

the Godowsky Society

THE
FIFTH PIANO RECITAL

BY THE EMINENT ARTIST

RESERVED
SEATS

\$1.00

ON SALE AT PIANO WAREHOUSES
OF GEO. R. FLEMING & CO., 1229
CHESTNUT STREET; BONER'S,
DITSON'S AND PRESSER'S MUS-
IC STORES AND BROAD STREET
CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC.



NEWSLETTER

vol VI

no. 1

LEOPOLD GODOWSKY

MR. LEOPOLD GODOWSKY TEACHES EXCLUSIVELY AT THE BROAD ST. CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC,
1331 S. BROAD ST. AND 716 N. BROAD ST. FOR TERMS APPLY TO
G. R. COMBS, DIRECTOR.

NEW CENTURY DRAWING ROOM

* *

124 South Twelfth Street

WEDNESDAY EVENING,

FEBRUARY 27, 1895

THE GODOWSKY SOCIETY

Patrons:

Gregor Benko

Shura Cherkassky

Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji

Ronald Stevenson

There is the usual mixed bag in this edition of the Godowsky Society Newsletter. I felt rather badly about not having done anything last year for the anniversary of Liszt's death, so I'm happy to be able to make some reparation, and it is being done by way of republishing an article by Bernard van Dieren, who died fifth years ago this year. Van Dieren was one of the composers discussed by our patron, Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji in his marvellous book Mi Contra Fa (The Porcupine Press, London mcmxlvii) which also contained that lovely piece on Godowsky which was included in vol.IV, No.2 of the Godowsky Society Newsletters. The article on van Dieren is by Alastair Chisholm, the author of Bernard van Dieren - an Introduction, published by Thames publishing, London 1984. The complete piano music of van Dieren has been recorded by Eiluned Davies on two British Music Society cassettes BMS 402 and 405, available from Whitetower Records, 44 Challacombe, Furzton, Milton Keynes MK4 1DP.

Also included in this issue is a letter which I received from Dr Andrew Cockburn - devoted Godowskian and pianophile - who wrote me about Paul Howard who founded the first International Godowsky Society and who wrote inimitable about his great love - Godowsky.

There is a review of Ronald Stevenson's radio programme of Godowsky the composer, the script of which appeared in the same Newsletter as Sorabji's piece. The review appeared in The Listener of January 7, 1971 and no prizes are given for determining the author.

The other pieces are important in the insight given to the amount of thought given by Godowsky to his art. They contrast with the rubbish I read recently in the newspaper The Independent: In a review of a concert Britten-Tippett concert given by Paul Crossley, it quotes from an interview with Tippett "inwhich he discoursed amiably on a number of subjects including his relationship with Britten, who always complained that his colleague's piano music was so difficult to play. Of course, that was long before the advent of Tippett's Fourth Sonata, which his interlocuter, Paul Crossley, had just delivered with his customary mastery. "Crossley suggested that Britten might have been unable to write much for the instrument because he was such an excellent pianist himself to which Tippett replied: 'You mean, as I can't play, I can write for the piano.'"

Well, well, well. I suppose if Chopin, Godowsky, Liszt, Beethoven, Mozart etc had not played the piano, they would have written more,

have been Berlioz and Wagner.

The truth is, of course, that the best piano music has been written by virtuoso pianists.

The photocopy of the programme which appears on the cover was sent to me by Gilles Hamelin who in turn obtained it from his son Marc-Andre' who recently won first prize in the 1985 Carnegie Hall International Music Competition.

The notes for this programme are given below and on page 19.

Harry Winstanley
Heathery Ha'
West Linton
Scotland
EH46 7DS

And the make of piano he played appears on page 21!

PROGRAMME

ANALYSIS BY HUGH A. CLARKE, MUS. DOC., OF THE BROAD ST.
CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

SONATA, OP. 81 (E FLAT) BEETHOVEN LES ADIEUX--L'ABSENCE--LE RETOUR

This exquisite example of the highest form of descriptive music requires very little comment, it so perfectly expresses the emotion suggested by its title. The form closely follows the prescribed sonata form with just enough of departure from it to give point and expression, without too frequent repetition to the themes.

CARNIVAL, OP. 9 SCHUMANN

PREAMBULE. PIERROT, ARLEQUIN, VALSE NOBLE, EUSEBIUS, FLORESTAN, COQUETTE, REPLIQUE, PAPILLON, A.S.C.H. S.C.H.A. (LETTRES DANÇANTE) CHIARINA, CHOPIN, ESTRELLA, RECONNAISSANCE, FANTALON ET COLOMBINE, VALSE ALLEMANDE PAGANINI, AVEU, PROMENADE, PAUSE, MARCHE DES DAVIDS--BUENDLER CONTRE LES PHILISTINES.

The kaleidoscopic changes and humors of the Carnival find perfect illustration in this composition. No composer since Beethoven has possessed the power of giving expression to humor with anything like the fulness of Schumann.

These carnival pictures give one the impression of a keensighted onlooker who catches every rapid change in the wild picture--quaint or gay--mirthful or mournful--and gives to each its fitting musical expression.

POLONAISE-FANTASIE (A FLAT) } CHOPIN FOURTH SCHERZO (E MAJOR) }

The name Scherzo (playful) seems hardly appropriate to the serious, earnest style in which Chopin's scherzos are written. This one, like the majority of Chopin's scherzos, is developed from two strongly contrasted themes--the first rapid and capricious, the other quiet and song-like in its development. The two themes are contrasted in every possible way.

In his Polonaises, Chopin has succeeded in embalming the aspirations of his unfortunate country, its military spirit, and intense longing for freedom. They are perhaps the best evidence of his genius, which, taking this simple dance form has raised it to the heroic plane, and infused it with the spirit of daring and gallantry that so strongly characterizes the unfortunate Poles.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY PAGANINI, BOOK 2 BRAHMS

The art of writing real variations is one very little cultivated nowadays. Among the few who can equal the skill of the great masters in this province, Brahms stands pre-eminent. It is interesting to observe how a theme, Italian in its conception, can be assimilated and illustrated by the foremost German composer of the day.

A SOLUTION TO A PROBLEM IN PIANO FINGERING

by

Samuel Randlett
(Assistant Editor of Clavier)



The interval of a minor third, whether melodic or harmonic, is most often played with the finger combinations 1-3, 2-4, and 3-5; 1-2, 2-3, and 4-5 are also used frequently. The 3-4 fingering of a minor third is not often used. Though every pianist regularly utilizes 3-4 in chords and arpeggios of the diminished seventh, chords containing five or six notes, and certain harmonic minor scales (Ex. 1),

Ex. 1.



the possibility of using it for minor thirds outside of these contexts seems generally to be ignored. This neglect is curious, for the practicality of the fingering could hardly be more convincingly proved than by its universal use in scales and diminished sevenths.

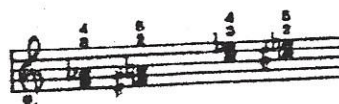
Even though the 3-4 combination received some pedagogical attention in the nineteenth century as one of the ten possible combinations of two fingers on a single hand (Brahms drills it in several of his Fifty-one Exercises), the true usefulness of the fingering appears to have been discovered only in the first years of the twentieth century. Moritz Moszkowski employs 3-4 to attain a perfect legato in the various "Transcendental fingerings" for major scales in thirds (Ex.2) given in the second volume of his School of Scales and Double Notes (published in 1901 and still available from Boosey and Hawkes). Leopold Godowsky, in the preface to his arrangement of the Chopin Etude in Thirds, Opus 25, No.6 (published in 1905), gives several ingenious ways of fingering chromatic thirds. His solution is shown at the top of this page.

Ex. 2.



This remarkable fingering (which was brought to my attention by Arthur W. Byler of Fisk University) produces an unbroken legato through the use

"To enable the executant to play the chromatic thirds smoothly and evenly, the hand must turn outwards and the middle finger must curve sufficiently to avoid touching the black keys in the following places:

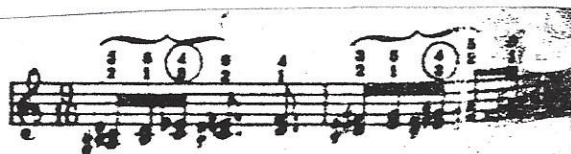


It is evident that Godowsky, who was famous for the speed and evenness of his double notes - he is said to have spent seventeen years in perfecting his performance of the Chopin Etude in Thirds - regarded his fingering (with the variants given) not as a clever alternative to other fingerings of equal merit, but as the best solution of this pianistic problem. He made another use of 3-4 in his fingering for the Chopin-Godowsky Etude No.45:



Since Godowsky's time the idea has not altogether died: Alfred Cortot included the Godowsky fingering in the preface to his edition of the Chopin Etude in Thirds; Emile Blanchet applied 3-4 judiciously to minor thirds in his own works; and Simon Charol in his book, A New Approach to the Study of the Pianoforte, not only advocates its use but carries it to impractical extremes. Nevertheless, 3-4 has not become established in the standard vocabulary of fingering, perhaps because 3-4 on an isolated minor third, of a chord fingered with 1-3-4, can at first feel strange. But as it becomes familiar, the fingering becomes easy. A large hand is unnecessary, though the hand must be positioned carefully, and one or both fingers (depending on which plays a black key) should be extended in a gentle downward slope from the knuckle. Voicing is not a problem; either the third or the fourth finger can be made louder at will.

Perhaps the best way to become accustomed to the use of 3-4 is to practice chromatic minor thirds. Godowsky's fingering is most easily learned in the following rhythmical arrangement, in which the fingerings and the keyboard configurations of the two bracketed groups are identical:



The 3-4 fingering should not be used indiscriminately on all minor thirds of course, nor even on most of them. There are two reasons that may make 3-4 preferable to other fingerings of a specific minor third:

- 1) Economy of motion. It is sometimes possible to avoid shifts of position by using 3-4: if the third and fourth fingers are naturally poised over a third, it may be best to use them to play it. This in turn may eliminate the need for a silent change of fingers on a held-down key when an unpedalled legato (or continuity of movement) is desired. Josef Hofmann must have had in mind unnecessary shifts of arm position when he wrote that "A correct fingering is one which permits the longest natural sequence of fingers to be used without a break".
- 2) Fitting the hand to the keyboard by placing short fingers on long keys and long fingers on short keys. This usually amounts to keeping

the passages taken from Clementi, Dussek, Liszt, Scriabin, Copland, and Ginastera.

Over half a century ago Godowsky and Moszkowski attempted to make a contribution to the art of fingering by liberating the 3-4 combination from its humble place in scales and arpeggios. It is time that pianists accepted their discovery.

Clementi: Sonata, Opus 40, No. 2



Ginastera: Sonata, first movement



Liszt: Sonata



Scriabin: Etude, Opus 6, No. 5



Scriabin: Sonata No. 7



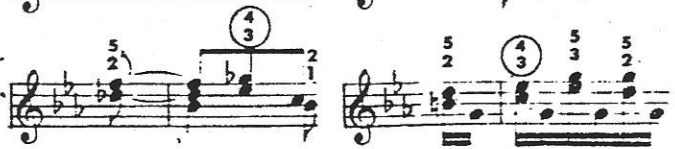
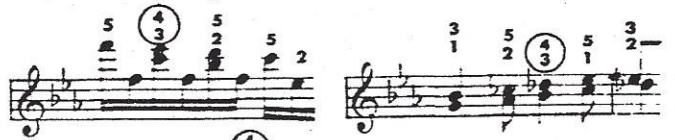
Copland: Sonata, first movement



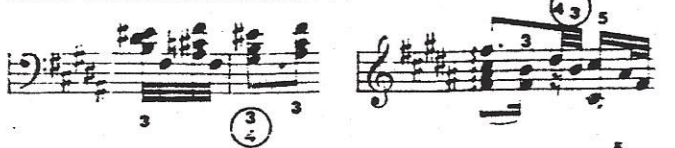
January, 1967

J. L. Dussek: Sonata, Opus 44

First movement, Allegro moderato



Second movement, Molto adagio e sostenuto



Fourth movement, Allegro moderato



(C) Samuel Randlett 1987 (renewed)

This article first appeared in Clavier, January 1967.

The editor apologises for the poor quality of the musical quotations.

Editor's note: This use of 3-4 on the minor third is not exceptional with Godowsky, and is seen as early as 1899 in his transcription of Si Oiseau j'etais.

In the Pachmann edition of the Chopin Etude Op.25 No.6 this fingering appears on the minor third but the fingering is not Godowsky's. (Chopin - with the authentic fingering and phrasing of Vladimir de Pachmann, transcribed and with notes by Marguerite de Pachmann-Labori. Augener Ltd. 1934.)

Dear Harry,

I have been thinking about your request for some material for the Godowsky Newsletter and thought an account of Paul Howard's piano repertoire might be of interest. I think you already have seen some of the marvellously varied recital programmes he gave in and around Adelaide in the twenties and thirties. I knew him during the last ten years of his life, and became thoroughly familiar with the works he then played, and which could be regarded I suppose as the "cream" of his repertoire (and by repertoire, I mean those works which he could play spontaneously, without score, at a moments notice).

He claimed that he played "nearly all" of Godowsky's works, but this was an exaggeration - for which he had a penchant - as I never heard him play a note of the Chopin/Godowsky Studies, the Symphonic Metamorphosen of Johann Strauss (so beloved of the majority of pianists aspiring to essay Godowsky works). He left untouched the Bach Suites and the entire Renaissance series. He did not play the Passacaglia. However, considering that he had memorised and played more of Godowsky's works than anyone else (with the exception of David Saperton) who ever lived: a typical afternoon or evening's (or whole day's if he felt so inclined, which was frequently the case) playing could include either the Sonata in E minor (taking about an hour) or the twenty-four Walzermasken (taking slightly longer).

He also loved playing the whole Suite for the Left Hand Alone - eight movements with repeats which would take about forty-five minutes.

He didn't play Godowsky exclusively of course, and these works of other composers he played made a deeper impression on me even than the Godowsky items in some aspects. This was because of the extraordinary beauty of tone which Paul managed to extract from his Lipp piano. For me, no other pianist has ever matched his rendering of the Rachmaninoff ^Prelude in G flat Op23 No10 and I have never heard a more beautiful performance of the Ravel Pavanne. His playing of Balakirev's "Au Jardin" was a non-pariel. It was a piece he loved to play and he made it sound so wonderful it took one's breath away. Strangely enough, I've never heard this work played by anyone else. He often began a recital by playing Bach's big Prelude in A minor (not one of the "48"). He frequently played the Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue. The only Chopin I ever heard him play was the Impromptu in G flat Op 51. He played one or two Scriabine preludes, the Op 11 no 10 I remember vividly. Sometimes he would stop between items to play the opening bars of Beethoven's Waldstein Sonata. This was done with irony, the repeated notes rather cruelly conveyed the obsessional and the banal in Beethoven's style in contrast with the ample lyricism and polyphony of the music which had gone before. But the point was tellingly made, nevertheless, and it always felt to be to Beethoven's detriment.

To return to Godowsky, Paul played a vast number of the smaller items. From the Java Suite he tended to concentrate on the more chromatic pieces, namely "The Gardens of Buitenzorg", "The Ruined Water Castle at Djokja", "Boro Badur" and, at the time of his death, was working on "The Streets of Old Batavia". In a letter to me written within a few days of his death he joyfully announced that "Streets is sticking a bit now". He played a number of early Godowsky pieces, including the early Concert Studies in C major and E flat, the Melodie Meditative, Twilight Musings and the Barcarolle Valse.

He played, with family and friends, all of the Miniatures and I imagine that for the majority of his visitors these charming pieces would be their first introduction to Godowsky.

The delightful Triakontameron were frequently tossed off and he was particularly fond of the following: Alt Wein, Terpsichorean Vindobona, Whitecaps, Enchanted Glen, An Americal Idyll, A Little Tango Rag, The Salon, and Lullaby.

Of the Transcriptions - or transcendentalisations as he used to call them - those that stand out were his incomparable playing of Saint Saëns "The Swan", in which the melody was muted not accentuated, with remarkable effect. Schubert's Morning Greeting, Hedge Rose, Lullaby, Wohin? and Wandering were frequently played but I don't recall any of the others.

Finally, of course, there were the four Poems - the quintessence of my lyric Muse - as Godowsky wrote to him. Later these lovely works were dedicated to Paul but, sadly and ironically, his name has not as far as I know been been actually linked with them as they have never been reprinted. It is high time this situation was rectified.

Yours,

Andrew

December 27, 1887 - April 24 1937

Bernard van Dieren whose centenary is being celebrated this year is an interesting composer. A true European and a wonderfully gifted man, he was gourmet and gourmand, a bookbinder and carpenter, a trick cyclist and crack shot. Like his friend Busoni he chose to leave his native land though yet he lived mostly in London from 1909 onwards, he remained a citizen of the Netherlands. He drew inspiration from the whole gamut of European culture, and as a song composer was equally at home with French, German or English texts.

His music is unconventional in style and form, and is sometimes demanding technically. A fine violinist, his natural tendency was to write polyphonically, as in his six string quartets. Yet he did contribute important pieces to the literature of the piano - these were written for Frida Kindler, his wife who was a pianist who had studied with Busoni and had been one of that Master's favourite pupils. In style the piano music ranged from the atonal "Six Sketches" of 1910-11 to the much more accessible later music, like the "Tema con Variazione". In a letter of April 1912 to Busoni, van Dieren described an unsatisfactory meeting with Godowsky whom he tried in vain to interest in the "Six Sketches".

A persuasive writer on music, he was one of the first to enthuse over the neglected figures from the nineteenth century - Donizetti, Bellini, Meyerbeer, Alkan and Liszt. His book of essays "Down Among the Dead Men" (OUP 1935) showed the enormous width of his interests and the depth of his perceptions. His influence spread through his friends Cecil Gray and Constant Lambert, both ardent Lisztians and in this connection it is worth remembering that another admirer of van Dieren was Sacheverell Sitwell who later wrote the classic book on Liszt.

Almost his last creative task was the arranging and planning for a series of programmes for the British Broadcasting Corporation in 1936 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Liszt. He was working on this during what proved to be his final illness and must have recalled attending the series of six concerts given in Berlin in the centenary year of 1911, by Busoni, when van Dieren himself was an aspiring young composer. Doubtless inspired by such a happy memory, the 1936 BBC series was a notable success, despite some cancellations due to death of King George V. Later Julian Herbage wrote to van Dieren: "thank you for your extreme kindness and willingness to adapt your plans to meet the many difficulties which seem bound to arise when any large scheme of this kind gets put into practice. I feel that apart from the splendid programmes, listeners have much to thank you for in the matter in which you overcame even what seemed the most insuperable obstacles. In short, I was as much grateful to you for your generous manner of collaboration, as for the excellent matter it produced."

The warmth of appreciation shown in that letter is typical of the response given by people who worked with him closely. To accompany the BBC series, van Dieren produced three articles for "Radio Times" (the official journal of broadcast events - Ed.). Here is the first of them:

(C) Alastair Chisholm, 1987

THE ORIGINALITY OF LISZT

by

Bernard van Dieren

Liszt was one of the most prolific of composers, and his vast output for piano alone permits no more than a roughly representative selection to be spread over four weeks of these concerts. Even then, there remains a number of monumental works for piano whose size does not allow inclusion.

While he was one of the most original musical minds, he was so much a born, instinctive musician that he catches the ear of the untutored as often as he holds the attention of the sophisticated. Yet many years passed before his works received anything like an adequate frequency of performance. Paradoxical as it may seem, it was his misfortune that his unequalled successes as a pianist had made him world-famous before he became known as a composer. Meanwhile he had generously supplied the prestige of his name to the romantic movement in music, which to the world in general signified revolution against the classical idiom and against all accepted faith.

What brought Liszt into this camp was his youthful enthusiasm for innovation and his human sympathy with the conceptions of liberty that seduced most artists born in the period of reaction which followed the somewhat mechanical classicism of the eighteenth century. When his compositions first appeared it was taken for granted that they demonstrated the principles he had advocated, especially as he mostly avoided the forms and manners of classical music. This was misinterpreted as critical arrogance. The fact was that he regarded them as so far perfected by the classical masters that further exploitation, if not simply presumptuous, could only lead to resigned imitation. He dispensed with the clash of contrasted themes in the dramatic exposition of proportions and patterns that culminates in the classical sonata. He returned to the single theme, which in the course of metamorphoses and variations supplies the material for all incidents and the motifs for decorative detail.

In face of opposition Liszt maintained a lofty confidence in his powers and principles. He refrained from public defence of his productions, although in word and deed he was always ready to champion the activities of his contemporaries. One need but refer to his efforts on behalf of Wagner, whom he helped to a popularity that largely eclipsed the claims of his own achievements. Although his work is steadily gaining ground, part of the harm seems irreparable. Liszt used to say that he could afford to wait, but the new idiom which was mostly his creation via Wagner and Strauss, become so familiar that his contribution is not prized as it deserves. Many a Lisztian phrase has attained proverbial standing in Wagner's works, and today the order of priority is forgotten.

In his early years of phenomenal success as a pianist he conceived the natural ambition to create works for his programmes that would show the possibilities his unheard-of-technique suggested. Not that he heaped up difficulties that would baffle other players; he exploited novel effects which opened up a new world of sound. Thus he discovered aesthetic possibilities that had not been dreamt of before.

One of the early works, a series of Etudes, embodies his discoveries. He had to a considerable extent been inspired and stimulated by the astonishing

performances of Paganini, and he acknowledged this influence in the adaptation for piano of five of his Caprices, three of which will be played by Egon Petri.

His own Etudes, written at this period, underwent a complete remodelling and a final revision in the course of some twenty years before they were published as the twelve Etudes d'Execution Transcendante, the whole of which will be heard in the first week. Although their wealth of colour and their spiritual amplitude became greatly widened, it remains astounding that the earliest version containing the musical substance dates from his fifteenth year. But also his treatment of the material shows a no less impressive development and one highly characteristic of all Liszt's work.

This constant remodelling made the use of opus numbers uncertain and deceptive, and after some early efforts, he abandoned them completely. Any chronological order, however convincing-looking, might be replaced by a different but equally defensible one.

The poetic scope of these Etudes ranges from the tenderly sentimental 'Ricordanza', No. 9, with its caressing garlands of purling notes 'like a packet of yellowed love-letters' (Busoni) to the superb rhetoric of 'Eroica', No. 7, and the vividly dramatic 'Mazeppa' and 'Wilde Jagd'. It should be observed how strictly the musical unfolding is retained in these pieces, as well as in the impressionistic pictures like 'Paysage' (Landscape), No. 3, and 'Chasse-Neige', No. 12.

An important place in his work, next to the Etudes, is taken by his transcriptions and paraphrases of operatic melodies. Fastidious critics have dismissed these as unworthy and trivial. But Beethoven wrote numerous variations on operatic airs, and those of Liszt are only more coherent and more brilliant. We shall hear two charming samples in the first week, the 'Valse de Concert' modelled on motives from two Donizetti operas ('Lucia di Lammermoor' and the little-known 'Parisina') and the enchanting paraphrase based on the Waltz from Gounod's 'Faust'.

While Liszt remained occupied with the same conceptions and developed works to greater perfection, he poured out a constant stream of fresh works revealing the ripening of his style. The new versions of old works necessarily retained many of the complexities and intricacies of the earlier versions. The original compositions show a steadily progressing simplicity. A good example from his middle period, when he was living as conductor in Weimar, is found in the 'Consolations', which Frank Mannheimer will play in the second week. They are intimate melodic pieces of quiet charm. The title alludes to a collection of poetry by Sainte-Beuve, and emphasises their character. They should be played as one reads lyrical poetry to oneself. The 'Cantique d'Amour' (Song of Love) in the same week belongs to a similar set, the 'Harmonies Poetiques et Religieuses'.

These programmes must show something of Liszt's versatility and unflagging enthusiasm. His love for other composers' works is shown in his numerous paraphrases. He transcribed a large number of Schubert's songs at a time when they had not become familiar, and he could help to secure their popularity. The matchless application of tone-colour ensures a lasting interest in them, and if our programmes bring in only two, it is simply for lack of time.

A typical feature of the romantic period in music is the frequent appearance

of Ballades and Legendes. Here too Liszt is as original as he is convincing. His two Ballades must stimulate everyone's imagination with their wonderful mixture of dreaminess and excitement. The two 'Legendes' deal with episodes from the lives of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Francis of Paul (St. Francis being Liszt's patron saint). The first refers to Chapter XVI of the 'Little Flowers' (the preaching to the birds), the second pictures St. Francis of Paul walking on the waves.

Liszt's remarkable descriptive powers are well exemplified in a series of highly dramatic pieces known as the Mephisto Waltzes, of which the second week's programme includes two. His 'Tanz in der Dorfschenke' (Dance in the Village Inn) refers to a poem of Lenau that shows Faust and Mephistopheles in the company of an unbridled throng which rushes in sensuous conflagration through a tempestuous whirl of dance.

In striking contrast to this is the elegiac 'La lugubre Gondola', a work from the very last years. It has special interest, having been written in Venice shortly before the death of Wagner, whose funeral procession in gondolas has been described by d'Annunzio. It seems like a premonition. Its extreme simplicity is noteworthy even when it is realised that it was originally conceived for violincello.

No selection would be complete without one of the twenty Hungarian rhapsodies. This side of Liszt's personality shows the half-gipsy troubadour improvising on national motives with an unparalleled abandon and resourcefulness. No one who has heard the 'genuine Hungarian' can fail to see how it has been raised here to a high artistic level without losing any of its exhilarating qualities.

(C) 1987 the estate of Bernard van Dieren.

Piano Playing - Second Series

by

Harriette Brower

Published by
Frederick Stokes Co.
New York 1917The Laws Governing Technic and Interpretation

Years ago, when Leopold Godowsky was a resident of America - or was it when he was making his first tour here? I remember vividly on one occasion studying his pianistic work from a position of vantage almost directly over the piano, when he played with the orchestra under Theodore Thomas. I noted many things about his playing then, besides the ease, fluency and dynamic effects, which belong, of course, to every pianist's equipment. One of the principal points which struck me was the absolute precision with which everything was accomplished. Chords especially were prepared through the fingers taking form - in the air - of the arrangement of keys and intervals, and then descending on the group, or gripping them, as the case demanded. That is to say, the fingers and hand were prepared and made ready for the chord before it was played, so that each tone had its place and value in the chord group. Single tones were also prepared and fingers made ready to take a key before the arm descended; arms and hands were slanted for scales and arpeggios; all was clean-cut, exact and well articulated.

Technical Difficulties Unknown

Since those days the pianist has, through constant study and effort of thought, risen to a more exalted height. Technical mastery and perfection, such as few possess, have been won. Technical difficulties do not exist for him. All gradations of tone, from powerful Crescendi to fine-spun pianissimi of gossamer delicacy, are alike delivered without trace of effort. There can be no question about the consummate perfection which molds and permeates everything he touches.

"The deep things of our art," says the master, "are little understood by general students of the piano. The great artist is an autocrat, a monarch; his work can only make appeal to the few; they alone can understand. That this should be so lies in the character of the instrument and its music. The piano is a marvel, perhaps the greatest instrument we have. it is so intimate yet so impersonal. The singer must be supplemented by an accompanist, and can only sing one note at a time. The violinist can at best play but two notes at a time and he also must be assisted. The pianist, on the other hand, comes unaided before his audience; he alone must speak, for he has the field to himself. He must make clear his meaning on a more or less responsive medium of wood and metal; he must revify the signs and symbols which are to paint the mood or picture. He must translate thought and feeling into tones; he must express what is subtle and deep, yet not too intangible to put into words. Where language ends music begins.

"Among those who play the piano, we have almost every variety of exposition. There are some whose deep learning leads them to be philosophers; others feel called to be preachers of their art. Then we have the refined poets, the dramatic players, the causeurs, the entertainers, or those who have such high animal spirits that they exemplify a wild pony galloping over

has developed into a more exact science since their day.

Art of Phrasing

"Among the things I have mentioned as belonging to the art of technic, we will speak first of phrasing. The question of phrasing is of exceeding importance, for phrasing itself is a great art. At the present time we know so much more about these things than was known even fifty years ago. Formerly composers put few marks on their music; there was little or no punctuation. Look at Rubinstein's compositions, for instance. It may be said that von Bülow was the first to formulate the laws of phrasing. Christiani's book on this subject is an interesting study, also one by Mathias Lussy. Perhaps the best book on music itself and its performance, at least the best I have ever seen, is by Adolph Kullak, a brother of Theodore Kullak. This is a learned and exhaustive work. The earlier edition has been translated into English; the revised edition is still, I believe, in the original German.

"In the matter of phrasing, Beethoven was considered very particular, Chopin also, but neither knew as much about the subject as we do now. Von Bülow did a great work in editing and phrasing Beethoven. Yet Klindworth, who also edited the master, is perhaps subtler in his readings. You remember that von Bülow himself gave preference to Klindworth's over his own edition, by advising students to use that of his friend. Of Klindworth's work for Chopin I cannot speak so highly. He has changed so many things from the original that it is not always clear just what the composer really meant. What Klindworth should have done in many cases was to put changes in the footnotes and leave the music of the original as it was written.

Art of Fingering

Another branch of piano technic is fingering, also a fine art. Before Bach's time, as we all know, the thumb was not used at all. When he advised its use, it was not to be employed on the black keys. Fingering, like everything else in piano playing, has been an evolution. Even the fingering of the C scale, which seems so natural, was not known until Dussek thought of it. Chopin made great use of thumb on black keys. Von Bülow believed in much changing of fingers in order to make use of all. So did Klindworth. They evidently desired to make things difficult instead of easy. It can readily be seen that the use of thumb on black keys must throw the hand out of position, tend to make the movement jerky, and force the hand nearer the name-board, where leverage is heavier. I believe in avoiding use of thumb on black keys when possible, in order to keep the hand in a more natural position; this idea seems to me easier and more logical.

Subjective and Objective

"We hear much talk of subjective and objective in musical interpretation. These terms are apt to be misleading. Pianists look at the subject from different viewpoints, according to their temperaments and aims. The impulsive nature takes the composition as it first appears to him, without further analysis, and strives to preserve that conception. He trusts to the present moment to furnish inspiration. Under extremely favourable circumstances he may be able to give a really inspired performance. Without these conditions his utterances may lack all glow and power. Rubinstein was an illustration of this style.

"On the other hand, the careful analytical player, who does not trust to first impressions, who studies every point and determines beforehand exactly how he will render the composition, may lack true inspiration and leave us cold. Von Bülow might be cited as a player of this type. The ideal interpreter is one who, keeping before him the first ideal, has thought out every effect and nuance he wishes to make, yet leaves himself mentally untrammelled, to be moved by the inspiration which may come to him during performance.

Tone Color and Agogics

"These subjects are vitally important in piano playing. What dynamics are to tone, agogics are to time and rhythm; this is the new term for the old one of tempo rubato. Rubato means "robbed" which is again misleading, for it says nothing about giving. If we take away, we must return, to even things up; the new term expresses this better than the old.

"In order to have every note, every phrase clear, we must not run them all together, as the Germans sometimes make a long combined word extend across the page. If you open an English book you see each word separated from its neighbour by a slight space. Just so we learn to make the musical thought or phrase clear by the way we make it stand in relation to other phrases; the right distance between them; it is the flexibility of rhythm, one might say, where everything is in artistic relation and balance.

Legato Melody Playing

"Do you consider a legato melody is just as successfully connected with the pedal as with the fingers?" he was asked.

"By no means," was the quick reply; "Though it can be used for special effects. The relaxed weight of hand on the key, the transference of weight from finger to finger, the condition of the hand in connecting a legato melody is very different from that of the hand lifted between each note; the tone has a different quality also. If a passage is marked legato, I insist on its being played with that touch. If chords are written in quarter, half or whole notes, I want them held in full time. One thing is unendurable - to hear the left hand before the right, constantly appoggiating. For real appoggiated chords, if the wavy line only extends the length of each chord, both hands are played simultaneously. If one long wavy line connects the two chords, the left hand plays first, followed by the right.

The "Progressive Series"

"The Progressive Series of Piano Lessons, with which I have been occupied for a number of years, in conjunction with a number of well-known artists, provides an eight-year course for teachers. Besides this there are, in conclusion, a résumé of the entire subject, the pith of the whole matter. Although the courses are nominally finished, I have about six years more work on compositions to be used with them."

On a subsequent occasion, Mr. Godowsky was seen just before leaving for a Pacific Coast tour. We were soon in animated discussion, which lasted for an hour and would have extended much longer had not time pressed. Mr. Godowsky is a thorough master of English and expressed himself with fluency and exactness.

As we had discussed the technical problems of piano playing during a

among the artists now before the public.

Variety of Treatment and Aim

"We need to consider what a man is aiming at before we judge him. A causseur cannot measure up to the standard of the philosopher, yet he may be most excellent in his line. It is seen that comparisons are not possible. It is futile to ask, "Who is the greatest?" as is so often done. The public does not understand these distinctions; therefore, as I have said, the truly great artist speaks to the few who can understand. This condition will doubtless exist for hundreds of years to come. And when, eventually, the masses do understand, the artist must also advance, so as to be always to the fore, always above the rest, to uplift others, for his calling is a very high one.

Piano Methods

"As to so-called piano methods I feel it necessary to look deeper than method in order to find the underlying principles. Perhaps the most important principle of all - one that I have been elucidating for many years - is relaxation. This is not the same as devitalization, which, if used indiscriminately and to excess, is very detrimental. Relaxed weight on the key differs from the old pressure touch, which tended to stiffen muscles and make the touch rigid. The finger rests with easy arm weight on the key. If more power is desired use more weight, if less hold back some of the weight.

Finger Action

"You ask if I approve of finger action, and finger lifting? We must have that; we cannot through it away. Wide, free movements are necessary to develop the fingers, to stretch the skin and flesh between them, to render the hand and its playing members supple and flexible. So we must be able to raise the fingers and move them freely."

"You refer to the early stages of piano study?"

"Not only during the early stages, but at any time. I consider these large, free movements and decided action of fingers as a necessary kind of gymnastics. Just as one exercises the body with all sorts of gymnastics, so we need well-articulated finger movements. I make a distinction, however, between the mechanics of piano study and the art of piano technic. To the former belong all forms of hand culture, finger training and gymnastic exercises. To the latter all the finer qualities of touch, tone, fingering, phrasing, pedaling, agogics and nuance. Each one of these technical divisions is an art in itself.

"When these are thoughtfully considered, as being necessary for the equipment of the player, it is easily seen why there are so few really great artists among the many who come before the public as pianists. For it is a comparatively easy thing to learn how keys are manipulated, to attain speed, be able to make a crescendo here, a diminuendo there, to accent, to copy more or less perfectly the notes and marks in a composition. Almost any one can do these things with sufficient study. But these things do not make an artist - far from it. An artist worthy the name is only evolved after minute and exhaustive study added to musical gifts of high order.

"There have been musicians, like Liszt and Rubinstein, who were so gifted that the lack of exact knowledge did not prevent them from winning the world. Rubinstein was a child of impulse as well as of genius; he never did things twice the same way; he relied on the inspiration of the moment, and one might say the same of Liszt. The art of piano playing

previous conference, I requested the pianist to go further and give his ideas on interpretation.

"One of the means, or perhaps it should be said the backbone, of interpretation is technic. I place technic on a higher plane than mechanism. Others combine the two; I differentiate between them. Technic is the means of expression, the medium through which we give out the music. I believe that each pianist presents a certain mental type, which is revealed through his performance; one is a poet, another a philosopher, a third an orator or even a stump orator, and so on. For some it is possible to express what they feel; others are more reticent, and not given to showing emotion; they rather repress it and seem to stand aloof. Some are ready to reveal everything; they are the ones who are popular with the public. We do say of these players that they 'descend to the public,' for they merely work out their natural temperament; they are one with the public, therefore they never fail to please. Those who have the highest ideals move a realm apart; they never become popular in the above sense. Men who have made the greatest scientific discoveries are generally unknown to the world.

Factors of Interpretation

"The two great factors in interpretation are Logic and Proportion. If you examine a Greek statue you find it perfect in classic form and line. Its proportions are faultless.

Among the composers the most perfect examples of proportion and Beethoven and Brahms. They are the Greeks of musical art.

"These two qualities - logic and proportion - must dominate the thought of the interpreter also - he must express them in his work. In just the degree that he lacks them will his performance fall short of beauty and expressiveness.

"Some players might be called pianists of the piano. The instrument itself is paramount with them rather than the music. The piano itself stands first with them. They will make all possible effects that are legitimate within the scope of the instrument, but never strive to make it something it is not. De Pachmann, Grünfeld and Sauer are of this type. Busoni, on the other hand, does not entertain this view. He is so great, such a deep, profound thinker, such a philosopher; he is in a class by himself. For him the piano represents the organ. See his transcriptions of the Bach organ compositions. He interprets them in this style, with much pedal and great tonal sonority. As organ tones in a cathedral resound and reverberate, owing to the vast spaces, so are the effects Busoni makes on the piano - of continuous tone-vibrations."

"The piano is a wonder; there is so much to think of and study about it and its marvellous literature. I have found pianists generally are much deeper thinkers than singers, for example," I remarked.

"Singers do not analyze their work as pianists do. If one has a beautiful voice, the mere quality of tone will enthrall the listener, outside of the song to be interpreted. If the singer merely vocalize a scale, it is still beautiful and appealing. But the pianist must do so many things besides merely playing the notes before he can make an appeal. He must consider tone quality, dynamics, pedaling, power and the whole concept of the piece.

"You speak of the word pianism. The word as used now includes, I take it, the entire subject of touch, technic, tone and performance. How odd that a word affects society like a new disease! All hasten to

acquire it. The word pianism is the only one that can be applied to an instrument outside of the human voice. You can say vocalism, but not violinism.

The Pianist a Conductor

The pianist is virtually a conductor, and his ten fingers are the instruments over which he holds sway. They are to do his bidding. He has a whole orchestra under his hands. The orchestral conductor merely directs his men; the pianist must both direct his whole orchestra and play all his various instruments, the fingers. His task is a more strenuous one than that of any other soloist.

"Then the literature of the piano. When you think of it, no other instrument has the literature of the piano. Has there ever been a composer like Chopin for any instrument? The greatest composers for violin were Vieuxtemps and Wieniawski; but their work can not compare in value to what Chopin has done for the piano. He wrote solely for that one medium; he is the poet of the piano. Look at Beethoven; he did more for the piano than for any other instrument. He composed nine symphonies for orchestra and thirty-two sonatas for piano. A sonata, as you know, is a symphony for one instrument. His last five sonatas are greater than anything he ever wrote for orchestra. The Opus 57, Appassionata, is a superb symphony. His last symphonies, outside of the Ninth, the greatest, are not equal to the last five piano sonatas in value. Berlioz wrote principally for orchestra; he may be called the first romanticist for that medium. I call him the apostle of ugliness. His works for orchestra cannot compare in value to what either Beethoven or Chopin has given to the literature of the piano.

Principles of Interpretation

"To come down to more explicit terms in regard to ideas of interpretation, I feel that, after a certain period of study, the pianist should trust more to his intuitions in the interpretation of a composition. Intuition first, backed by a logical reasoning. Some put it the other way round; they put reason first, and as a result their performance is dry and soulless. For instance, I play a passage and make it sound pleasant, expressive; it pleases my ear. I then analyze the effects I have made and see if they are logical and correct. For I must prove each point according to laws of interpretation.

"There are laws of interpretation. One of them is never to lay stress on a concord, but rather on a dissonance. The stronger the dissonance the heavier the stress put upon it. That is a fundamental law. Another principle is, not to fill rest places with sound. How many players sin in this way; either by not observing rests or by filling up the place of silence by tones prolonged by pedal. Silence plays a very important rôle in music. Silence should not be interfered with, filled up, or obstructed. Many times it is necessary to hold pedal, if one has to jump from the bottom to the top of the keyboard. But one must know whether the bridge over the skip with pedal or to let there be silence between the two.

Traditions

"We speak of traditions of interpretation. This should not mean dry, academic formulas - it should not mean the traditions of the schools and conservatories. They conserve the old ideas, for that is the meaning of the word. Real tradition in piano playing originates with great artists who have discovered and evolved certain effects through intuition.

When these intuitions stand the test, and measure up to the highest standards of art, they become traditions.

The subject of interpretation is a very broad as well as a deeply interesting one. It is one upon which I have bestowed a great deal of thought and made many discoveries. I repeat, I feel we should trust more to our intuitions than we do. It is claimed by one learned man that, if the world had followed this course, we should now be on a higher plane of civilization than we are; present events seem to bear out his theory."

FAIRY TALE, (A MINOR)
MOTO PERPETUO, (F MAJOR) } GODOWSKY
POLONAISE, (C MAJOR)

The FAIRY TALE is, as its title suggests, an imaginative piece and is strongly oriental in color, and fanciful.

The MOTO PERPETUO is the only piece of that character written in 3/4. The right hand has eighths throughout, the unvarying rhythm of which seems forcibly to illustrate the idea of perpetual motion. Unlike other compositions bearing the same name, it ends abruptly, a more logical ending than a gradual diminution of motion would be.

The POLONAISE is full of the pride, nobility and eclat characteristic of the Polish nation.

CONCERT PARAPHRASE ON STRAUSS' VALSE. SCHUETT
"GESCHICHTEN AUS DEM WIENER WALD"
("STORIES FROM THE VIENNA WOODS")

In their way Strauss' waltzes are as near perfection as anything can be, both as to construction and expression, and when paraphrased for the piano by a master hand, possess a brilliancy and seductiveness almost equal to that they have when played by an orchestra.

"ISLAMEY," ORIENTAL FANTASIA. BALAKIRIEFF

Islamey is a fantasia on a Turkish theme. It is a composition of very peculiar character and one of the most difficult pieces in the literature of the piano.

TARANTELE, "VENEZIA E NAPOLI". LISZT

The Tarantelle is a favorite form with modern piano writers. Its verve and rapid passionate rhythm, give it a rare fascination, and furnish ample opportunity for the display of dexterity and endurance. It goes without saying that a tarantelle by Liszt must possess these qualities in pre-eminence, and prove an undertaking worthy the powers of the most accomplished pianist.

THE SIXTH AND LAST RECITAL WILL BE GIVEN AT THE DRAWING ROOM,
WEDNESDAY EVENING, MARCH 20

The Gildemeester & Kroeger Pianos used at all of
Mr. Godowsky's Recitals.

Mr. Godowsky will accept a limited number of advanced piano pupils at the Broad Street Conservatory of Music, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays of each week. The remainder of his time is entirely devoted to concert work, and it is a great concession for him to accept even a limited number of students. Great master that he is, his methods and knowledge will be eagerly sought by students who may wish to acquire absolute perfection in piano playing. Immediate application for hours should be made to

GILBERT R. COMBS, Director
BROAD STREET CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

1331 South Broad Street
716 North Broad Street

The Listener, in its wisdom, frequently reviews some of the better programmes put out by the B.B.C., and in the case of Stevenson's programme on Godowsky, this is what happened. Read on:

"Mark Twain suggested that Shakespeare wasn't written by Shakespeare, but by someone else of the same name. You might bear this in mind in reading this review: the author shares the name of the pianist who commemorated the Godowsky centenary on Radio 3 last week. Stevenson introduced the programme and played five Godowsky pieces. If a Godowsky title cropped up in one of your Christmas music quizzes, it would be just the thing to stump the would-be encyclopedist. I suppose the usual response would be something like this: "Godowsky - oh yes, he was one of the great Romantic pianists; but a composer? Oh well, probably a lollipop merchant, a writer of encores."

These assumptions couldn't be more wrong. Godowsky, Romantic or no, lived to the eve of World War Two. He was a relative (by marriage) of George Gershwin and used to drop in on his friend Charlie Chaplin on location in Hollywood. Godowsky was born in Wilna, Russian Poland, in 1870; was largely self-taught, apart from advice from Saint-Saëns; stormed Berlin in 1900; emigrated to the US; suffered a stroke in the Thirties which terminated his concert career; gave master classes in Russia; died in New York in 1938.

'Hari Besaar' (The Great Day), from the Java Suite, opened the programme. Composed in 1924, it is a translation into pianistic terms of the sonority of the Gamelan ensemble, playing at the kermess or country fair. The second piece, 'Whirling Dervishes', for all its allegro feroce, isn't vintage Godowsky. But the next piece certainly was. It was Study No 18a for left hand alone, one of the 53 Studies after the Chopin Etudes. With these works Godowsky extended piano music's range of polyphonic, polyrhythmic and polydynamic possibilities. Their technical demands challenge any pianist alive. Their poetry puts them beyond the reach of whizz-kids; far beyond many pianists capable of negotiating the merely digital problems. I doubt whether any pianist today could perform them in toto. Godowsky could. That fact alone stakes his supremacy in the pianistic galaxy. The study we heard contains an accompanied canon: a tune followed by its own shadow, so to speak, and set against an ornate background. It also employs unusual rhythms in irregular groupings, such as four notes followed by five then three. And this was years before Bartok employed such rhythms. Whereas Bartok got the idea from Balkan folk dances, Godowsky's rhythms were suggested by finger groupings in relation to the keyboard.

The Study was followed by Godowsky's free transcription of Schubert's 'Cradle Song'. His declared aim here was 'merely to transplant the song from voice to piano; to comment and interpret it, in the manner of free variations'. Godowsky hoped that to listeners who are open-minded, his Schubert transcriptions would proclaim his veneration for the composer and his immortal songs. Let's look a little more closely at his 'Cradle Song' transcription. The original is so well-known as to be taken for granted. Ethnomusicology indicates that most tunes of such folk-like simplicity actually have their source in folk-song. When Schubert wrote his 'Cradle Song' he was half-remembering some immemorial phrases. In a sense, he was transcribing phrases which were even simpler than his tune. And, of course, he clothed his tune in the harmony of his period and personal choice - a thing no folk-singer of long ago would do, for folk-song in the pre-electric-guitar era was unaccompanied. Godowsky preserved Schubert's tune with fidelity and, just as Schubert added his own harmonies to an essentially folk-like tune, so Godowsky adds his harmonies - of pastel-like subtlety.

He also treats the tune in canon, a very insouciant canon: paradoxically, it is artless, guileless, though full of art. The echo-device of canon was as natural to Godowsky as echo is to the hills.

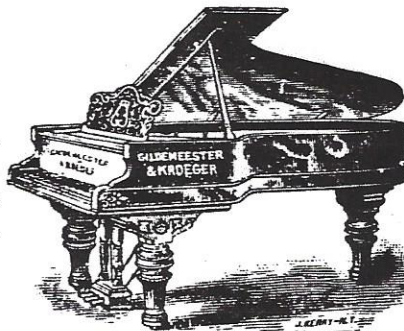
Schubert was also the inspirer of Godowsky's last major work for piano, his Passacaglia based on the first eight bars of the 'Unfinished' symphony. This was composed in 1927, on the eve of the centenary of Schubert's death. It culminates in a monumental fugue, which Godowsky authorised for performance separately. The commemorative programme ended with this fugue.

TWO INVALUABLE EXPERIENCES
UNITED

The
Gildemeester & Kroeger

MR. GILDEMEESTER.

For many years managing partner of Messrs. Chickering & Sons.



MR. KROEGER

For twenty years Superintendent of the factories of Messrs. Steinway & Sons.

Grands

Pianos

Uprights

ACCEPTED BY MUSICIANS AS THE
PEERLESS INSTRUMENTS OF THE CENTURY

A critical comparison between these pianos and those of the oldest and best known manufacturers is desired and invited.

An assortment of these beautiful pianos are on exhibition and for sale at the warerooms of

GEO. R. FLEMING & CO.

1229 and 1231 Chestnut Street