.

We know that pianists of Style Brillante Epoch did double tutti episodes on the piano, but we do not know how much. Did they play the whole tutti or just a melody line? Experience during our ensemble rehearsals revealed that it is very helpful to play tutti with an ensemble of medium size. Above all, from time to time there are some players who are not sufficiently capable or just unfamiliar with the material and need extra support. At other times a pianist has to play the tutti parts in order to exemplify main ideas. This would be even more important for the composer-performers of Style Brillante Era who performed their own concertos. My conclusion on piano playing in tutti episodes is that it was dependant on the situation, and could vary from complete abstinence, through playing some particular voices or bars, to full tutti doubling.

Text on the front page of Daniel Steibelt's Concerto in E Minor says: Concerto pour le Pianoforte avec accompagnement d'un Violon ou de tout l'Orchestre ad libitum, that reminds about Mozart's Violin Sonates, which are also written for Piano with accompanying Violin, and not opposite. Steibelt mentions that it is possible to choose between the whole accompanying orchestra and one accompanying violin.

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*Deuxième*

CONCERTO

*Pour le Pianoforte*

avec accompagnement

*d'un Violon ou de tout l'Orchestre*

*ad libitum*

*par*

D. STEIBELT.

*à Leipzig*

*Chez Breitkopf & Härtel.*

*Fr. 2 Rthlr.*



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<b>Benefit Concert of Wilhelm Cramer, 28 April 1786</b>	
Overture	Haydn
Song (Tenducci)	
Concerto for oboe	Fischer
Song (Madden)	
Concerto for violin (new)	Cramer
[Interval]	
Symphony (new)	J.-B. Cramer
Sonata for pianoforte	J.-B. Cramer
Song (Madden)	J. C. Bach
Quartet for harpsichord	[J.-B. Cramer?]
Battle Symphony	Raimondi

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<b>J. N. Hummel Benefit Concert, London, April 29, 1830</b>	
Mozart [1756—91]	Overture
Pacini [1796—1867]	Aria, "Il soave e bel contento"
Hummel [1778—1837]	Concerto for pianoforte in A flat, composed for this occasion
Handel [1685—1759]	Aria, "Lascia amor," <i>Orlando</i> [London 1733]
Auber [1782—1871]	Duet, "Ce secret là" from <i>Leicester, ou Le chateau de Kenilworth</i> [Paris 1823]
[Interval]	
Beethoven [1770—1827]	Prometheus Overture [comp. 1800]
Hummel	Aria, "Deh calma," <i>Matilda von Guise</i> [Vienna 1810]
Hummel	New Characteristic Fantasia Founded on an Indian Air
Mozart	Terzetto, "Cosa Sento" from <i>Le nozze di Figaro</i> [Vienna 1786]
Hummel	Extemporary performance

Every performer knows how difficult can be the logistic of the orchestral concert process. Coming to a new country on tour, without internet and even decent transport, a player had to find a place (usually a salon or hotel hall) to play at, to hire a piano, find musicians being able to accompany him, and proceed the performance. Trying to make an economical benefit from the concert, a pianist of that time had a limited opportunities to hire a large-size orchestra. That was a common practice to ask friends to accompany at the benefit concerts. Number of orchestra players and even instrument dividing was often improvised. Under the first performance of Beethoven's Leonore on March 29 and April 10, 1806, J.N.Hummel was asked by the composer to play timpani, since they needed a percussionist.

At Finchcocks Instrument Museum there is a hand-written and then typed list, recorded pianos, hired out by Broadwood company, since the company was established. Among others hiring musicians there are names of Chopin and Tellefsen who hired Broadwood pianos for their concerts.

A comparison of various programmes reveals to say that size of an accompanying orchestra was changeable from performance of a piano concerto solo, without accompaniment, or with accompanying violin, through some accompanying instruments up to full orchestra size, and it was a common practice to have one player per instrument, as we will do at the final performance on January 21. 2011. This is why I have chosen to use Josef Hofman's version for piano and string quintet for this performance.

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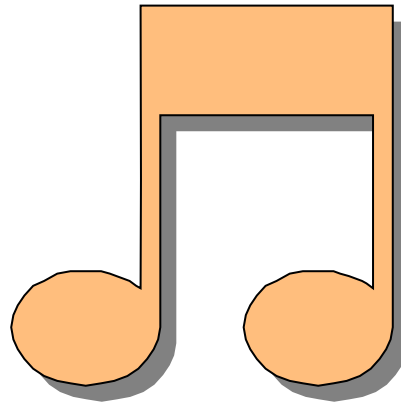
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### Reflection on the final result:

Goals and ideas for the final performance

Reflection on the final performance.

Reflection on the general artistic result.



### Goals and ideas for the final performance.

Research has been based on historical method books from early 1800s Style Brillante Epoch, such as Muzio Clementi's *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Piano Forte* (1801), *Ausführlich theoretisch-practische Anweisung aum Piano-forte Spiel*, Carl Czerny, *Complete Theoretical and Practical Piano Forte School, Op. 500*, Thalberg's *L 'Art du chant applique' au piano*, Thomas Tellefsen's *Sketch for the Method*, and the correlation between them was tested. A set of analyses examined the impact of some particular techniques that are not in wide use anymore.

My final performance had a form of a lecture-recital that took place on January 21 2011 at the Norwegian Academy of Music, Levin Hall.

Programme consisted of:

Jan Nepomuk Hummel – Rondo in E flat Major, op. 11

F. Kuhlau - La clochette, Rondeau brillante pour le pianoforte sur un motif favorit d'un concerto de Paganini

F. Kalkbrenner - Le Fou, Scene Dramatique pour piano et chiroplaste machine

S. Thalberg - Grande Fantasia sur God save the Queen

T. Tellefsen - Adagio pour piano et violin; Quatre Mazurkas

F. Liszt - Ricordanza, Etude d'execution Transcendante

Frédéric Chopin – Konsert nr 1 in E Minor

– Allegro

– Larghetto

– Allegro vivace

Participants: Hjørleifur Hvalsson – violin, Carmen Fossum – violin, Marie Opsahl – viola, Nikita Sirotenko – cello, Jon Martin – contrabass

All pieces from this programme were presented on a concert tours in Norway and abroad in December 2008/January 2011. Separate piece from this programme have

got international reviews, like for example a five-stars reviews on Thalberg's Fantasia in Independent, after my Wigmore Hall solo recital on January 3, 2009.

However, this programme as a whole has been presented first on my Norway's tour winter 2010/2011. Here is a review from Tønsberg Blad about this programme:

#### Piano Art with new dimensions



BEAUTYFULL: Natalia Strelchenko delivered a dazzling musical experience on Teie Manor last night. Photo: Anne Charlotte Schjøll  
Reviewed by Svein Erik Tandberg

Quite as expected, was the concert last night in Teie Manor, with the pianist Natalia Strelchenko, a dazzling musical experience. She has visited Tønsberg before, and we almost lost our breath of her performance. But she also has a number of other qualities in her capacity as an interpretator. She gets the instrument to sing with a projection to testify both the willingness and ability to penetrate deeply into the material she communicates with.

The last is at first: The program in Teie Manor was magnificently crowned by Frederic Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, arranged for piano and string quintet by Josef Hofman.

Here we got the full experience that Natalia Strelchenko has a significant sense of the great lines in Chopin's music, not to mention that in the many conflicts and explosive chord figurations, is the melodic force. It is constantly underlied. Is it something that clearly reflects Chopin's personality, so it is this melodic power. This created almost magical effect on the listeners. On the whole, there was a lyrical tenderness and warmth in the music. However, it needs a sensitive mind and a stunning technique to demonstrate it. For Stelchenko, it hardly exist any limitations in this respect. Before the break. we have got a very interesting introduction about how she has developed it.

Her main research idea was an investigation on piano playing development from the late 1700's and until the late 1800's. In short, we can say that she has

shown a road from the "light-touched" fortepiano to the "modern" concert grand piano as we have it since the second half of the 19th century. The instrument's technical design was developed and made possible for the instruments to produce repetitions with increased speed. This provided new opportunities for the composers. Moreover, we can say that the new instruments have been heavier in touch. Started from the pearl play figurations, played with the fingers and wrist, they now called the new for the new pianos, that let a player use shoulders and the arm. In this way, the singing legato play using the arm's own weight got a central place in the piano music.

In an approximate chronological order Natalia Strelchenko played pieces by Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Friedrich Kuhlau, Friedrich Kalkbrenner, Sigismund Thalberg, Thomas Tellefsen and Franz Liszt that reflected this process.

Some of these pieces can be definitely described as elevated musical entertainment - that's why the program was titled "Natalie's New Year concert" pretty accurate. Strelchenko is really an innovative performer, when she, with the greatest insight and bravura, transmits this to the modern piano. She does not reconstructs for its own sake, but ensures that the items from the past sound aesthetic are engaging in our times.

A great concert that also collected a full house.

Posted in Tønsberg Blad on Saturday, 08 January 2011.

Approach to this transition period was based on three main dimensions: the analysis of historical treatises, an investigation of period instrument mechanics, and relevant pianistic practice. Every piece in the programme of the final lecture-recital represented a minor project within this main topic.

The programme as a whole made an attempt to exemplify this gradual transition. I have chosen to refer to this period as the 'Style Brillante'.

I have begun with the Rondo opus 11 in E flat Major by Johan Nepomuk Hummel, representing the starting point of this technical transition.

I used a McNaulty fortepiano, a replica of an instrument from 1790 (seventeen ninety), that belongs to the Viennese school.

A method book, which I drew on for the Hummel project, was Hummel's own *Ausführlich theoretisch-practische Anweisung aum Piano-forte Spiel*, which sold thousands of copies. Starting with countless short exercises, based on various combinations of finger grip, Hummel gradually develops these combinations into the ornamentation groups, of which each develops the shape of an artistic interpretation of a single technical figure. Further on, the author talks about the art of improvisation as an obligatory skill to possess, and finally gives the example of his Piano Concerto in A-Minor opus 85 (eighty-five), as a logical artistic goal culminating from the previous exercises.

Placing the player physically at the instrument according to Hummel's method book, the distance between the piano and the player's body is as long as the distance from his elbow to the wrist. The upper arm from the shoulder down the elbow is located strictly vertically, not diagonally as on the modern piano. This position deletes both tension and weight from the shoulder, and gives an opportunity to play with the fingers only. However, shoulder and elbow movements from side to side, along the keyboard, seem to be important. Lack of those movements, while using this technique, locks the arm, neck and even facial muscles. Comparing this body position to a standard body position used in our times, a player using Hummel's technique has to sit closer to the piano than we are accustomed to.

Left and right hands are equal in volume: because it still derives from two-part counterpoint, creating polyphony in homophony.

He put effects (dynamically and agogically). Curiously, these effects make best sense on period instruments, because of the mechanism: attack on fortepiano is sharper and more direct.

The peculiarities of the authentic mechanism made it important to judge precisely the moment when the finger touches the note and the moment when it releases it. That explains the measurement that a note should last half of its length, described in Leopold Mozart's 'Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing'. Improvements and changes to instruments diminished importance of when the fingers end the note. This is why the transition period later on will result in a gradual change from staccato and harpsichord over-legato techniques to legato technique.

The next piece in the programme was Friedrich Kuhlau's *La Clochette, Rondeau Brillante d'un Motif Favorit du Paganini*. This is the start of so-called "virtuoso-fever" period, or *Style Brillante*.

The original theme may come many times after several episodes in between, but the theme may be transformed every time it appears. This is a development of the Rondo form that we have observed in Hummel's little Rondo. Fantasia over somebody else's theme is actually the same as paraphrase, but Fantasias could also be based on original themes, or be just a free improvisation.

Improvisation has been regarded as one of the techniques in *Style brillante* Epoch, that involved ornamentation of the melodic line (as in the slow movements of Kuhlau's Sonatines that I recorded). Newly evolved compositional forms (as paraphrases, fantasias) have changed existing music forms. For example, employing the elements of improvisation into repetitions of the theme, a player interjects elements of variation form within the rondo form, makes a fusion of variation and a Rondo form.

I used a Bakeman's fortepiano, replica of Walter fortepiano from 1805 (eighteen or five). It has a hand stop instead of knee lever, and there is a wider diapason of the keyboard that allows the composer to employ four octaves scales and chords. Phrasing in arpeggios is not based on rhythmically equal passages in Czerny's spirit, but on splitting the chords, as a development of Baroque acciaccaturas, as it is described in my essay on phrasing in romantic piano music. Such a division of

texture allowed figurations to be based on the current harmony (that often lasts a whole bar or more in these pieces) and creates troché phrasing, with the last upbeat of the bar completing the previous main tone and not leading into the next bar, that is an important characteristics of a Classical style performance practice.

In introduction, Kuhlau uses a tremolo technique in Daniel Steibelt's spirit, over-dramatic musical language anticipates Thalberg's paraphrases, and reveals the first signs of a freedom of the wrist. The first pedal indication are made here, also in Steibelt's tradition: the pedal is used as a sound effect only, covering long periods of the same or various harmonies. Syncopating pedal is not employed yet.

Kalkbrenner's piece presents one of the most important composition forms in the Style Brillante epoch. His composition "Le Fou" (The Madman) was a hit in early 1800s (eighteen hundreds). The first association that a modern pianist receives with a piece called The Madman, is a dramatic picture of an artist or a hero, going insane, expressed in sound. In this case this piece does not much sense. The key word for understanding of this piece is the sub-title: Scene dramatique. This is not a description of somebody's feelings but an operatic scene, with an entrance, long monumental introduction, the artist's first aria, the actress's aria, happening, duo, and a final triumphant chorus.

Beginning with Le Fou, all the pieces presented in this lecture-recital have had figurations with a clear iamb structure, that creates an important characteristics of the Romantic style.

Sigismund Thalberg was presented at the concert as the next step in the development of piano technique. Being famous for his unique legato touch and beautiful sound, he described importance of singing legato in his method book *L'Art du chant appliqué au piano*. Along with Frédéric Chopin, Thalberg was one of pioneers of syncopating pedal, opposite to Liszt, who, according to evidence of contemporaries, used the old-fashioned effect pedal.

In Thalberg's Fantasia over God save the Queen there are new techniques employed:

- parlando (declamating), coming from opera,
- non-synchronic playing when the right hand plays with rhythmical freedom over the strict conducting pulse of the left hand,
- caressando (caressing the key),
- snap (shot stroke),
- jeu perlé (utterly refined non-legato scale pearl play),
- leu lié (over-legato in spirit of old harpcichord technique),
- newly invented and enormously popular tremolo technique
- senza pedale staccato,
- and his famous third-hand effect

These techniques are the most important attribute of *Style brillante*.

In the early 1800s (eighteen hundreds), both composition and improvisation were a natural part of daily music practice. Hummel mentioned importance of improvisation



in his method treatise. Carl Czerny's "Kunst der Improvisazione" treats improvisation as one of the elements of technique. Somebody, who could not improvise, would not be considered as being a proper musician. Compositional talent influenced general renommée as a musician. Being one of the most brilliant players of 19<sup>th</sup> (nineteenth) century, Sigismond Thalberg was criticized for not being a musician of Liszt's level because of imperfection of his compositions, not because of his performer's skills.

Composition form of Paraphrase, invented in Style Brillante Epoch, were a potential vehicle for improvisation. What different ways of playing could this bring about?

It is interesting to read how Thalberg himself describes his practice process. He writes that every morning he dedicates 2 hours for playing scales, and then, he dedicates 2 further hours to playing scales with expression. What could this mean?

Continuing my idea of romantic passages as a continuation of broken chords, we can re-construct the manner they performed in that time: a pianist had a melody, that he either got from the audience or prepared in advance, a harmonic structure for this melody – figured bass, and then he had to use all the scales and passages he practiced on, as an improvisation over this basic material. Regarding the element of the score from this point of view, we can understand, that everything, written in Paraphrases and Fantasias, is not a strict definitive texture, but a record of a melody with a set of various technical elements, recommended for employment.

Last, but not least, a technical element used by Thalberg whilst playing his famous legato and repetitions, was weight technique. This technique became possible because of one man who was not a pianist, but who however contributed more than anybody else to the transformation of the Style brillante into High Romanticism. His name is Sebastian Erard.

It had great consequences for the development of the piano technique, and for new approaches in composition as well. It allows us to repeat notes without relieving the note fully, and that opens the way both for quick passages, repetitions, martellato, soft accompaniments, bringing pianists to the new stage of virtuosity and virtuoso fever.

As a part of my final lecture-recital, I used some chamber music: Thomas Tellefsen's Adagio from his Sonate for Piano and Violin, and Chopin's Piano Concerto opus 11 (eleven) in E Minor. Reason for the inclusion of chamber music works in this programme was the question surrounding structure of concerts in the Style Brillante Epoch, and the use of orchestra for piano concertos in this period. One of most essential attributes of Style Brillante Epoch was the phenomenon of the benefit concert.

For the end of the first part of the concert, I have chosen to perform a cycle of four Mazurkas by Chopin's pupil and disciple Thomas Tellefsen. These Mazurkas were composed while Chopin was still alive, and there are some clear parallels between them and Chopin's mazurkas, both thematically and harmonically. However, Tellefsen's production in general has more of the atmosphere of "remembrance of Chopin", rather than slavishly following melodic ideas. The main interpretative question will be timing. In modern time players have lost a genuine, intuitive feeling of

the 19<sup>th</sup> (nineteenth) century dances, and their pulse has disappeared from our bodies. The only tangible point of reference for us is rhythm, that is easy to confuse with the pulse. Different uses of pulse creates different aesthetics, and changes the style.

In observations recorded by Chopin's contemporaries we can find information about how he played his Mazurkas. There were many witness who relate that he played them with so strong tenuto on the second beat that a piece did sound almost in 4/4, not inn  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Tellefsen, being a disciple of Chopin, was likely to have inherited this tradition.

Liszt's Ricordanza is the last piece in the first part of the concert.

Translated from Italian, Ricordanza means Memories. A master of sound painting, Liszt uses here the wide palette of all possible old techniques to portray the concept of remembrance: parlando, non-synchronic playing, carezzando ,snap, jeu perlé, jeu lié, staccato senza pedale, and elements of improvisation inherited from his teacher, Beethoven's pupil Carl Czerny. This asks for an experiment to use old-fashioned Graf piano to exemplify these ideas. Using these technical elements, Liszt builds up a monumental lexicon of old techniques and at the same time closing the page of Style Brillante Epoch in piano history.

My final concert had a form reminiscent of a benefit concert. As a part of my final programme, I used some chamber music: Thomas Tellefsen's Adagio from his Sonate for Piano and Violin, and, for the second part of my final recital, I have chosen Chopin's Piano Concerto op.11 in E Minor. Reasons with emplying chamber music works in the programme was the misteries in question on structure of Benefit Concerts in Style Brillante Epoch, and use of orchestras for piano concertos this period.

There are two reason of incorporating a chamber music piece into this programme: Benefit concert structure, and my reflection on the nature of the chamber music pieces of that time. The original title of Tellefsen's Adagio is 3<sup>rd</sup> part from the Sonate for Piano and Violin. Piano is typed first. Melodically, solistic role interchange in every next period and portrays a duo piece, not a violin piece with a piano accompaniment far in the background.

My interpretation presents my minor research on piano pedaling. Interpretation is based on the three first editions of Chopin's 1st Piano Concerto in E Minor - the French, German and English one. Pedaling is the most striking element in Chopin's original score, which clearly indicates a different approach to what is common in our day, and to what we find in Chopin's later works. In my interpretation I tried to revive a reminiscent of the Style Brillante pedaling experiments rather than a High Romantic pedaling.

The pedal indications are absent for long periods. When they do appear, this may only be for a few bars, often covering T-D harmonic changes. Pedal is never used as a substitute for legato, but only as a sound effect (second movement, bars 63-66):

Using Chopin's original pedaling as it is written, we get a totally different sound, paradoxically, much richer and producing greater variety than we use now. We can find *legato* passages with pedal (fairly common now), non-*legato* passages *senza pedale*, *legato* passages *senza pedale*, *non legato* passages with pedal.

*Legato senza pedale* sharpens the idea of finger legato that many pianists of Style Brillante Epoch were highly praised for, and that is almost out of use in our day. Many *senza pedale* episodes come from the old tradition of the *parlando* style. This phrase *senza* with the accents *senza pedale* makes the best sense just in the case of *parlando* style interpretation. Chopin combines *con pedale* and *senza pedale* effects masterfully, sometimes even to change colour within the same passage.

The use of original pedaling changes the breath, phrasing and timing, and – style, - like for example in the subsidiary theme in the reprise of the 1<sup>st</sup> movement. Played without any pedal, texture transforms the section into a typical *jeu perlé* episode.

As a conclusion, Chopin's early piano Concerto op.11, usually interpreted in the light of his later style, has now been played as a representation of Style Brillante Epoch piece, a stylistic transformation from the Classical to the Romantic period.

### Reflection on the final performance.

Approach to the stylistical transition period was based on three main dimensions: the analysis of historical treatises, an investigation of period instrument mechanics, and relevant pianistic practice. Every piece in the programme of this lecture-recital represents a minor project within this main topic. The programme as a whole makes an attempt to exemplify this gradual transition, that I have chosen to refer as the 'Style Brillante'.

Being parts of minor research projects during these 3 years, all overnamed works were performed many times in different venues in different countries, with good reviews. As well, a form of a lecture-recital was quite familiar for me. This was a most essential form for my course of lecture-recitals on history of piano technique. I was well prepared.

However, I have never got a chance to perform the whole final concert, painting the technical progress from Classicism to Romanticism as a whole. I would like to make a rehearsal concert in advance, but logistics of completing all 4 instruments and 5 extra players in the same hall was too difficult. One week before the final performance I have got refused to use one of instruments (Bakeman) because of the Academy could not tune a private instrument, even though it was used during the whole last year and was an important part of my project. An alternative was to find urgently a tuner from outside the Academy and to tune it on my own fee.

On the concert day I could dispose the hall only 2 hours in advance the concert. During this time I had to do following: to place the pianos in the hall, to fix chiroprast machine on one of them, to place ten note-stands and 5 chairs for the extra players,

to move a table and a sofa with project results from one part of the hall to another one, to arrange right sound, to arrange the light, to arrange video, to check the sound for the sextet and, preferably, to try the pianos in the hall acoustics before the concert. I have never completed a Artistic Research Programme before, but I have 30 years of professional experience of playing concerts, and this is absolute the first time in my life a pianist was left so unsupported with so many preparations.

The reality has shown that 2 hours is impossible time to sort out all these things. We looked to be late. I had to finish my preparations before I had to start. This is physically impossible to demonstrate a chiroprast without having it fixed. This is physically impossible to play without a decent light. That was why I asked a stage assistant, who arrived before the concert, after all piano moving, that I have to make it ready before they let public in. I even locked the entrance door to get some sort of quiet and concentration. However, the thing that was immediately dome was that the audience was let in, in the middle of preparations, with me running up and down the stage with note-stands and chairs, in casual clothes. This was absolutely the first eperience of such happening for me ever in my life. I found it damaging both for psycho and for concert focus.

Light setting was not completed and I suffered from insufficient light during the concert. Moving 4 pianos from place to place just before the concert does not contribute to the performance on the fortepiano right after that. A stock, holding the lead of McNaulty fortepiano, disappeared after moving. Pedals on Graf piano were not put on after tuning, so I had to put them on myself.

As a consequence, doing all these practical matters at once, I have not got time to try the pianos at all, to try Chopin's Piano Concerto with my ensemble, and should go on stage without any warm-up. Playing on 4 different instruments with different techniques during the same concert demands a luxury of being able to concentrate on musical matters only, not on moving the instruments and ordering the light. As a consequence, I have not had any right feelings in my fingers, and performance of Hummel's Rondo did not have necessary precision. Pulse and troche phrasing was not as clear as it should be, expressivity was not on a sufficient level. Next piece, Kuhlau's Fantasia, missed the variety of touch that diminished the coloristic effects. Starting with Kalkbrenner's Le Fou, I began to focus more on the concert and let the practical issues float out of my head. However, Ricordanza, completing the first part of the concert, sounded differently in the Levin Hall's acoustic, I had to choose the most appropriate touches during the performance, and that coursed some unfortunate tones a couple of times, that felt ridiculously unnecessary: I played this piece in at least three halls of international standard (Carnegie, Wigmore and Casals Halls), and recorded it on CD additionally to this.

All the overnamed pieces suffered from lack of perfect precision and did not have the expected international performance level.

I was more satisfied with my performance of Thalberg's and Chopin's works. I felt, in Thalberg's piece I succeeded with the idea to express the variety of techniques; weight and legato techniques were especially successful. The most predominant ideas, that I expected to express in Chopin's Concerto, came out clear enough, even though *jeu perlé* passages in the third movement had not always the required expression.

Regarding the verbal part of the lecture-performance, I was slightly concerned of a target group to whom I address the lecture. From one side, there was a committee and my highly qualified colleagues, from another side, the concert was open for everybody and people had to pay money for being able to come in. My previous experience with a lecture-recital consisted of arrangements for a homogenous target group: either music clubs with the music amateurs in the audience, academic lectures for the music students and professionals, or conference papers. I found it quite confusing to try to combine these approaches. Addressing a concert to a group of people, who paid money for being entertained, a performer should focus on entertainment, carefully employing information into the speech, and maybe combining it with some curious historical facts. Addressing the lecture to an audience of the highest professional level, the most important is conveying of the information, preferably in form of reading the text (as an academic conference paper). I found the attempt to fuse these elements a bit disturbing and dis-focusing, that might influence the presentation.

As a whole, I regard this concert as extremely unfortunate one, and, desperately *unnecessary* unfortunate. I was well prepared. Everything was ready. Maybe, if I had had some more time in the venue, or had been helped a little more, so all this could go better. However, I can learn my lesson on it: combination of a lecturer-performer, concert producer, stage assistant and a piano mover of 4 pianos, and not getting any opportunity for a rehearsal for such a huge arrangement is not possible to combine at the same time.

In this case my logistic problems have influenced the arrangement.

#### Reflection on the general artistic result.

Documentation of the project can be divided into three main groups: CDs, radio programmes, news-paper reviews, and written material.

I regard the CDs as the most successful part of the artistic documentation. Concert and CDs were the form I could express myself pianistically, and I am quite pleased with the result. My intention was not to criticise the traditional way of playing and to demonstrate the right way, but rather to search for the alternative solutions and open the minds with the variety of choices. The audible result I achieved expressed my ideas as I planned it, and I regard these projects as a success.

Radio programmes was an attempt to disseminate result of my research. I think I managed to convey my ideas and got a chance to exemplify them with some sound examples and pieces as a whole. The fact that NRK radio was so interested to follow up this project and made 3 radio programmes about different aspects of my project in 2 years, let me think that these programmes were successful.

News-paper articles contented encouraging commentaries and some constructive critics, that as a whole made me more confident in my ideas.

The part I am most concerned about is my written materials. The Artistic Programme does not allow a researcher to have a theoretician as a supervisor, this is why in the very start of my project, the goal was to concentrate on the performance display only. I think, absence of a theoretic specialist as one of supervisors, in my occasion, played an unfortunate role. My project was crossing the practical and the theoretical fields. Now, after completing my research, I have got quite a significant amount of written sketches and notes, that are asking for being transformed into the form of article of a conference paper, or even a separate PhD.

## Conclusion.

### How do results of this project help to professional development in the relevant area?

Research on historically informed Romantic Performance is fairly new, a continuing tradition from Baroque and Classical period. I have looked for research on technical transformation during the transition period, and have not find any similar research going on this any places at all. I feel that this research was necessary step in this development.

This project let me create a hill, from top of which it is possible to condense three paths, viewing in different directions: musicology/music history, pedagogy and performance practice. Therefore, the results have been achieved in all those dimensions.

### Pedagogical results.

Pedagogical result of this research has been expressed in a course in Historical Piano Methods, that I have been teaching at Leeds College of Music (2008-2009) as a whole and at the Norwegian Academy of Music in parts, within the course in General Pedagogy (2009-2010). Lectures for this course have consisted of description and analysis of historical method books from 1500-1940. Last year, I have begun to develop this course, including some historical method books for other instruments. However, the main body of this course has been based on the method books investigated during this research. This course on history of piano technique does not have analogies in Scandinavian Music Academies, and can be a good additional contribution to the main curriculum.

These techniques have been disseminated on the master-classes in Leeds (2008, 2009), Murmansk (2009), Tokyo (2009), Egersund Chamber Music Festival (2009).

### Contribution to the artistic field.

Following techniques have been defined and consciously employed in the performance practice: parlando, carezzando, jeu perlé, leu lié, tremolo, finger legato senza pedale. Employment of these techniques has opened wider horizons in use of technical elements, and helped to bring research elements into the pianistic practice, making conscious piano practice even more exciting. that meaning with the research on historical techniques is not to revive them, but to use them creatively for find new alternative interpretation. Reason is not to pretend to find the only right way, but to show variety of possibilities. This applies both to stress, ornamentation, and phrasing. For example, my cadenza was not an attempt to copy improvisation of Style Brillante, but to see how we can use it creatively in our times. Early music demands to reconstruct practices of previous generations. Historically informed Style brillante interpretation investigated how to play music that is 200 years old. Early Romantic

music has been perceived as something that opened up a uniform in post-war interpretation. Then it was much colored by the romantic tradition of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

I hope this project helped to develop a reflection on different ways of interpretation. Interpretation has previously been a kind of tacit knowledge, a knowledge, related to the individual. It has passed down from teacher to student. In this reflection, I was intending to share this knowledge and document the artistic process. Whether it is to be reflective practitioner due to constantly have to take artistic choices, but you usually do not put words on it. Musicians do not have an opportunity to write down everything, but, maybe, this evidence of an artistic process can be a source of information for other pianists, teacher and musicologists.

New ensemble Stilette ([www.stilette.no](http://www.stilette.no)), specializing in Stylistically Informed Early Romantic Performance is established.

This is particularly important, that this project does not a question of choice between a period or a modern instrument, but rather makes an attempt to employ historical approaches into the modern instrument practice. The idea is not to convert disciples into a new religion, but let them use the experiences of period instruments. After the master classes I have got an evidence that student's interest in historical piano method course creates better awareness about the body movements, better finger control, more perceptive phrasing and articulation, and, as a consequence, more varied sound and expression.

#### Contribution to musicological field.

There are following ideas that I have got and did work on creatively:

Idea of transitional periods and particular techniques as its attribute

Employment of a new vocabulary for identification of this period and employed techniques

Romantic phrasing's origin from the Baroque broken chords, and which changes of rhetoric and, as a consequence, style, would it bring

Improvisation as a form of Style Brillante techniques

Fusion of Rondo and Variation form in Paraphrases

A concept of Style Brillante has been employed.

I finished this research with a huge amount of written sketches on these topics.

Transforming these ideas into the written articles and conference papers is a typical musicological work, that is not mentioned with this artistic project, and does not allow time for it neither. However, a solid amount of work, of these 3 years, call for being formed into musicological articles, conference papers, and, possibly, a PhD, sorting out written materials and predominant ideas of these studies.

It is apparent from this research that development of piano technique did influence the music style. Transition from the Classical to the Romantic stylistic period will imply transition from non-legato and over-legato to modern legato, from non-pedal to pedal playing, from finger techniques to weight techniques. Investigation of the Style



Brillante transition helped to clarify stylistic attributes, identifying Classical or Romantic belonging.

As a final conclusion, I would like to say that meaning with the research on historical techniques is not to revive them, but to use them creatively for find new alternative interpretation. Reason is not to pretend to find the only right way, but to show variety of possibilities. This applies both to stress, ornamentation, and phrasing. For example, my cadenza was not an attempt to copy improvisation of Style Brillante, but to see how we can use it creatively in our times. Early music demands to re-construct practices of previous generations. Historically informed Style brillante interpretation investigated how to play music that is 200 years old. Early Romantic music has been perceived as something that opened up a uniform in post-war interpretation. Then it was much colored by the romantic tradition of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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Natalia Strelchenko  
Historically informed interpretation in 1700-1900  
A course of 8 lectures-workshops.

This course is a result of my previous studies on historically Informed Interpretation. The goal of my lectures is to exemplify which effect different historical interpretative and technical traditions have on the musicians' esthetic and style, and what audible results come of different approaches to instrument technique.

The course is constructed by working through and recounting an assortment of collections that illustrate the predominant ideas of different musical epochs. In case if there is no suitable repertory I always have some material that I can perform as an example for the further discussion.

A structure of every workshop includes theoretic part (an introducing lecture), and practical part - presentation of the relevant repertoire performed by students, and following discussion on style, involving all the student audience.

1. Ornamentation. *Baroque playing tradition. Harpsichord. J.J.Quantz' Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen.*
2. Articulation. Transition period. J.C.Bach. *C.P.E.Bach's An Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments.*
3. Classical style. L.Mozart - *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule.* Fortepiano.
4. Transition period. Phrasing. J.N.Hummel's *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instruction on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte* (1828). Virtuoso fever.
5. Reflection on the music score. Memorized and improvised music. Liszt.
6. Romantic Style. Chamber music interpretation and works for the solo instrument and the orchestra. Establishing of a solo recital pattern.
7. French playing tradition. F.Couperin and *L'art de toucher de clavecin* and Ravel - *Tombeau de Couperin.* Stylistic analogies. Neo-classicism.
8. Stylistic development in Norwegian music in 1700-1850.

Course has been previously presented as a whole at Leeds College of Music, Leeds - UK, and the Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo – Norway. Some lectures from this course have been presented at the UCLA (LA - USA), Murmansk College of Music (Murmansk, Russia), and Swedish Royal Academy (Stockholm, Sweden).

Course is recommended both for undergraduate and master students (all instruments). However, the best is to divide them in two separate groups according to the studying degree.

Course languages: English or Norwegian ad libitum.