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Performing an artistic image for canonical and contemporary solo piano music

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PERFORMING an ARTISTIC IMAGE

for CANONICAL and CONTEMPORARY SOLO PIANO MUSIC

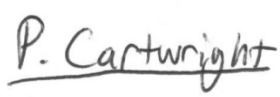
PETER MARK CARTWRIGHT

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Wits School of Arts, Faculty of Humanities,
University of the Witwatersrand

Johannesburg, March 2020

Declaration

I declare that this research thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.



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Peter Mark Cartwright

16 March 2020

Abstract

This thesis explores the concept of the artistic image in Western art music for solo piano through the preparation of both canonical and contemporary repertoire for concert performance. The research is located within the field of artistic research and specifically (following Henk Borgdorff) research in the arts, which assumes no separation between the researcher and the practice of art. Drawing on techniques from two traditions of writing on musical performance, namely the pianist-pedagogical and artistic research literature, the thesis presents two major narratives detailing the creation and practical realisation of an artistic image from the first encounter with a score through to the first and subsequent performances. Chapter one describes this process for the preparation of Schubert's Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, while chapter two does the same for the contemporary South African composer Alexander Johnson's *Three Incantations*. Additionally, in chapter two, findings are presented from participants who performed in a concert of South African music for solo piano which I organised as part of this research. The participants were provided with a list of artistic image techniques and practical methods to realise these prior to the concert and were interviewed about their experiences and engagements with these. This research finds that while the combined narrative account is one of the most effective techniques for developing an artistic image and relating this image immediately to its practical realisation, additional practical concerns need to be considered which are discussed in the concluding section.

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Peter Mark Cartwright

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Introduction

A South African Story: Preparing Hofmeyr's '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy

The first recital for my doctorate was a duo concert with flautist Khanyi Mthetwa. For that concert, which took place on 2 October 2018 at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), in Johannesburg, I performed the work of a contemporary South African composer: Hendrik Hofmeyr's '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy for Flute and Piano (2010).[1] The '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy is based on "an abridged version of Eugene Marais's poetic account of the tragic history of Mabalêl, daughter of King Rasithlare" (Hofmeyr 2010). The following brief discussion of preparing the piano part of the '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy is thus drawn from my personal experience.

I first familiarised myself with the general structure of the work and identified features that stood out. Immediately noticeable is Hofmeyr's characteristic use of canon, written about at length by James May in 'The Marriage of Instinct and Ingenuity: Canonic Writing in the Music of Hendrik Hofmeyr' (2017); a technique that enjoyed a revival in twentieth-century composition. This is a form of expression which for Hofmeyr represents "the marriage of instinct and ingenuity, of emotion and intellect" (17). The form of canon used in the '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy represents "Hofmeyr's more straightforward canonic writing, where the canonic processes are clearly audible" (17, see fig. 1). The complete canonic section can be heard from 3:45-4:06 on the recording.

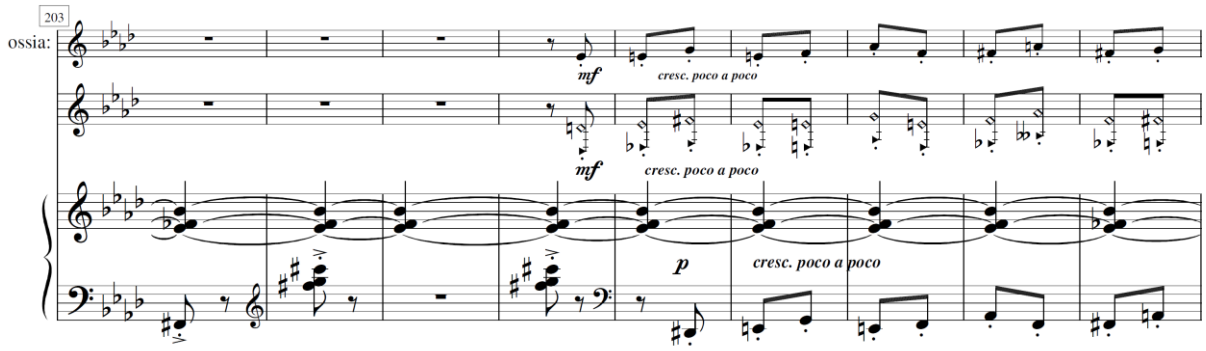


Figure 1: *'Mabalêl'* Fantasy for Flute and Piano, bars 203-211.

After this process I divided the music into sections based on the poem, changes in pianistic texture, tempo and key changes, and the entry of the flute. I made the necessary arrangements between the

[1] Hofmeyr's work has won prizes that attest to his "audacious and inexorable search for new musical horizons" (Franke 2012: 88). The '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy was commissioned by flautist Owen Brits-Van Ryneveld and has been praised by critic Paul Boekkooi as "dramatically descriptive". It "absolutely captivated the listener's imagination. A masterpiece" (Boekkooi 2014). Our live recording from this concert is posted on YouTube (Mthetwa and Cartwright 2018).

hands, and started to develop suitable fingerings and hand groupings, or 'handings' as Schnabel refers to them: "he often spoke of 'handings' rather than fingerings because he thought primarily in terms of hand positions" (Wolff 1979: 178); a concept that epitomises the more recent theorisation of embodied, instrument-specific knowledge (which I return to later in the thesis). I looked up the meanings of the Italian terms in the score as the composer spent time in Italy and uses many unusual descriptive terms. I also noted some odd phrase lengths such as five bars followed by three bars (see fig. 2, for example).

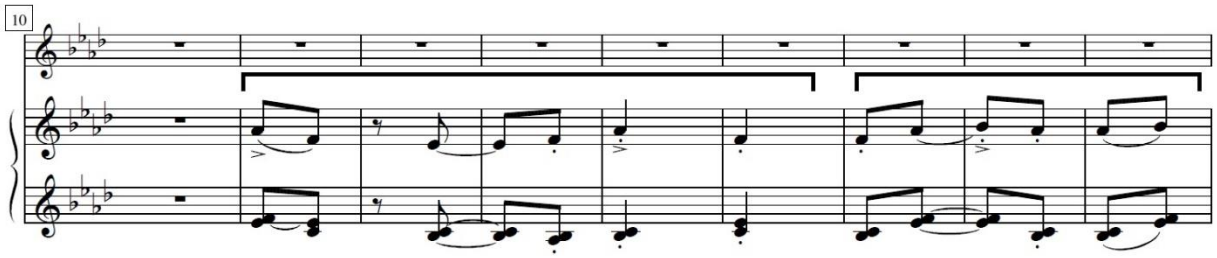


Figure 2: *'Mabalêl'* Fantasy for Flute and Piano, bars 10-18.

I tried to intuitively find the right sound for each section of the music in terms of balance and shading; as the piano textures are varied throughout and require detailed work to highlight the composer's instructions. I also added to the score my own instructions on how to play, such as reminding myself that the opening should be charming, or to take the upbeat tempo from the flute as in bars 236 and 237 and divide the following triplets accordingly (4:44, see fig. 3).

Extensive technical work was required in addition to the usual practice of increasing metronome speeds up to the performance tempo. I practiced at the upper limits of the indicated tempo markings to ensure that I was comfortable with the material. Additional technical work included playing passages that spanned the length of the keyboard in chordal reductions to try and find the best position of the hand as the angle of the arm changed relative to the keyboard. Physical hand divisions and musical groupings do not always match, and these places required practice from both the technical and musical perspectives to find a middle ground that solved both problems. This approach is similar to one outlined by Russian pedagogue Heinrich Neuhaus, where a musical or technical problem is reduced to its constituent parts and worked out separately (1973: 108; see also Blum 1998: 17). For example, in bars 237 to 241 the technical groups are in twos (right to left), while the musical rhythm is in triplets (see fig. 3). This required practicing in two ways, first emphasising the technical grouping of right-left, and then focusing on the musical grouping by emphasising the first note of each triplet. After working in both ways I tried to play the passage focusing only on the musical content – knowing that the technical work underpinning this had been thoroughly taken

care of gave me the freedom to create a lugubrious, murmuring accompaniment under the high flute melody.

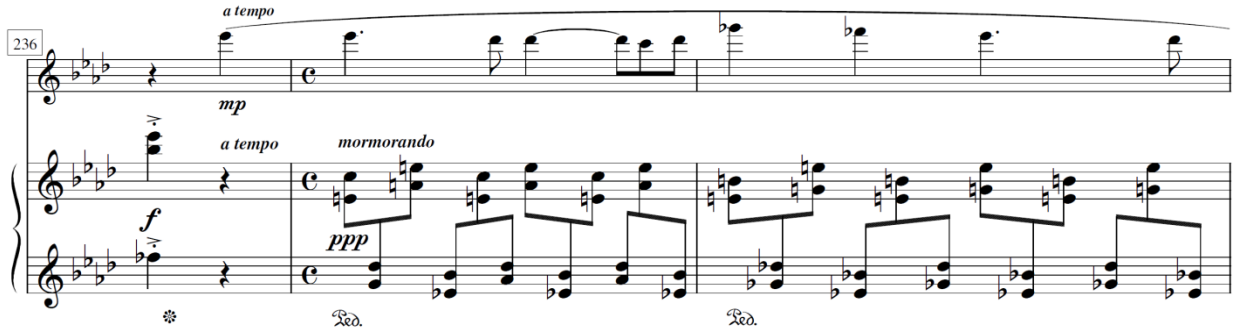


Figure 3: *'Mabalêl'* Fantasy for Flute and Piano, bars 236-238.

At the same time as I was trying to find the right sound for single chords, I was aware that this can interfere with the longer phrasing and shaping of the musical line, and again had to practice in two different ways to come to a solution. In one play through of a particular section I would focus on the individual sound quality of each chord, and in the next would try to focus on sustaining the musical line. This way of working was useful where the piano carries the melody, but the sound can't overpower the flute accompaniment, especially as it dips into the low register of the instrument.

I was also trying to arrive at suitable pedaling solutions based on the harmonic structure, which, in addition to containing several minor seconds, sometimes changed in the middle of a bar and in unusual places in figured passages as the section from bars 168 to 183 (see fig. 4).

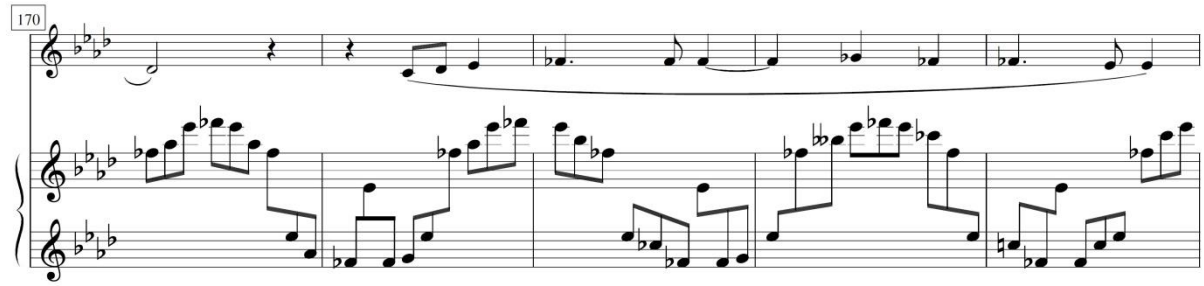


Figure 4: *'Mabalêl'* Fantasy for Flute and Piano, bars 170-174.

Another section, which seemed straightforward when I rehearsed alone, was also in canonical imitation with the flute, and further, I had to try and find on the piano the same sound as the flute's 'slap-tonguing'. This was best achieved by flicking the key forwards with the finger, using a low wrist, and avoiding the key's complete descent to the key bed. My preselected fingering had made ample use of the thumb, which is not ideal for this style of playing, and so I had to undo all the fingering in

this section, and its repeat later, and learn to play it using only the middle three fingers, which was more difficult but produced the appropriate sound.

The duo concert in which I performed the '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy was one of three concerts I presented for the creative doctoral research. In addition to this I presented a full-length solo piano recital and organised a concert of South African works for solo piano in which I performed along with four other invited pianists. The solo recital consisted of Mozart's Adagio in B Minor and his Rondo in D Major, K. 485, Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 21 in C Major, Opus 53, and Schubert's Piano Sonata No. 19 in C Minor, D. 958. This programme contrasted the differences in approach to composition between Beethoven and Schubert, prefaced by two late works by Mozart. Brendel succinctly highlights these differences:

> In Beethoven's music we never lose our bearings, we always know where we are; Schubert, on the other hand, puts us into a dream. Beethoven composes like an architect, Schubert like a sleepwalker. This is not to say, of course, that Schubert's craftsmanship is shoddy, or that Beethoven's music remains prosaic: I mean that the attitudes of the two masters to the problems of composition were different by nature (2015a: 42).

The works by Beethoven and Schubert were placed adjacent to one another in recital to highlight these differences of style. Beethoven's 'Waldstein' Sonata represents for the renowned Beethoven scholar Donald Francis Tovey the beginning of his second period of output (1931: 149). Schubert's Sonata in C Minor, composed in the year of his death, but only published ten years later, is representative of what can be considered his late style, and the connotations thereof, despite his death at a young age. The first theme in the opening movement of this sonata strongly references Beethoven's own Variations in C Minor, WoO 80: it shares a key, time-signature, rhythmic pattern, harmonic progression and melodic outline (Shulman 2014: 93). However, where Beethoven's Variations are structurally concise, Schubert uses the material as a point of departure for an expanded journey through different keys and themes.

The chamber recital, discussed above, consisted of works for flute and piano, and was performed with Khanyi Mthetwa. The programme consisted of Poulenc's Sonata for Flute and Piano, FP 164, Messiaen's *Le Merle Noir*, Prokofiev's Sonata for Flute and Piano, Opus 94, Hofmeyr's '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy for Flute and Piano, and Franck's Sonata for Flute and Piano (originally for violin and piano).

The final practical component of this research was a concert of contemporary South African piano music which took place on 12 May 2019. For this concert I invited four other pianists to perform a South African work for solo piano, while I performed the fifth work. The repertoire of the three recitals reflects works drawn from the canon of Western art music piano and chamber literature, as well as works from the contemporary South African moment.

From the earlier short narrative of my personal experience preparing the '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy for performance, several themes emerge. My discussion about the character of the work's different sections raises broader questions of how performers endeavor to find a connection to the emotional content of the work and communicate this in performance. Linked closely to this is a consideration of how technical approaches may serve specific artistic goals, rather than considering technique for its own sake, while my brief discussion of the use of canon in Hofmeyr's work details how analysis can be directly useful for performers and what role it may play in musical preparation. The attempt to find a balance between emotion, intellect and instinct highlights how different influences can inform a performance. These matters belong to the domain of musical interpretation, and in the case of my research contribute to an exploration of how to develop what Neuhaus coined the "artistic image" (1973) of a particular composition. Neuhaus defines this as "the image conjured up by imagination, emotion, inner hearing and aesthetic and intellectual understanding" (20). He describes how to develop the artistic image with "a broad knowledge of musical literature", the ability to "memorize music by reading the score without touching the piano", and through the performer's understanding of

> the form, the thematic material and the harmonic and polyphonic structure of the composition… [and] developing his imagination by the use of apt metaphor, poetic similes, by analogy with natural phenomena or events in life, particularly spiritual, emotional life. It means supplementing and interpreting musical language (20-21).

In the practical performance work and written research I thus explore the question of how to develop an artistic image of a musical work by investigating methods designed to create a conceptual and emotional understanding.[2] The aim is to understand how the artistic image may be realised in practical terms through performance on the instrument, and how the practical work in turn influences the artistic image in a dialectical interpretative process.

I chose to explore the development of an artistic image through examples of both canonical and contemporary repertoire. This was achieved by testing different types of techniques (on which I elaborate later in the Introduction) designed to develop the image in both conceptual and practical terms. From data gathered during the testing phase I wrote a narrative account of my personal learning process, the development of an artistic image and the means with which to achieve it in practice, from the initial encounter with the score through to the presentation of the work in public recitals. The works I 'tested' the process on are the first movement of the Schubert Sonata in C

[2] It is beyond the scope of this research to discuss the concept of the 'musical work', which has received extensive consideration by music philosophers, such as Lydia Goehr (1992), Richard Taruskin (2005) and William Weber (1999). I am aligned with Neuhaus' approach that the musical work itself is one of three essential elements of performance, along with the performer and the instrument (1973: 1).

Minor, D. 958 and the *Three Incantations* by Alexander Johnson. By testing the process on different types of repertoire I offer thoughts on the usefulness and value of the techniques in terms of preparing for performance a canonical work and a contemporary composition. Supplementary information was contributed by interviews with pianists who performed at the concert of South African works and who documented their learning processes.[3] In considering these questions I draw on two traditions of literature, namely, the work of pianist-pedagogues and the academic-based field of artistic research, both of which provide approaches to interpretation and technical application. While my research is positioned as artistic research, it draws significantly on the first source of literature, as other artistic researcher pianists have done (see Doğantan-Dack 2015a) in an attempt to find common ground between the pedagogical and academic realms, two areas that too often remain separate in research projects. What follows in the Introduction is a discussion of the important sources of literature that contributed to the research in a meaningful way, combined with an articulation of further contributions that my research hopes to make to this field.

Pedagogical Perspectives

Keyboard musicians of the Western art music tradition have written about their artistic process and craft for several hundred years. Eighteenth-century treatises on performance, such as C.P.E. Bach's *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* (1949 [1753, 1762]) and François Couperin's *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* (1974 [1716]), deal with aspects of keyboard music including improvisation, harmony, technique, interpretation, ornamentation, practice methods, phrasing and style.

Following the emergence and development of the pianoforte in the eighteenth century, guides to performing on the new instrument appeared, an early instance of which is Johann Nepomuk Hummel's extensive *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course on the Art of Piano Playing* (1828), which discusses the interpretation and technical approach required for several of the compositional examples included the treatise. In the early nineteenth century the concept of the "historical recital" was pioneered by Ignaz Moscheles (Gould 2005: 64) and pianists began to perform a varied repertoire from different eras, rather than just the music of their time. This meant that pedagogical work was expanded as pianists not only had to play various styles of music, but also had to play them on an instrument for which they were not always originally written. Consequently, piano

[3] The decision to only use pianist-participants in the contemporary music concert was a result of the vast existing body of literature and recordings on canonical music, particularly the music of Schubert. By comparison, there is a shortage of literature on the experience of non-specialists performing contemporary music, and even more so South African piano music, and documenting their learning process.

literature dealing with how one plays the instrument had to account for this change and pianists became more stylistically versatile. Many pianists also created editions of the works of other composers, often including suggestions for interpretation and technical preparation. An early example of this was Hans von Bulow's (1876) edition of the Beethoven sonatas, works which were also famously edited by Artur Schnabel (1949). Ferruccio Busoni edited and transcribed various works by J.S. Bach (1894), and Alfred Cortot prepared editions of many of Chopin's works (1926, 1930a, 1930b).

As a secondary result of the development of the historical recital performers became reproducers of music, rather than creators; the idea of the composer-pianist, or improviser, became less significant, and pianists shifted their focus from presenting new music to the interpretation of older music (Gilmore 1993).

In the twentieth century the literature dealing with the art and technique of piano playing expanded exponentially. Josef Lhevinne's *Basic Principles in Pianoforte Playing* (1972 [1924]), Gieseking and Leimer's *Piano Technique* (1972), Heinrich Neuhaus's *The Art of Piano Playing* (1973) and Gyorgy Sandor's *On Piano Playing: Motion, Sound and Expression* (1981) are among numerous texts by pianist-pedagogues dealing with both musical and technical approaches to playing and interpreting piano music.

Of this literature, Neuhaus' work has always held great significance for me. I first came across his book early in my undergraduate studies, and have revisited it several times, always attempting to understand more clearly the advice and wisdom contained therein. With each reading I am reminded of principles and values which I would like my playing to represent: a clear artistic conception and the means with which to achieve it. Indeed, the first and most important chapter of his book deals with 'The Artistic Image of a Musical Composition' (1973: 7) as defined above.

Neuhaus also mentions that compositions should be studied from an analytical perspective "as a conductor studies a score, that is, not only as a whole… but also in detail, taking the composition apart to see its component elements, the harmonic structure, the polyphonic structure" (21), but beyond these theoretical details, Neuhaus challenges us, asking, "what is the particular work which remains to be done to give the performance a true artistic value? What must be done to make the performance emotionally moving, interesting, to make it reach the hearer?" (22).

This is perhaps the most significant challenge for any musician, and requires more than theoretical knowledge or technical ability. In starting to guide his reader through this process, Neuhaus calls for "*simplicity* and *naturalness* in expression" (24, emphasis original). However, he warns that to work

purely on the artistic image without seeking its embodiment in tone, phrase and nuance is as worthless as working only on piano technique without regard for the music. Our role as an artist is thus two-fold: the performer must develop not only the artistic image, but possess the technical means to execute it. Technique here refers not only to mechanical ability, but is meant, as explained by Leopold Godowsky, to include "Rhythm, Tempo, Accent, Phrasing, Dynamics, Agogics, Touch" (Godowsky in Cooke 1999: 110). In this research I attempt to answer Neuhaus' question of how to create a performance that delivers "true artistic value" (1973: 22) by documenting the preparation of the above-mentioned works for recital through all the steps of learning.

In dealing with the means of achieving an artistic image for a work to be performed, the discussion can once again be framed from the perspective of Neuhaus, who attributes "the fundamental principle of solving a technical problem" to the formulation of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis (117). If one cannot solve a problem by intuition alone, it can be reduced to its constituent parts and worked out separately. Alternatively, the technical difficulties can be increased as a counter-measure to the above approach, for "by increasing the difficulties, so to speak, to the limits of 'theoretical maximum power', by making the problem more complex, [the performer] will acquire the skills and the experience which will enable him to solve his problem completely" (125).

These approaches are followed by Alfred Cortot, who frequently reduced and analysed difficulties, and Ferruccio Busoni, who often made works more difficult than their composed form. For instance, Cortot's edition of the Chopin Preludes begins with a description of the artistic and intellectual merits of the work and relates them to the relevant situation in Chopin's life (a time of physical illness and attempted recovery in Majorca) (1926: ii). Cortot discusses each prelude in detail, with a description of the piece in terms of emotional content and artistic value, closely related to musical material, bridging the gap between artistic image and practical realisation. For example, the introduction to Prelude No. 1: "The passions, the impatient ardour, with which this prelude sweeps along, can only be rendered by the accurate punctuation of the syncopated figure which, from bar to bar, pantingly and feverishly carries the melodic line forward" (1926: 2). Cortot follows these verbal descriptions by reducing and preparing constituent parts for performance, in this case melodic lines, always with artistic goals in mind. Cortot's approach of finding direct connections between emotional narratives and their practical realisation was particularly relevant when preparing the Schubert Sonata for performance. In several passages the artistic meaning suggested a specific technical approach – without first identifying how I wanted a particular passage to sound, I would have had no means of realising it successfully in practical terms.

Taking an opposite approach, Busoni, in his edition of Bach Preludes and Fugues, creates exercises which enhance rather than reduce technical difficulties – he is always sure to relate these back to their musical meaning. This example is taken from his notes to the Prelude in C Minor, from Book One:

> The technical utility of this Prelude – which is comparable to an agitated stream reflecting the flames of a conflagration – may be enhanced a) by a strict holding of the notes with both little fingers; b) by a martellato variation of the principal figure with an "alternate striking of the hands in double notes" (Zweigriffen) or c) by added octaves thus rendering the whole a study of sixths in "transcendent execution" (1894: 8).

These are followed by musical extracts indicating the relevant patterns. Busoni also makes use of verbal analogies to elucidate the music's character: "In this fugue we seem to be borne upward, out of the crypt of a mighty cathedral, through the broad nave and onward to the extreme height of the vaulted dome" (1894: 29).

Cortot's and Busoni's approaches provide a means for working both at artistic and technical challenges, while demonstrating how Neuhaus' ideas of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis can be practically realised; and I liberally draw on the ideas offered in the writings of these seminal pianist-pedagogues. For example, I provided the participants who performed in the South African solo piano music concert with a list of artistic image techniques they could explore in their own preparation processes, with examples from Cortot and Busoni appearing prominently in the list. Furthermore, it is my intention to return to the tradition of the pianist-pedagogues, and to explore their ideas within the context of artistic research that is currently fashionable in the academy, thereby bridging the gap between the work of pianist-pedagogues and pianist-researchers and bringing the voice of the performer into the academic world.

From Practice to Performance to Practice

With the emergence of 'artistic research' in the last two decades, pianist-researchers have recently used the academic space in order to put forward ideas about challenges of the craft while delving into the mechanisms and processes of musical performance. This research through, and into, practice provides tools for understanding artistic processes, and provides valuable insights into the functioning of the creative mind and the strategies involved in presenting an artistic musical performance. Pianist-researchers such as John Rink and Mine Doğantan-Dack have compiled and edited important scholarship on artistic research (1995; 2002 and 2015a), while contributors to these works such as Peter Hill, Jonathan Dunsby, Stefan Reid, and William Rothstein have expanded on various areas of artistic musical preparation. As Doğantan-Dack notes,

> some would like to argue that, historically, artistic practices have always been based on research processes and therefore constituted artistic research (e.g. Malterud 2010), it is the total intertwining of the large-scale socio-economic and cultural circumstances with the recent entry of expert artistic practitioners into academic research scenes that renders *artistic research* an essentially contemporary phenomenon – a contemporary academic discipline (2015b: 29-30).

Artistic research is that which "seeks to convey and communicate content that is enclosed in aesthetic experiences, enacted in creative practices and embodied in artistic products" (Borgdorff 2012: 144). It is characterised by the distinction that "art practice (the works of art, the artistic actions, the creative processes) is not just the motivating factor and the subject matter of research, but that this artistic practice – the practice of creating and performing in the atelier or studio – is central to the research process itself" (146). Linda Candy reaffirms the role of practice in this type of research: "Practice-based research is an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice" (2006: 3). In other words, research "is done inside the practice, by doing acts that are a part of the practice" (Hannula, Suoranta and Vadén 2014: 3). My research satisfies the various requirements of artistic research. It allows room for the performer(s) voice(s) to speak to questions of understanding artistic processes, and allows room for the performances and knowledge derived therefrom to contribute to and form part of the research. Most obviously, some of my performances for the doctoral research are included as audio-visual recordings (available online), and the concerts I presented for the degree contribute to the assessment for the qualification.

Artistic research has come to the fore in recent decades. In 1993, in the earlier developments of artistic research, Christopher Frayling proposed a three-part distinction of work within this field: "Research into art and design; Research through art and design; Research for art and design" (Frayling 1993: 5). The first category includes historical research, aesthetic research and research into theoretical perspectives on art. The second category includes research that is done through the creation of art, and can for example include research with the use of a diary to keep track of a practical experiment or to document the creative process. I used this type of documentation extensively in my research, with data from such documentary processes forming the backbone of the two main chapters presented in this thesis. Frayling's final category includes research "where the end product is an artefact", where "the goal here is the art rather than the knowledge and understanding" (5). The practical work for this research thus falls within this last category as the musical performances constitute a significant component of the work.

Twelve years after Frayling's seminal work in laying out the terrain of artistic research Henk Borgdorff, a leading scholar in the field, continued the discussion of research as practice:

> The crux of the matter is whether a phenomenon like research in the arts exists – an endeavour in which the production of art is itself a fundamental part of the research process, and whereby art is partly the result of research. More particularly, the issue is whether this type of research distinguishes itself from other research in terms of the nature of its research object (an ontological question), in terms of the knowledge it holds (an epistemological question) and in terms of the working methods that are appropriate to it (a methodological question) (2006: 1)

He also points to the differences between research that has traditionally been undertaken in the academy, and that which takes place in practice, and acknowledges that there are divergent opinions about what these differences are (1-2). Borgdorff slightly reworks Frayling's three-part division of arts research as "(a) research on the arts, (b) research for the arts and (c) research in the arts" (6). The first implies for him a theoretical distance between the researcher and the object of research, and the second that "art is not so much the object of the investigation, but its objective" (6), denoting research that is practically applicable to the development of art practice. The final category

> concerns research that does not assume the separation of subject and object, and does not observe a distance between the researcher and the practice of art. Instead, the artistic practice itself is an essential component of both the research process and the research results (7)

It is mostly within this last category that my research is located as there is an intentional connection between the researcher and the artistic practice (the preparation and performance of solo piano music) while elements of the second category are also present in that the performances themselves were also examined as part of the research. The final sentence of Borgdorff's explanation is worth including here: "Research in the arts hence seeks to articulate some of this embodied knowledge throughout the creative process and in the art object" (7). In the case of a performing musician such as myself, there is ideally little separation between theory and practice, and this research attempts to find out how the two interact with one another. Concepts that inform musical, structural, and emotional considerations about a particular work are incorporated simultaneously into the act of performing and recreating that work on stage, and there exists "a comparable intimate bond between theory and practice" (7).

Darla Crispin also discusses the contributions of artistic research to art practice, and acknowledges that while practice can exist without research, artistic research is dependent on art practice. Despite this somewhat one-sided relationship she states that "artist researchers generally feel that their research practice helps them to mature and improve as artists" (2015: 63). She proposes three stages during which this research may provide benefits:

> They may emerge at the stage of repertoire choice or initial creative decisions (input), at that of development of an interpretation or working through of creative ideas (process) and at that of enriching the presentation of the finished work to an audience (63).

It is my hope that I have developed and improved as an artist through the process of completing this research; all three of Crispin's stages, from repertoire choice, interpretation and presentation of the performance have not only informed this research but encouraged me to develop my musical abilities.

Within the discipline of music, Mine Doğantan-Dack points out that in comparison to other arts practices which have embraced practice-led research "music – particularly music performance – has been a late arrival in the scene of artistic research" (2015b: 31). She notes that

> in music performance the sense of a community of artist-researchers, as well as a plurality of views on the way musical performance and research might be integrated, is beginning to emerge only slowly… we are just starting to engage in substantial and sustained debates about the cultural policies, ideologies, academic discourses, theories and methods that are shaping artistic research in this field (31).

Doğantan-Dack elaborates on the specific foci of practice-based research in musical performance, noting that "most of the projects in musical performance to date have focussed on performing musicians' artistic *process* in order to explore and reveal the tacit-embodied, and the expert cognitive-artistic knowledge that drives performance making" (31, emphasis original). Doğantan-Dack recently highlighted that both concert performance and music analysis for performers are "currently under-represented in practice-led or artistic research" (2015a: 5). I took my lead from this insight: my research aims to address this under-representation by exploring how musical analysis for performance, variously conceived, aids in the preparation of musical works for concert performance. I document these processes in first person narrative accounts, and I am eager to anchor this endeavour, in part, by drawing on the practice and ideas of the pianist-pedagogue tradition.

Musical performers tend to focus on the end product of their artistic endeavours when writing about their processes. As Jonathan Dunsby notes "the performers who do tell us about performance tend to record their views… at the thin edge of the wedge, naturally preferring to concentrate on the fleeting goal, the product, rather than on the journey, the substantial process by which they arrive at the goal" (2002: 234). Dunsby elaborates on this idea:

> performance itself typically occupies a rather small part of performers' attention. Actual performance is the tip of an iceberg of performers' practice and rehearsal, which in countless different ways is the 'analytical' level of music-making, the time when everything is put in place mentally and physically for the on-stage 'calculation' that has but one opportunity to be right (233).

Hultberg claims that this tacit knowledge in performance preparation and presentation is important to reveal (Hultberg in Doğantan-Dack 2015b: 31). My research thus aims to try and uncover in-depth tacit knowledge that sometimes is not foregrounded to the extent it should be in research that focusses only the performance as end product. I do this by focussing on the preparation of two

specific works for performance and documenting all the steps involved, informed by the writings of both pianist-pedagogues and artistic researchers.

Interpretation through Analysis

Another forerunner of artistic research in music, and especially Western art music performance, is scholar and pianist John Rink, who in 1995 defined four areas of scholarly writing about musical performance: "literature on historical performance practice, the psychology of performance, the relation between analysis and performance, and 'interpretation' broadly defined" (1995: ix). My research is grounded especially in the latter two of Rink's categories. It is focussed both on interpretation, that is the development and realisation of an artistic image, and on the relation between analysis and performance, more specifically, the ways in which analysis can contribute to interpretation.

Janet Ritterman highlights the need for the type of understanding advocated in my research, where the voice of the performer-researcher is included. She argues for a "wholeness of approach, in which composers' ideas are complemented by performers' understanding – understanding of themselves as well as of the music they play" (2002: 84). In terms of arriving at the 'performer's understanding', Rink has provided perhaps the most detailed approach of what he calls "performer's analysis" (2002: 36) which forms "an integral part of the performing process" (36). He calls for a

> fundamental reconceptualisation of musical structure, one that takes into account the creative role of performers in giving shape to music or, to put it another way, in discerning structural potentialities within musical materials and then realising them as they see fit within the broader musical narrative of their performance (2015: 129).

Aaron Williamon cautions that "one issue that must be addressed by subsequent research is the extent to which certain analytical strategies are the most effective and efficient" (2002: 124). One aspect of my research is thus to investigate a range of analytical strategies pursued specifically for the purpose of preparing a work for performance; in other words, to 'test' the efficacy of analysis for performance preparation.

Within this broader sphere of artistic research, some researchers have dealt with the piano as an instrument of research/performance, and specifically with elements that influence the creation of an artistic image.

In 'Analysis and (or?) Performance' (2002), Rink explores what analysis means for a performer, arguing that

> the interpretation of music requires decisions – conscious or otherwise – about the contextual functions of particular musical features and the means of projecting them. Even the simplest passage… will be shaped according to the performer's understanding of how it fits into a given piece and the expressive prerogatives that he or she brings to bear upon it (35).

Rink employs the phrase "performer's analysis" to describe the type of analysis that performers use "as an integral part of the performing process", as opposed to musicological approaches to analysis (36). One of the main differences between these approaches, he argues, is that performer's analysis acknowledges that music unfolds temporally, and that musical shape (as it plays out over time), rather than its structure (which is fixed at any point in time) be of central importance. He also privileges the concept of "informed intuition" (36), which recognises not only the need for musicians to use their intuitive response to music, but that significant performance experience informs this intuition.

Rink states that while the findings of structural and motivic analysis are useful, they may not be directly applicable to interpretation, in contrast to Neuhaus who espouses their values. Rink outlines five principles that may inform a performer focussed analysis:

> (1) Temporality lies at the heart of performance and is therefore fundamental to 'performer's analysis'.
>
> (2) Its primary goal is to discover the music's shape', as opposed to structure, as well as the means of projecting it.
>
> (3) The score is not 'the music'; 'the music' is not confined to the score.
>
> (4) Any analytical element that impinges on performance will ideally be incorporated within a larger synthesis influenced by considerations of style (broadly defined), genre, performance tradition, technique, instrument and so on, as well as the performer's individual artistic prerogatives. In other words, analytically determined decisions should not be systematically prioritised.
>
> (5) 'Informed intuition' guides, or at least influences, the process of 'performer's analysis', although a more deliberate analytical approach can also be useful (39).

It is worth noting that Rink's principles leave room for individuality and the "artistic prerogatives" of the performer; deliberate analytical approaches are tempered by the performer's intuition as well as other considerations mentioned in point four. It is an approach that aligns with my own feelings about how a performer might use analysis.[4]

Rink demonstrates how these principles may be applied in practice by analysing an excerpt of a Mozart sonata. He identifies elements of the music including construction of the melody and

[4] Pianists such as Murray Perahia have espoused the value of Schenkerian analysis for performers, especially as a means to understanding the compositional whole from a structural point of view (Finane 2020). While this certainly could be valuable, I had to select here a finite number of approaches, and some of these have not been explored as thoroughly as Schenker's approach. Furthermore, it seems that Rink's techniques allow for more personal input from the performer and could be less rigid than Schenker's structurally based approach.

accompaniment, use of register, rhythmic placement of cadence and the use of harmony and inversion and how these elements could influence a pianist's shaping and phrasing, rhythmic give and take, dynamic colouring, articulation, pedalling, touch and timbre (40). He acknowledges that the interpretations based on this information may not be informed by conscious analytical decisions and often take place at sight. Importantly, however, this does not mean that deliberate reconsideration cannot take place at a later stage, at which point "something beyond intuition may be required" (41). This leaves room for the circular approach used in this research, in which initial assumptions are challenged after practice at the piano and time spent with the work. William Rothstein lends further nuance to the discussion of analysis, which is "best carried out through a combination of intuition, experience and reason" (1995: 237).

Rink outlines five techniques to assist performers in their analytical grasp of a composition – identifying formal divisions and basic tonal plan, graphing tempo and dynamics, analysing melodic shape and constituent motifs/ideas, preparing a rhythmic reduction, and renotating the music (2002: 41). He demonstrates how these are used in preparing a performer's analysis of Chopin's Nocturne in C-Sharp Minor, Opus 27 No. 1. Rink starts with a description of the composition in emotional terms: "opens bleakly" (42), "triumphant melody" (42) and "cathartic cadenza" (42) and then describes the form in story-like terms in a personal identification with the music. A similar technique is mentioned by Dunsby, who notes that for Alfred Brendel a performer must identify with the spirit of the work in personal terms (2002: 232). Peter Hill argues that the first job for a performer learning a new composition is to develop a view of the work away from the instrument (2002: 133). These three authors agree that this initial artistic image is critical to understanding the music and developing an interpretation; however, I add that the performer should also leave room for the image to develop at various stages of learning.

After documenting his personal identification with the Nocturne, a process crucial to artistic research, Rink moves on to the technical challenges facing the pianist preparing the work, with reference to musical ideas he wishes to convey. While the traditional means of formal and tonal understanding are familiar to most musicians, for performers they should be understood in "diachronic terms" (45); how they play out as the piece is performed or heard: "a pianist would tend to *feel* the various tonal areas as points of gravitation towards or away from which the music flows - areas weighted according to their perceived importance" (45-46, emphasis original). Rink suggests that a chart of the structure of the composition be drawn up, demonstrating main sections, subsections, bar numbers, and tonalities. A similar approach is used by Charles Rosen in

demonstrating the layout of themes from a Mozart Piano Concerto (1997b: 210-211), and by Busoni who made use of a diagram to demonstrate the form of a Bach Fugue (1894: 7).

Rink continues to outline similar approaches for graphing tempi and dynamic changes, melodic contour, rhythmic reductions of phrase structure, and the renotation of various passages. Consistent throughout his application of these techniques is their potential to influence performance. He does not suggest that they have to be applied methodically, but rather used as needed to elucidate performative musical problems which may come up at the instrument. This is reinforced by Rothstein who warns consistently of the pitfalls of following analytical findings explicitly in performance, for example, in relation to Bach Fugues there are times when bringing out entries of the theme could "do a performance more harm than good" (1995: 218). Rink's approach has been praised for "articulating the unconscious nature of much 'analysis'" (Windsor 2005: 184). Rink's techniques of graphing tempi and dynamic changes, creating rhythmic reductions of phrase structure, and renotating various passages have been used extensively in my own work. Furthermore, I have tried to derive direct links between this analytical work and its effects on my performances.

In a more recent article 'The (F)utility of Performance Analysis' (2015), Rink argues that rather than only uncovering the musical structure of a work through analysis, performers have a role in creating that structure in real time as they perform a particular composition (128-129), highlighting again the temporal importance of performer's analysis. Here Rink carries out a performer's analysis on Chopin's Prelude in B Minor Opus 28 No. 6. He uses the same method of rhythmic reduction mentioned above, however this time it "serves as a background impulse to other parameters of the music in performance, potentially interacting with them in unique ways depending on the performer's intentions and strategies" (136). These parameters include texture, register, sonority, melodic contour, and dynamics, and provide areas to be explored in the development of an artistic image while preparing a work for performance. The use of analysis in developing an interpretation is also advocated by Stefan Reid, who suggests that analysis for performance would involve a study of the score in order to "gain a detailed knowledge and understanding of the work which will then inform their interpretative decision-making" (2002: 108). However, the relationship of analysis to performance has been questioned by Rosen, who argues that performance and analysis are different disciplines, and that performances do not require analytical justification, and that analysis should not always be reflected in performance (1997b: 305). Rink has tried to address this by suggesting methods of analysis which *are* directly relevant to performance. My research thus seeks in part to explore how analysis may help us to understand the work in ways which are not necessarily directly

identifiable in performance. I have incorporated the various parameters mentioned above in my analytically-informed preparation processes of select musical works, and I am concerned to draw out the links with their effects on my performance.

In his later work Rink suggests a new technique where one would "virtually play through the Prelude" (2015: 137) (without actually using the piano). This approach is similar to that mentioned by Hill, where work with the score starts away from the piano (2002: 133); and I discuss Hill's techniques in greater detail below. Rink moves through the prelude, "noting the performance-specific parameters that arise" (2015: 137). By implication, these parameters could vary depending on the work and the composer. Here Rink starts with diagrams of what he labels "enactment" on the keyboard (137), which use a graphical representation of the piano keys, and outline the "zone of traversal" (137) for each hand for the progressive bars of the piece. In other words, the register covered by each hand is depicted, as well as any movement within or static quality of each voice. As Rink progresses through the Prelude various parameters are detailed including texture, lateral and vertical motion, displacement and confinement, registral expansion, registral contraction and registral peaks, similar and contrary movement of voices, sonority, silence, dynamic contrast, and coloration (138-140). While these are not the only parameters that might exist in a composition, they provide a useful starting point in terms of features that may occur. Although some of these parameters can be identified away from the piano, I have allowed for the influence of practical work at the instrument to contribute to their uncovering. For example, chord voicing is often best worked out at the instrument. Rink's work, specifically on Chopin has been challenged by Rosen, who highlights the difficulties of terminology when dealing with Chopin's forms which often do not fit traditional moulds and are more narrative in nature (1997a: 395). From my experience a description of form does not have to be specifically narrative, a table showing particular sections with letter names and numbers can equally elucidate structural concerns. The approaches outlined above provide practical methods of achieving what Neuhaus refers to when he says a performer should know "a great deal that is substantive about what goes on in that sonata from the point of view of musical and theoretical analysis" (1973: 20), but with a specific focus on performance implications. Once again, this links to how the performance implications of analytical work are made explicit in my research: whenever elements of musical and theoretical analysis are used, they are always linked to their influence on the performance itself, rather than only being used in an abstract sense.

Parallel Programmes: Finding a Narrative Thread in Performance

A further technique for developing interpretation is also mentioned by Neuhaus: the use of metaphor and analogy (1973: 20). Reid writes about the importance of: "the creation of an extra-musical programme such as a story or a descriptive emotional sequence" because "this programme instils relationships between the various elements of the musical work and allows the performer to bring out the significance of individual musical events within the context of the overall interpretation" (2002: 108). From my own experience as a performer I have found that programmatic descriptions or the identification of a work's character can bring something to the music that may otherwise have been missing, or can highlight elements that were not apparent at first reading. These analogies do not have to be extensive or in depth, often giving oneself the simple instruction to play, for example, '*tranquillo*' or '*misterioso*', can bring meaning to a passage that was otherwise lacking in effect. Throughout this research I have typically opted to use shorter descriptions of the character of various sections rather than developing entire narratives created around the music. These would typically involve describing the nature of a particular theme, or a particular musical effect required by a compositional device.

Hill makes the point that compositions do not reside in the notated score, but rather are imagined first by the composer and then communicated by performers in sound. The earliest stage of dealing with the score is crucial as it will establish foundations for the preparation and performance work that follows. One needs to consider the style of the music, the notation used by the composer and the role of the performer in relation to the music. After discussing what not to do first (fingering, sight reading, listening to recordings), Hill suggests that the performer needs to start by developing a view of the work: "the answer is to work intensely at the score, but heard in our heads *away from the instrument*" (2002: 133, emphasis original). In this way considerations of performance technique are side-lined, and the performer focuses only on musical issues. Hill suggests that one can then approach the time at the keyboard as a conductor would a first rehearsal. The foundations of understanding are already in place. He does, however, acknowledge that the progression from mental work to work at the instrument is not one directional and accepts that various refinements to the image take place after this process. My research has made allowance for this by first working through the score in detail away from the piano, and then documenting the effects of the work at the piano on this initial image, and tracking how it changes over the course of performance preparation.

In referring to a passage by Gerald Moore, one of the leading accompanists in the twentieth century, Hill notes that Moore's approach includes a cycle of processes. This begins with an "initial image of

how the phrase should sound – leading to experiment at the piano, then reflection and self-criticism followed by further experiment" (cited in Hill 2002: 130). Moore continues his description by acknowledging the drawback of this method which can result in a loss of inspiration and spontaneity (131). As Hill points out, this type of repetitive approach tends to dull the performer's creativity.

> How can we work and work, without losing enthusiasm or the open-mindedness that enables our ideas to develop? How, indeed can we *perform* at all – in the sense of creating a unique event, with insights which arise from the inspiration of the moment? Clearly if repetition is at the heart of the problem, we need to find a way of working which minimises its role, or at least build into our method a means of mitigating its disadvantages (131).

This highlights one of the central problems of preparing works for performance: traditional practice methods tend to involve this experiment and repetition approach, with all the pitfalls mentioned. Hill's preference is summed up as follows:

> the inescapable conclusion is that the first job is to begin by developing our own view of the work: the ideal is to exploit the precious time when the piece is unfamiliar, when we are most able to bring fresh insights to bear. We need, however, to do this without becoming unconsciously influenced by our inevitable limitations of skill. The answer is to work intensely at the score, but heard in our heads *away from the instrument*. The musical payoff is that we can develop our understanding free from all considerations of technique, focusing entirely on the musical issues that need to be decided in advance of practising at the instrument. Obvious though it may be, we have to be clear, in outline at least, about what we are trying to do before looking for the means to achieve it (133, emphasis original).

Hill's approach is followed in this research: a significant amount of work at the score was completed before work at the piano began.

In attempting to create an artistic image of how a composition should sound in performance, one inevitably engages in interpretation, especially with relation to historical composers. It is worth noting that the majority of literature on interpretation deals with canonical composers, while there is significantly less written on the performance practice of contemporary piano music. Peter Walls argues that "Most performers would think in terms of being true to the work, of exploring its emotional content, of attempting to honour the composer's intentions" (2002: 17). His approach has been challenged by Luke Windsor, who questions this aesthetic stance: that is, the equal relationship between the notes and their historical context (2005: 184). Of course, in many cases it may be impossible to know exactly how a composer intended a work to sound, and if they had an 'ideal' version of a performance in mind, separated from practical and acoustic considerations. It is important for a performer to feel convinced by their interpretation, as only with conviction can they give a convincing performance. From experience working directly with composers, I have found that they are more concerned with the performer producing a successful performance or recording than being pedantically accurate to their indications in the score. The problems with notation (which is our primary point of contact with music of the past) are numerous. Roy Howat states:

> Although scores are the most fixed point of reference for our classical repertoire, far from being absolutes they rest on sand, and what we scientifically trust least, our musical feeling, remains the strongest and final link to what the composer sensed and heard before subjecting it to notation (1995: 3).

While imagination and originality are valued in performance, this is only to the extent that they illuminate the character of a work, or make its emotional, spiritual, or conceptual content clear. Walls suggests that interpretation consists of bringing out the meaning of a composition, while appropriation involves using the music to express something of a personal agenda (17-18); however, the point at which one engages in appropriation is inevitably subjective. Renowned pianist Daniel Barenboim elaborates on his thoughts of what the score represents, noting that "there is no such thing as absolute faithfulness to the score" (2008: 53); we have to "search for and understand each part of the music in terms of the ultimate nature of the whole" (53). He suggests that our task as a performer is to go a step further than interpretation, and his thoughts are worth quoting in full:

> The score is the final substance, the finished work, and the interpretation of it is a finite, temporary expression that takes place in time and has a beginning and an end. To be able to grasp the substance of the music itself is to be willing to begin a never-ending search. The task of the performing musician, then, is not to express or interpret the music as such, but to aim to become part of it. It is almost as if the interpretation of a text creates a subtext for itself that develops, substantiates, varies and contrasts the actual text. This subtext is inherent in the score and is itself boundless; it results from a dialogue between the performer and the score, and its richness is determined by the curiosity of the performer (2008: 52-53).

Negotiating this tricky subject of interpretation and artistic image is essential to the practice of the performing musician of art music. My own pianistic training has involved constant reference to the score, and has consisted of a critical engagement with various sources and opinions. While devotion to the details contained in the score is extremely important to me as a performer, even more crucial is the ability to uncover what I believe to be the musical intentions of a particular composer. This process cannot be reduced to a list of principles, and is different for each composer, and even individual works. Here I am in agreement with Austrian conductor, Nikolaus Harnoncourt: "The score of a work was an abstract design which indicated the substance of the music, though not its actual realization" (1995: 160).

In this Introduction I have given an account of some of the fundamental ideas and practices that inform my research, identified from key works of literature that have dealt with these subjects from two broad traditions of scholarship: pianistic-pedagogical writing and artistic research.

From these two traditions certain key points can be drawn. There has been a clear move, albeit late in the field of music, towards artistic research which accords greater prominence to the voice of the performer in the discussion of artistic creation. This is research which is necessarily subjective, personal, and reflexive and further contributions are necessary especially in the field of music.

Several researchers have tried to bridge the gap between musicological findings and artistic expression, for instance the work of John Rink which seeks to find ways to incorporate analytical findings within musical performance, while simultaneously allowing for the performer's intuition to contribute to and temper these findings. While Doğantan-Dack (2015a) has incorporated the findings of pianist-pedagogues such as Brendel and Schnabel in her own research, she deals specifically with one aspect of artistic playing (finding a normative approach to a cantabile sound) and does not account for a more complete process of developing and realising an artistic image – something which my research explores. My work hopes to contribute to Rink's efforts to find common ground not only between analytical findings and performance, but to bring the work of pianist-pedagogues into the academic space. The following section deals with the specific means of achieving these various research goals within an artistic research framework.

The Insider's Outlook: On Methodology

Borgdorff questions whether there is "a characteristic, privileged way of obtaining access to the research domain of art practice and the knowledge embodied in it" (2012: 50). While acknowledging the broad debate in this area, he further questions whether artistic research methods should "conform to approved academic (or scientific) standards and conventions". Indeed many aspects of music performance do not lend themselves to quantitative, scientific enquiry, which Borgdorff acknowledges: "research in the arts is generally performed by artists. In fact, one could argue that *only* artists are capable of conducting such practice-based research" (16, emphasis original). Research of this nature can best be performed, as Borgdorff puts it, "from within" and the research design "incorporates both experimentation and participation in practice and the interpretation of that practice" (16-18). My research, which is qualitative in nature, followed this pattern: experimentation took place while applying the various techniques of artistic and technical development, and interpretation occurred in the reflection on and narration of this process, and of other pianists' documentation of their preparation and performance practice.

Doğantan-Dack notes several characteristics of doing artistic research including "the non-linearity of its trajectory, the emergent nature of its methodologies, its reliance on contingencies and singularities, and the interrelatedness of situated subjective insights and generalised knowledge" (2015a: 6). She speaks of the "generative methodologies" which "can only be carried out through compositional activity" (6). In my case this was performance activity, and provided scope for various methods to be selected when carrying out this project, some of which relate directly to the practice

of performing. My research used two types of methods to explore artistic practice: autoethnographic first-person narration, and qualitative interviews.

Doğantan-Dack highlights the need for methods that can reveal embodied or tacit knowledge within artistic research, those that "have focussed on performing musicians' artistic processes in order to explore and reveal the tacit-embodied, and the expert cognitive-artistic knowledge that drives performance making" (2015b: 31). This type of knowledge was perhaps first elucidated by scientist turned philosopher Michael Polanyi in his seminal book *The Tacit Dimension* (1966). In discussing the performance of a skilled chess player he argues that we must assume that "we are faced with some coordinated performance, before we can even try to understand it, and must go on trying to pick out the features that are essential to the performance, with a view to the action felt to be at work in it" (1966: 30). This seems equally relevant to the performance of a composition by a skilled musician and this research hopes to uncover more of this silent knowledge as experienced by various performers.

This characteristic knowledge is highlighted by Borgdorff as "art practice [and] embodies situated, tacit knowledge" (2006: 18). Doğantan-Dack emphasises "the value of revealing the insider's perspective through the first-person narration of the creative processes the performer engages in, without which the artistic issues involved in performance making would remain unarticulated" (2015b: 32). My research explores embodied knowledge, both within my own practice and that of other pianists. Doğantan-Dack suggests that this view can only be brought about through acknowledging the subjective judgements made in preparing a performance (2012: 40), which can be achieved through narrative autoethnography.

The approach of first-person narration falls within the broader approach of qualitative research called autoethnography, which "seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experience in order to understand cultural experience" and uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography (Ellis, Adams and Bochner 2011: 1; see also Méndez 2013: 2). It is "both process and product", and "acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don't exist" (1-2). This approach is suitable to my research, which focusses on my experience of developing an artistic image in preparing certain works for recital performance, allowing me to focus on my influence on, and subjectivity towards, preparation and performance as research. Researchers using autoethnography "seek to produce aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience" (4), and in my case the description is of the process of learning select works for

performance. These experiences are supplemented by reference to the literature discussed earlier and in interaction with other pianists and their learning processes.

Autoethnography entails several approaches dependant on the nature and emphases of the research. My research draws on elements from three types of autoethnography. Personal narrative is "specifically focused on [the authors'] academic, research and personal lives", while reflexive ethnography documents "ways a researcher changes as a result of doing fieldwork", and layered accounts "focus on the author's experience alongside data, abstract analysis and relevant literature" (Ellis, Adams and Bochner 2011: 5). The personal narrative is used when discussing my learning process of the Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, dealing with my knowledge background of the composer, initial encounter with the score, accounts of the work before and at the piano and how they interact, the influence of lessons and masterclasses, the use of recordings, and the first performances of the work. Reflexive accounts are included at the end of the chapter dealing with the concert of South African music for solo piano when looking back at the complete experience, not only of my own learning of the *Three Incantations*, but the experiences of the research participants. I also examine ways in which I developed musically through the research, and look at elements that could be improved or changed were I to repeat the process. The layered account was used most prominently when describing my learning of the Schubert Sonata. Not only is my own experience documented, but the use of musical analysis and other literature such as that discussed earlier in the Introduction, and their effects on my experience, are included as well.

Autoethnographic writing can assume many forms and utilise varied media and tools, and has been used successfully in music projects by researchers such as Davidson, Bartleet and Doğantan-Dack. Davidson advocates the use of field notes, providing "one of the most extreme forms of self-reflective work" (2015: 98). Field notes formed the basis of much of my narrative writing and I have included short sections of these notes at some points in my writing. Brydie-Leigh Bartleet uses autoethnographic narrative to gain insights into the conducting profession using "description and action, dialogue and introspection", and makes use of a variety of media to record her work: "I filmed my rehearsals and concerts, undertook interviews with colleagues and used sound recordings and photographic images to reflect on significant moments in my processes of interpretation and performance", in combination with drawing on "sensory recollections of significant moments throughout my musical development" (2009: 1-2). She goes on to explain why this mixed-method approach was useful:

> By being one step removed through such media, I was able to explore the differences between what I thought I was doing in the moment and what I perceived myself to be doing

> in retrospect. Crafting, reflecting, re-crafting and re-reflecting on this data evoked a very fluid sense of time; it happened anywhere, anytime and never seemed to end (2-3).

She explains how she then created a narrative out of these tools using "concrete action, emotion, embodiment, self-consciousness, and introspection" (3). Doğantan-Dack notes that autoethnographic writing allows emotional aspects of an experience to be integrated into knowledge generation with a focus on personal experience (2012: 40). I have adapted many of these techniques and media for this research, including the use of interviews, recording practice sessions, and taking detailed notes while learning.

The various methods drawn from the two main streams of literature were trialled and questioned in my learning process. Following this was a process of analysing and reporting the outcomes of these approaches, and finally a detailed reflection on these events. I kept extensive notes while preparing the various works for performance: these included a written journal while practising, reflections on the process after performance, detailed notes from lessons and masterclasses, recordings of practice sessions and descriptive findings gathered from listening to recordings.

Autoethnography has been criticised for several reasons. It is, some argue, "too artful and not scientific, or too scientific and not sufficiently artful" (Ellis, Adams and Bochner 2011: 8). The practice has also been criticised for its focus on the self (8), while not having sufficient interaction with others. I set out to address this possible shortcoming in my own research by involving other pianist-participants, specifically for the concert of South African piano music. I interviewed the other pianists and asked them to document their own approaches when preparing for the concert, using this data for comparison with my own experiences and to supplement the findings from my personal approach.

To engage with the participant-pianists I used qualitative, semi-structured interviews, focussing on their experience of learning and performing in the concert of South African piano music with reference to their use of the various provided artistic image techniques. This type of interview provides direct access to the experience of the respondents (Merriam 2009: 267). The semi-structured interview contains a mix of "more and less structured interview questions" (89), that are flexible with little pre-determined wording or order, where questions are "phrased to allow for individual responses" while they remain "fairly specific" in their intent (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 206). This format allows the interviewer to obtain specific data from the interviewees, while allowing room for their interpretation of phenomena, with the interviews guided by "lines of inquiry" (Weiss 1994: 46) along various subjects and areas of interest. I say more about the interview process in chapter 2.

The participants were also be asked to keep an episodic journal of their practice sessions as they prepared the works for performance, and had the option to record relevant practice sessions. They were given the option of employing the various techniques and methods of analysis mentioned above in developing an artistic image and achieving it in practical terms, but I also let them know that they could work according to their own methods. As the research involved 'human subjects' I had to apply to the University's Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) for 'ethics clearance', which involved, amongst other things, gaining the consent of the participants prior to the commencement of the research.

Outlining the Narrative

The first chapter documents my encounters with the Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958 (focussed on the first movement), from the initial choice of repertoire and edition and my knowledge background with Schubert's music in general, to a detailed account of my preparation and learning of the work using the techniques drawn from the two strands of literature I discussed earlier: namely the work of pianist-pedagogues and pianist-researchers. After this I present an excerpt of a narrative account derived from my development of the various artistic image techniques, followed by a discussion of work at the piano to realise those images. This culminates with findings from the first performances of the work combined with insights from my lessons, various commercial recordings, and a masterclass.

The second chapter contrasts with the first in that it focuses on the preparation of contemporary music for performance. The voice of the research participants who performed in the concert of South African works is prominent at first as their interviews and performances inform most of the discussion. The debate between the roles of musical intuition and analysis is at the forefront here. Following this is an extended narrative account of my personal experience learning Alexander Johnson's *Three Incantations* which were put through the same set of processes as those presented to the concert participants.

To return to the work of Neuhaus, and the central theme of this research: "what is 'the artistic image of a musical composition' but music itself, the living fabric of sound, musical language with its rules, its component parts, which we call melody, harmony, polyphony, etc., a specific formal structure, an emotional and poetic content?" (1973: 9). This is the fundamental question which my research aims to discuss: how does one develop an artistic image of a composition for performance, and what are the means used to realise it in practical terms?

Chapter 1: Artistic Process and the Performance of Schubert's Sonata in C Minor, *Allegro*

Encounters with Schubert

When I chose Schubert's Sonata in C Minor I knew that the solo recital I was planning for the doctorate would have a classical theme. The inherent challenges of uncovering an appropriate expression when performing this music on a modern piano holds significant interest for me; questions of contrast, dynamic range, and projection of voices need special attention. I had settled on Beethoven's Sonata No. 21 in C Major, Opus 53, the 'Waldstein', and had chosen two shorter works by Mozart to open the programme, namely the Adagio in B Minor K. 540, and the Rondo in D Major K. 485. I was drawn to the final three sonatas by Schubert – a composer heavily influenced by Beethoven would provide a coherent close within the prevailing mould of the recital. It would also provide an opportunity to contrast two individual, but related, approaches to the dramatic expansion of concise material within the sonata form.

To help me decide between the three late sonatas I listened to recordings of the works by Alfred Brendel (Brendel 1990) and the earlier of his two recordings of the work; the choice of the earlier recording was not intentional – it happened to be the first on a search result. I tend to consider Brendel's performances to be more traditional readings of the works, without outlandish choices in regard to tempo and interpretation. *Gramophone*'s article 'The 50 Greatest Schubert Recordings' summarises Brendel's approach to Schubert as one that "balances heart and mind with innate good taste" (*Gramophone* 2019), and a review of Brendel's live recordings of late Schubert describes him as a pianist who "conveys a sense of complete emotional and intellectual coherence, as well as great freedom" (Plaistow 2001). Both of these reviews attest to his balance of the emotional and intellectual spheres and I hoped that by using them I would be able to focus mostly on the musical characteristics of the work without being distracted by the overly personal influences of a particular performer. I did not listen to the whole works, and settled quickly on the Sonata in C Minor, having listened to the other late sonatas (those in A Major, D. 959, and B-Flat Major, D. 960). I was drawn to the dramatic narrative and expanded scale of the C Minor sonata and the choice of key paired well as the parallel minor of the Beethoven, not to mention Schubert's direct links to Beethoven music discussed in detail later in this chapter. Additionally, direct links between the two sonatas are evident in that Schubert references Beethoven's figuration from the 'Waldstein' sonata in the first movement of his C Minor sonata (Fisk 2001: 180).

Before beginning any work at the Sonata in C Minor I documented my knowledge background of Schubert's music in general and did some preliminary reading on aspects of his style, particularly in relation to the concept of 'lateness' in his last sonatas. Inevitably, the preparation of this sonata has exposed me to far more of his music and surrounding discussions.

I had probably heard recordings and performances of the Sonata in C Minor over many years before settling on it, but would not be able to list these specifically, nor had I deliberately listened to different interpretations. The work only became part of the pianistic performance canon during the twentieth century, significantly later than the piano sonatas of Beethoven. While Beethoven enjoyed public success during his lifetime, Schubert's piano music was mostly championed and rediscovered in the twentieth century by Artur Schnabel (Brendel 2015a: 112).

Having heard many recordings and live performances of other works by Schubert, I had some knowledge of performance approaches to his music. I had also performed several other works by Schubert including the 'Trout' Quintet in A Major, D. 667, the Introduction and Variations on '*Trockne Blumen*' for Flute and Piano in E Minor, D. 802 and the 12 *Valses Nobles*, D. 969 for solo piano. I had also accompanied several of his more well-known songs.[5] Additionally, I had read through some of his other solo and chamber works, and had started work at the Piano Trio in E-flat Major, D. 929 and the 'Wanderer' Fantasy. As a result of this, I approached this particular sonata with a not insignificant knowledge of Schubert's work, compositional style, and performance history, informed by exposure to a selection of his solo music, chamber music, and lieder. I thus had an idea of the emotional and technical range of his music from intimate vocal works dealing in poetic, abstract and concrete texts to large-scale chamber music and virtuosic showpieces such as the 'Wanderer' Fantasy.

Schubert's Sonata in C Minor was composed in his last year, and was not published during his lifetime. Alfred Brendel divides Schubert's instrumental music into roughly two style periods. The late sonatas fall into the second period, "starting in the autumn of 1822 and terminated by his death" (Brendel 2015a: 112). Brendel also provides a few general characteristics of Schubert's sonatas from this second period: "the first movement is always composed in sonata form and covers a wide emotional range. The tempo is more often moderate than fast" (113). In the case of the Sonata in C Minor the tempo of the first movement is *Allegro*, however according to Schubert's early draft this was originally marked *Allegro Moderato* (Howat 1995: 16).

[5] The songs I accompanied included '*Auf dem Wasser zu Singen*'; '*Gretchen am Spinnrade*'; '*An die Musik*'; '*Ganymed*'; '*Bei dir Allein*'; '*Ständchen*'; '*An Sylvia*'; '*Die Wanderer*'; '*Die Forelle*'; as well as '*Gefror'ne Tränen*' and '*Der Lindenbaum*' from the cycle *Winterreise*, D. 911.

In addition to what Brendel describes as Schubert's second style period, there has been extensive academic discussion of the idea of 'lateness' in relation to composers writing towards the end of their lives. In a documentary of Schubert's life, pianist Andras Schiff suggests that Schubert was not afraid of his death, but rather of the effects of his illness. When his condition became terminal his compositional output nearly doubled: "I feel an increase in the intensity of the Schubert compositions towards the last two years" (1997: 36:06-36:17). Schiff continues:

> When Schubert felt that death was approaching, he made sure that he wrote down everything, and that's why I feel that it's not an unfinished life, it's a finished life, and these last compositions, they are to me the greatest Schubert works, and there is nothing more to be said, or to be sung, or written by a human being, that's it, it's a *finita la commedia* (45:50-46:28).

Scholar Edward Said suggests two possible manifestations of lateness in the work of artists. Either "we meet the accepted notion of age and wisdom in some last works that reflect a special maturity, a new spirit of reconciliation and serenity often expressed in terms of a miraculous transfiguration of common reality", but then he asks, "what of artistic lateness not as harmony and resolution but as intransigence, difficulty, and unresolved contradiction?" (2006: 13-14). It seems that in the Sonata in C Minor, Schubert is dealing more with Said's second set of possibilities, the tempestuous, and frantic nature of the opening of the first movement certainly suggests elements of difficulty, and even the tranquil theme of the second movement is frequently interrupted by agitated outbursts. By contrast, I think that the first movement of the Sonata in B-Flat Major, D. 960 would be more in keeping with Said's ideas of special maturity, reconciliation and serenity.

In her introduction to *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style*, Lorraine Bodley poses several questions regarding lateness in relation to Schubert in particular, reminding us that this was a composer only in his late twenties (who died at the age of 31):

> Is there not, in all Schubert's 'late music', simply an experienced composer's calm and confident grasp of the tools of his trade? Or did Schubert's knowledge that he was dying propel an early flowering of a 'late' style? If so, then how can we define this style as distinct from maturity? (2016b: 1).

Bodley also provides evidence that Schubert may not have been aware of his impending death, with several references to his own thoughts that he would still recover from his illness (4). Bodley disagrees with Schiff that Schubert's life work was complete:

> and yet there is something in these last works that communicates a sense of his life as being unfinished. The final works suggest the triumph of artistic achievement over the degradation of death and disease, the permanent presence of death (9).

As a performer it would seem that reaching a decision on whether or not Schubert was aware of the immediacy of his death is not necessary in the performance of his late music. As Brendel reminds us, we should approach each work as an individual creation, and while discussions of the surrounding

psychological context of the composer can at times provide insight into certain compositional aspects, the primary concern of a performer should be to communicate the musical meaning of a composition successfully. Brendel states: “I like to think of every masterpiece as a phenomenon in its own right. In doing so, the usual way of looking for relationships and analogies within a certain style is of no great use to me… I am not interested in clichés, but in what is special and unique” (2015a: 40). The extension of this argument means that to look for personal and psychological circumstances around the composition of a particular work might serve as inspiration to evoke a certain mood or character, but cannot give us all the interpretative answers required to present a successful performance. In this chapter I specifically investigate methods designed to directly influence and stimulate my interpretation of this sonata.

Throughout this chapter I discuss the process of preparing Schubert’s Sonata in C Minor, D. 958 for public performance, with specific focus on the first movement, *Allegro*. I cover the choice of a particular edition, the use of various methods to develop an artistic image and practical methods used to achieve this image. The narrative spans the time from my initial choice of the work through to the first performance, and also reflects on subsequent performances thereafter. Interwoven with this writing are insights from pianist-researchers, pianist-performers, a brief survey of select recordings of the work, performance literature, and insights from my teachers and a masterclass on the work.

Settling on a Score

Having decided to perform the Sonata in C Minor, I needed to choose a primary score from which to work. I am aware of the existence of several editions of piano sonatas by Schubert. I chose to work mostly from the G. Henle Verlag Urtext edition, edited by Paul Mies with fingering by Hans-Martin Theopold (Mies 1971). I had used similar editions when learning several Beethoven sonatas, and had also worked at the abovementioned Schubert Trio from one of these. I first familiarised myself with the various notational markings in the edition and the editorial notes. I also looked up Schubert’s manuscript of this movement with a view to finding new insights. Andras Schiff argues that manuscripts have the effect of making well-known music personal once more, something which can be lost in the printed edition: “if you look at the printed edition, somehow all the magic has gone from it, a magic that is the directness of the composers’ handwriting” (1997: 27:58-28:03). It quickly became clear that to make substantial use of the manuscript for this sonata would require in depth knowledge of how to read and interpret Schubert’s markings. For instance the wedges that appear

on the chords in bar 2 and similar places (in the Urtext edition) are missing in the manuscript, and the chord in the left hand in bar 3 is tied over, where in printed editions there is a rest on the third beat. In the end I decided to continue with the G. Henle Verlag edition, with reference to any other editions that I could find. An in-depth discussion of the compositional history of the Sonata in C Minor and the development of its various editions is beyond the scope of this research. The musical extracts included in this chapter are captured from my working copy of the score, and include any markings I have made.

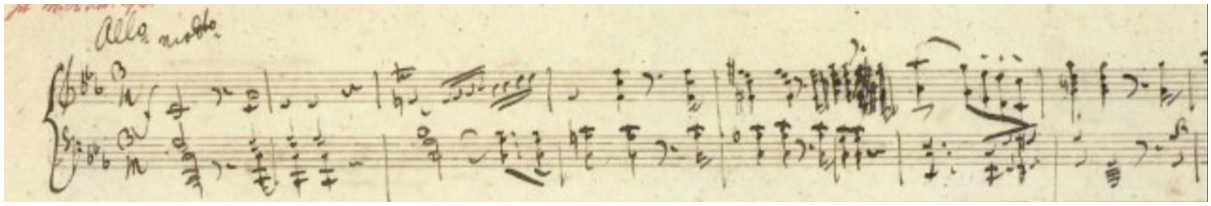


Figure 5: Schubert Sonata in C minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 1-8. Manuscript (Schubert 1828).

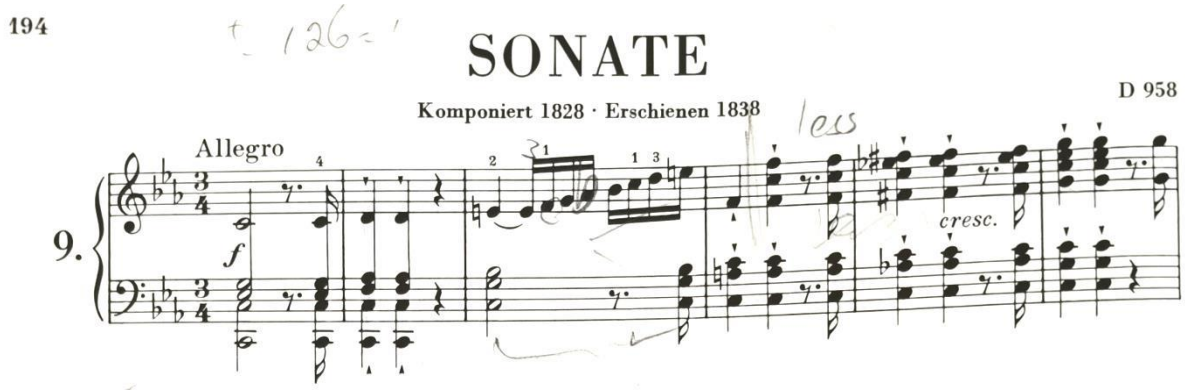


Figure 6: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 1-6. G. Henle Verlag, Urtext edition (Mies 1971).

Initial Image(s)

One of the goals of this research is to test various methods designed to develop an artistic image and to realise this image in practice. With this in mind I decided to follow Peter Hill's recommendation that the artistic image be at least somewhat worked out before undertaking the practical work at the instrument. This would take advantage of the "precious time when the piece is unfamiliar, when we are most able to bring fresh insights to bear" (2002: 133) and would allow me "to be clear, in outline at least, about what [I am] trying to do before looking for the means to achieve it" (133).

I began work at the methods of creating an artistic image which were carried out specifically before starting at the piano. I put the first movement, *Allegro*, through techniques drawn from the literature of both pianist-pedagogues and pianist-researchers discussed in the Introduction. In this

way I would start by "taking the composition apart to see its component elements, the harmonic structure, the polyphonic structure" (Neuhaus 1973: 21). I had gathered these techniques together into a list by this point, and these were subsequently sent out as the guidelines for the participants in the concert of South African works (which is covered in chapter 2).

The first task I set myself was to create a structure table as outlined by John Rink, which included major structural features of the work, and smaller sections within these. Rink states that "one of the first deliberate analytical tasks a performer could undertake is to determine the music's form and tonal foundation" (Rink 2002: 45). The table (see fig. 7) outlines the major sections one would expect of a classical sonata form movement – exposition, development, recapitulation and coda – with the details of the themes, transitions and cadential extensions outlined as well. I later revised this table with more detail and some revisions of sections. The first hand-written draft illustrates the use of this technique.

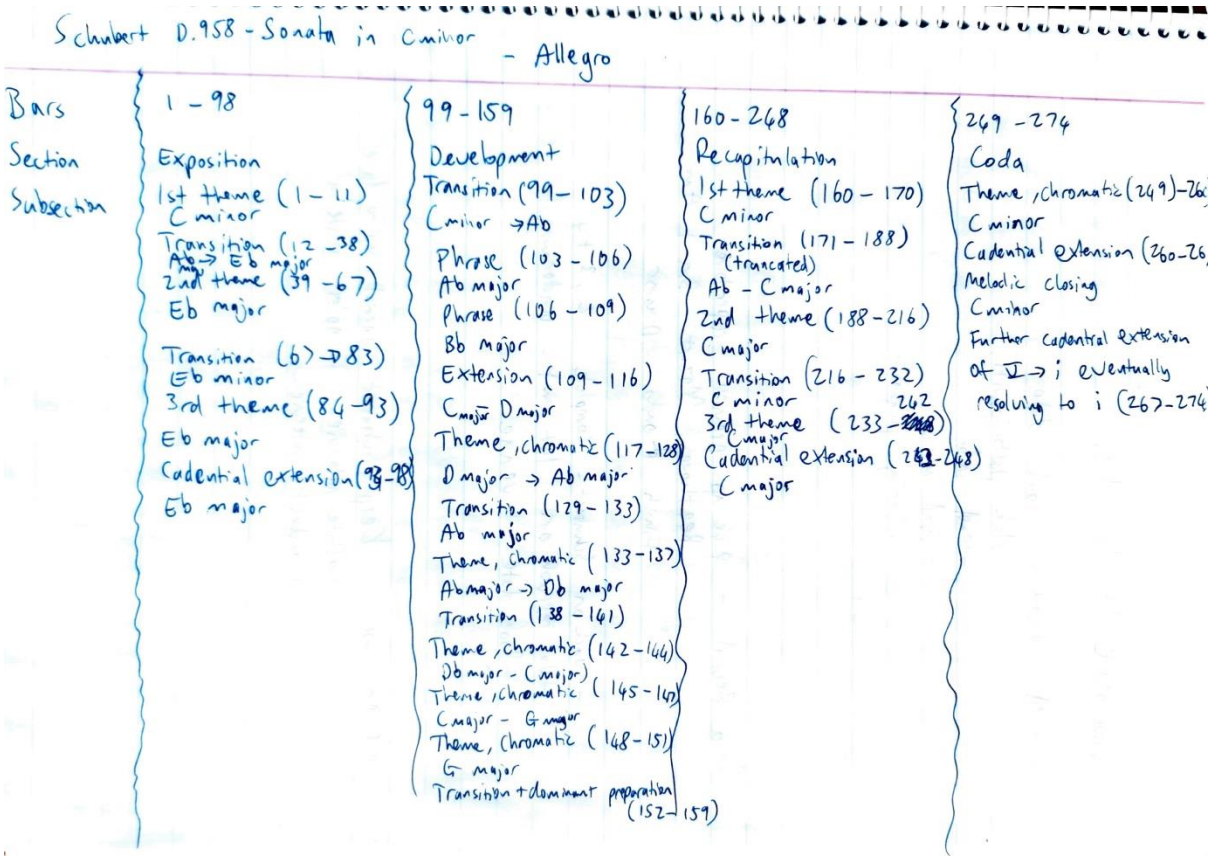


Figure 7: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*: Structure Table.

Finding out where the exposition finished was easy as the composer marked a repeat at that point. While the bounds of the development are fairly straightforward to identify, the inner workings of this section were more complicated to determine at sight as Schubert didn't appear to make use of any previous themes, somewhat in keeping with Charles Rosen's description of certain development

sections “which make no allusion to the exposition whatever” (1988: 275). Schubert also introduces a new chromatic theme in the bass in bar 119, marked in the table above and which is used in various keys before forming the basis of a retransition (see Rosen, 1988: 262) into the recapitulation. The coda was once again easy to distinguish from a structural point of view as it is preceded by a general pause with a fermata. Having completed this preliminary structural analysis it was clear that the development served to heighten the drama of the movement with several modulations moving upwards through keys from A-flat Major to C Major (bars 103-110), never staying too long in one particular key.

The first movement thus conforms to what came to be known as sonata form, and exists in a mostly stereotypical version thereof, in that there is an exposition, development and a recapitulation, followed by a coda. I am aware of the many usages of the term ‘sonata form’, but will use here the most conventional as outlined by Rosen:

> Sonata form, as that term is most frequently encountered, refers to the form of a single movement… it is a three-part form, in which the second and third parts are closely linked so as to imply a two-part organization. The three parts are called exposition, development, and recapitulation: the two-part organization appears most clearly when, as often happens, the exposition is played twice (1988: 1).

The structure of the modulations in the *Allegro* is fairly straightforward for a minor key sonata movement on a macro level. The first theme group is in the tonic key, the second is in the relative major with a brief foray into the parallel minor. The development is more unstable, modulating frequently through various keys, some of which bear little connection to the tonic. The recapitulation is in the tonic minor, with the second theme group restated in the parallel major, while the coda remains in the tonic minor, using the new theme introduced in the development. Schubert tends to highlight points of structural importance through use of extreme dynamics, changes in texture, and a more spacious harmonic rhythm, for instance in bars 36 and 37 the passing harmonies in the lower voice are dropped in favour of a more structural presentation of the half-cadence ending the first subject group. Additionally the melodic line has been replaced by a broken chord figuration, outlining the slower change of harmony here enhanced by a *crescendo*, strong accent and the *forzando* in bar 38. Xavier Hascher shows that Schubert uses harmonic changes on the second beat of the bar in the second subject group to outline unexpected harmonic detours (2016: 267).

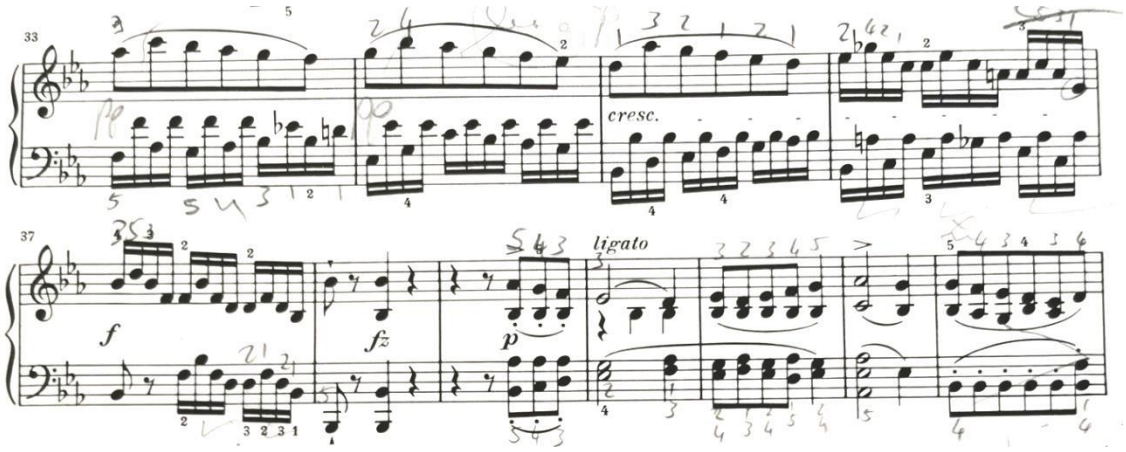


Figure 8: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 33-43.

Following Neuhaus' suggestions mentioned earlier, I then undertook a harmonic analysis of this movement, working out the various keys, chord progressions and modulations. During this process, which involved my first detailed look at the score, I started to notice other features of the music and how they contributed to the narrative progression. For instance, the abrupt changes of harmony in bars 110-113 (fig. 9) are combined with similar changes in dynamics and the use of 'foreshortening', which I had read about previously in Brendel's writing about Beethoven's compositional techniques (2015a: 117). Passages like that in bars 48-50 had caused some confusion at first as to whether the modulation was to D-flat Major or G-flat Major (see fig. 10). I had originally thought the key was D-flat Major as the first chord of the phrase outlined a tonic triad, however the presence of the C-flat in the left hand of bar 49 would ultimately signal G-flat Major.

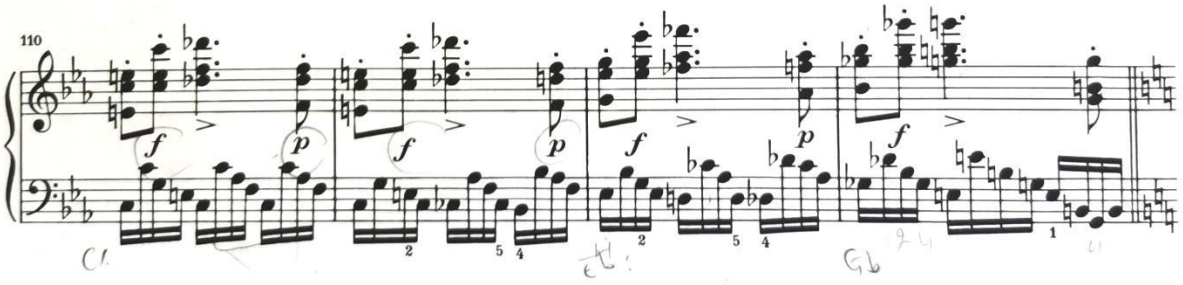


Figure 9: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 110-113.

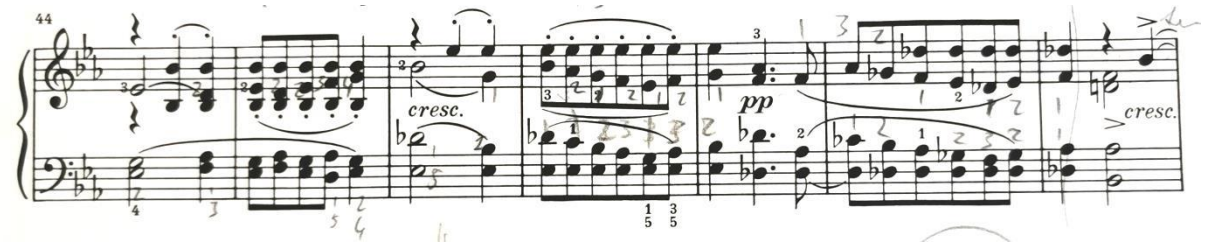


Figure 10: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*: bars 44-50.

The next task I undertook was to prepare a graph of the dynamic progressions of the movement with any significant changes plotted out, which according to Rink "amounts to an 'intensity curve' for the whole piece – that is, 'a graphic representation of the music's ebb and flow, its "contour" in time'" (2002: 48). This exercise yielded useful information particularly as it related to the development discussed above: it is immediately clear from the graph (see. fig. 11) that Schubert places significant emphasis on the early stages of the development section, such that drastic and constant changes of dynamics signify an intensification of the narrative drama unfolding.

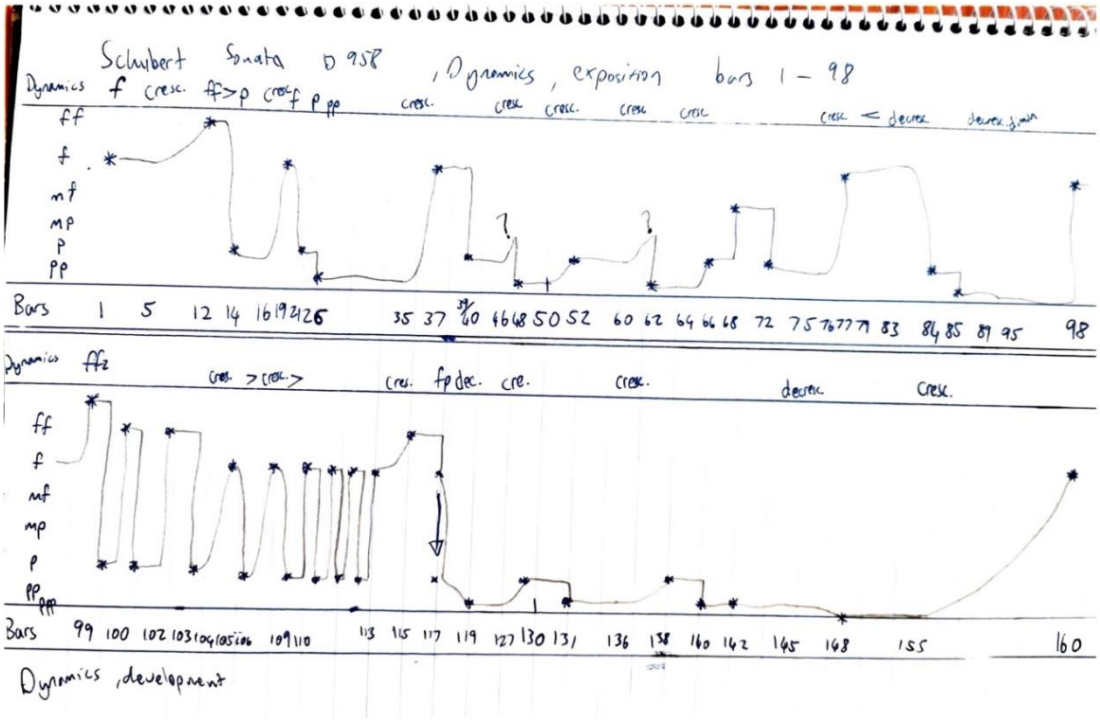


Figure 11: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*: Dynamic Curve, Exposition and Development.

Following this I created a rhythmic reduction of the phrase lengths to determine any unusual occurrences. Immediately noticeable from the outset of the movement was a slight deviation from traditional and symmetrically defined four- and eight-bar phrases, which by the nineteenth century had "become tyrannical" (Rosen 1988: 133). Schubert's phrase lengths appeared to me (before work at the piano) to be divided as seen in fig. 12 for the opening.

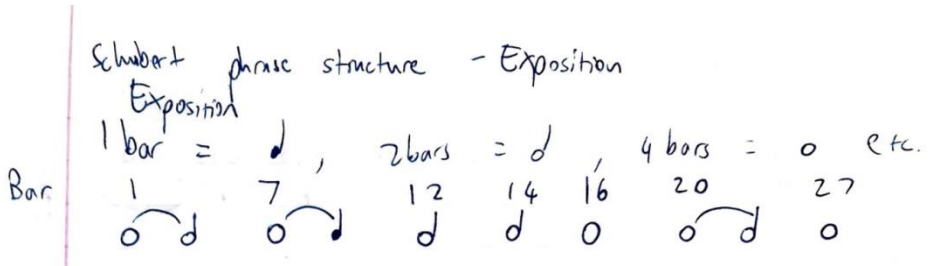


Figure 12: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*: Phrase Length Reduction.

In discussing the second movement of this sonata, Charles Fisk points out how Schubert uses unexpected phrase lengths to create uncertainty for the listener (2001: 48-49). The idea of predictability in the music of other Viennese composers such as Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven is also discussed by Scott Burnham who suggests that in their music "melody, harmony and phrase rhythm unfold together to project a satisfying sense of filling a foreseeable segment of time with something interesting and cogent" (2016: 35). While the phrase structure I identified in Schubert's *Allegro* may be understood from different perspectives, the difficult bars to group are bars 11-14 (see fig. 15). In bars 7-11 the right-hand melody is immediately repeated in the lower voice. In bar 11 the left-hand phrase pattern is continued and completed as expected in bar 12; however the descending scale continues over an additional bar, extending the harmony on the bVI chord. Some writers have pointed to the improvisatory nature of this scale, which would allow room to play it without undue accent on the first beat of bar 13, possibly contributing to a more balanced closure to this section. Fisk writes that this scale "stalls momentum" (2000: 635) at this point in the sonata.

Focussing in: Bar-by-Bar

Having completed these initial processes I set about writing a bar-by-bar narrative description of the *Allegro* combining what I considered at the time to be important structural and musical features of the work with possible pianistic implications for its performance, thereby forming a more developed artistic and performative image of the movement. This image was enhanced where necessary by additional findings drawn from the pianist-researcher and pianist-performer literature. In this way I would be "discerning structural potentialities within musical materials and then realising them as [I saw] fit within the broader musical narrative of [my] performance" (Rink 2015: 129). What follows is an extract of this writing, undertaken before starting the work at the piano. It includes analysis of the score coupled with interpretative insights and performance implications that occurred to me at the time prior to performance. I have left these observations as I originally wrote them up even if they changed subsequently. I then compare the initial interpretative decisions with those that came about as a result of work at the piano and the first performance of this sonata.

The opening of the first movement of Schubert's Sonata borrows significantly from the theme of Beethoven's 32 Variations in C Minor WoO 80; specifically the same harmonic progression underlines both. While I had played the Beethoven Variations previously, this insight is by no means unique, and has been well-documented by several scholars (see Rusch 2013, Park 2016). Schubert's

setting here is more homogenous in texture than that used by Beethoven and requires slightly different pianistic treatment.

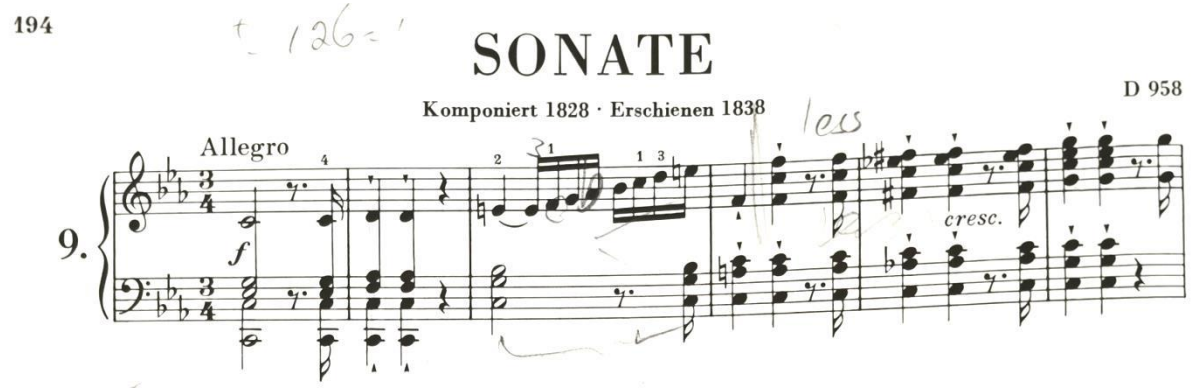


Figure 13: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 1-6.

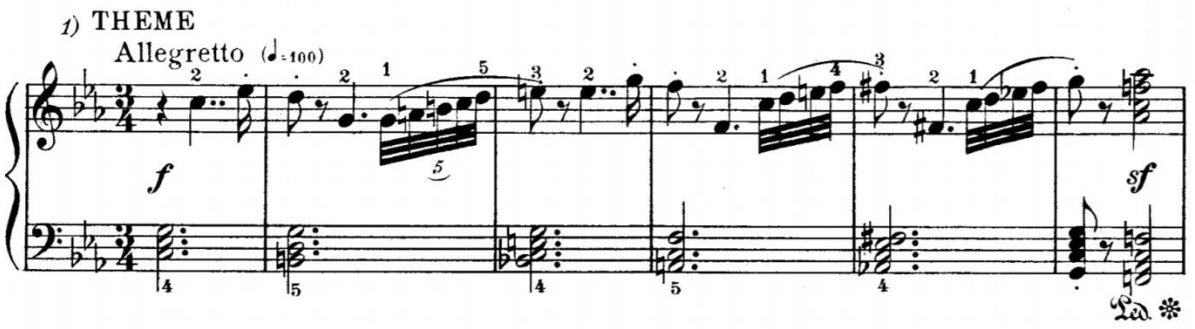


Figure 14: Beethoven 32 Variations in C Minor, WoO 80, bars 1-6.

What struck me in particular about the opening of Schubert's Sonata is that the chords start in a lower register of the piano, and move mostly in unison. By comparison, the texture in Beethoven's Variations is somewhat thinner and mostly in two parts; a melody accompanied by closed position chords beneath. Schubert's texture matches this briefly in bar 3, after which he returns to a more homogenous texture. This suggested to me a full pianistic sound with less melodic emphasis than I would use in the Beethoven. Schubert's articulation should be followed closely, as by this time Schubert distinguished between the staccato dot and the 'sharper' wedge, which is used here. In the preface to the G. Henle Verlag edition of the sonatas that I worked from the discussion regarding dots, dashes and wedges notes that "a distinction seems to have been intended only from about D. 840 onwards" (Mies 1971: iv). This suggests that by the time of the Sonata in C Minor Schubert used the various markings to indicate different articulations.

Furthermore, Schubert sets his music over a pedal point in the bass and uses the harmony to support the melodic rise, whereas Beethoven uses contrary motion between the two parts to increase tension. Brendel warns us against structural comparisons between the music of the two

composers: “If we look in Schubert’s sonatas for Beethoven’s virtues, we shall find them full of flaws; they will seem formless, too long, too lyrical and harmonically overspiced” (2015a: 116). However, the comparison made here seeks not to evaluate Schubert’s music on Beethoven’s terms, but rather to elucidate Schubert’s alternative treatment of similar material and suggest performative implications that arise from this.

This opening section appears to me to be inherently pianistic rather than imitative of the orchestra. Strings wouldn’t have the sharp attack and resonance required in bar two, the register is too low for many wind instruments, and brass doesn’t seem appropriate. Brendel speaks about how Schubert may suggest certain other instruments, but acknowledges that the music remains pianistic in nature: “Schubert evokes an orchestra, a chamber music group or a Lieder singer on the piano, but he does it in pianistic terms” (Brendel 2015a: 119). This encourages the Schubert pianist to search for pianistic solutions to questions of colour and texture, and while we can draw inspiration from the sounds of other instruments it should not be our place to try and imitate them directly. Schiff on the other hand, describes a section of Schubert’s G-flat Major Impromptu as being a combination of three parts: the vocal line of a singer, an inner accompaniment referencing water, and the lower voices played by celli and basses (1997: 16:00-16:53). I only came across this observation after I had presented the first two performances of the Sonata in C Minor, but it gives some license to understand pianistic music as a combination of various melodic and harmonic inspirations, while also allowing the possibility for them to change through the course of a movement. This was something which I had not considered before, and which could aid in developing an understanding of Schubert’s pianistic style. It also provides freedom from the need to understand everything in purely instrumental or vocal terms at the piano; some parts can rather be assigned a certain character, feeling, or reference to a natural phenomenon.

Rosen refers to Schubert as “in part the most significant originator of the new Romantic style and in part the greatest example of the post-classical composer” (1997b: 516). Both of these notions can be identified in the opening discussed above; while using a harmonic progression similar to that of a slightly earlier composer in Beethoven, Schubert’s treatment of it suggests a more Romantic approach in that the texture is fuller, and the music shifts into an unexpected direction as early as the 12th bar. Instead of the classical four-plus-four phrase structure, Schubert takes a short fragment of the opening bars and uses it to move in a different direction.

The chordal texture loosens somewhat in bar 7 with the inclusion of counterpoint between the melody doubled in octaves and the bass which is also doubled at the octave. Despite this slight change in texture I imagined that I might perform this without undue lyrical indulgence and that the

rhythm should continue to be strict. The music clearly moves forward here to bar 12, and any use of rubato in the passage leading to it would seem out of place, and would disrupt the dramatic tension required. The accents on the A-flats in bars 7 and 9 could be seen as tensions against the harmony, resolving downwards to the tonic chord, and possibly hinting at the first important structural deviation, the much written about turn in bar 12 to A-flat Major (see Fisk 2000, Park 2016). The importance of these A-flats is considered by Ryan McClelland to be a precursor to the scalic flourish in bar 12 (2016: 251). I imagined this change could be achieved by producing a rich sound rather than stretching the tempo as discussed above. The scale run that follows would require increasing articulation as it descends into the lower register of the piano, combined with a fluttered pedal (to prevent the sound from becoming muddied) and landing firmly on the *fz* in bar 14.

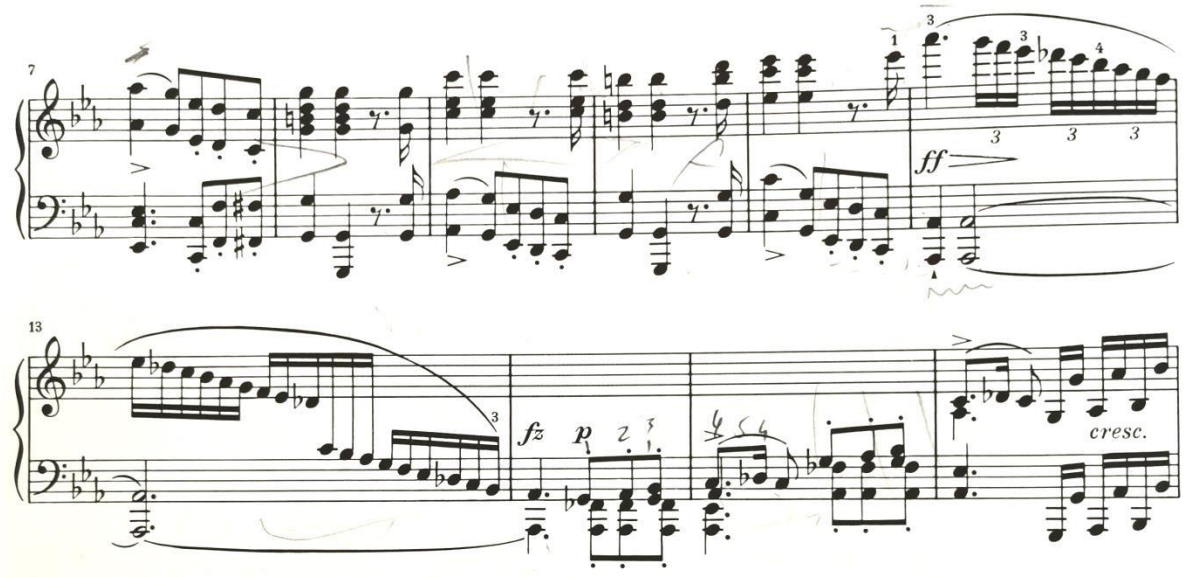


Figure 15: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 7-16.

I thought that the change in dynamic in bar 14 would need to be carefully managed on a modern piano, as the sound decay would have been quicker on Schubert's instrument, and the articulation in bars 14 to 15 would also need to be exaggerated in the lower register of the piano as sound lasts longer on the thicker and longer strings than in higher registers. On a modern piano the accents might be voiced clearly towards the top note, with a slightly tenuto feel rather than a sharp attack which seems more in keeping with the *piano* dynamic context at this point. As I looked at the next phrase, that is the transition (bars 16-20) to the counterstatement (bar 21), I had the following thoughts: I would move the transition forward in strict time; the pedal would need constant adjustment in the broken octave passage; chords in the left hand (bars 19 and 20) should be cleanly punctuated, with those in bar 20 possibly receiving the wedge accent, even though it is not marked, to ensure that they refer back to the articulation and powerful character of the beginning of the

movement. I would achieve the *diminuendo* in the right hand with sound only, without slowing the tempo, although a slight *non-legato* articulation at the bottom of the scale would also assist in providing clarity through the descending register. Approaching this point of structural transition in this manner would ensure that the nervous excitement of the new texture in the counterstatement would be maintained and the dramatic narrative of the music would progress naturally.

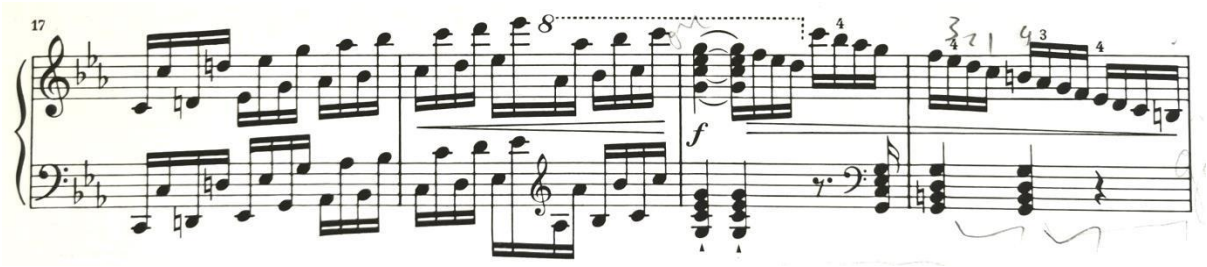


Figure 16: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 17-20.

While I continued this work for the entire movement, the extract included here should demonstrate the type of work that I had undertaken by this point before work at the piano. I had a well-developed idea of certain artistic qualities of the *Allegro*, including some thoughts as to the variety of characters of the various theme groups and how to achieve these at the piano.

Development at the Piano

Once I had completed this initial score reading and analysis, and had drawn performative implications from it, I decided to start work at the piano. This process was documented from the first reading at the instrument, and I made audio recordings of several of the early practice sessions. This initial process consisted of 29 sessions of around 30 minutes each. I started work slowly and in small fragments; often focussing on as little as two bars at a time. I worked consistently with the metronome and counted aloud during certain passages. In what follows I describe some of the contrasting insights gained from this process. This was informed by some consideration of historical performance practice and opinions on approaching Schubert's music on a modern instrument.

I was preparing the Sonata for performance on a modern concert grand piano and not on a period instrument from Schubert's time, which scholars of historical performance practice such as Paul Badura-Skoda (2013) have done. Researcher and flautist Abigail Dolan expresses how period performances can have value to those who play on modern instruments. In an interview with Rosalind Rei about seldom used flute techniques derived from older recordings Dolan noted that she was "exposed to so many different sonorities which were forgotten, and began to think of ways to

use these old approaches as a source of inspiration" (Rei 2019). While acknowledging that earlier styles of performance can be valuable to the contemporary performer, for example, what can be learned in terms of colours and sounds that are possible, I am aligned with Dinu Lipatti's philosophy that the performer's role is to capture the spirit of the music rather than endeavour to play it as it might have sounded in the composer's time or to past audiences. Lipatti notes, somewhat provocatively, that

> wanting to restore to music its historical framework is like dressing an adult in an adolescent's clothes. This might have a certain charm in the context of a historical reconstruction, yet is of no interest to those other than lovers of dead leaves or the collectors of old pipes… Music has to live under our fingers, under our eyes, in our hearts and in our brains with all that we, the living, can offer it (Lipatti 1950).

It is worth noting here that the historically informed performance movement has moved forward from the tenets to which Lipatti was reacting so strongly.[6] Brendel speaks about how Schubert in particular can benefit from being performed on a modern instrument: "If you try to play the Wanderer Fantasy and Beethoven's Sonata Op. 106 on a piano of the 1820s, you will realise how much more Schubert's piece depended on the instruments of the future to come alive" (2015a: 119). As Badura-Skoda notes, Schubert "didn't own an instrument, sometimes he went over the extension of the available keyboard and you have to use a post-Schubert instrument to play some of his sonatas" (Vittes 2017). Schiff speaks of playing Schubert specifically on a Bösendorfer piano as opposed to a Steinway, citing the difference as being similar to that between Hochdeutsch and the Viennese dialect: "a splendid Steinway is to me a very objective instrument, and I need a very subjective one for this music" (1997: 15:05-15:12). Doğantan-Dack makes similar observations in her research on the performance of Beethoven's music. Her research process "has its origins in technical and interpretative questions related to the making of artistic musical performance on the modern instrument of the piano" (2015a: 169-170).

The notes I took after starting work at the piano raised some new ideas which I documented after the initial read through. These often dealt with details that wouldn't easily be observable when parsing the score in terms of broader themes such as structure, harmony and dynamics as I had done previously, and also involved practical ways of making sense of the combination of musical features rather than dealing with isolated elements. One of these ideas arose out of the accompaniment figure in bars 21 to 37 (see fig. 17). Here Schubert uses a variation of the 'Alberti' bass, but it is enhanced with an interval on the first of each four semi-quavers and coloured with a dissonant passing note on the third semi-quaver. Rosen speaks about the nature of this type of

[6] For those interested in further reading of historically informed performance see Leon Botstein (2005) and Deanna Joseph (2014) as introductions to the subject.

pattern, suggesting that this accompaniment "blurs the independence both of the three contrapuntal voices which it theoretically contains and of the chordal or homophonic harmony which it supposedly illustrates" (1997b: 29). In order to realise this distinction I would practice in several variants, for instance, playing the melody in the right hand with just the lowest voice on the main beats in the left, or playing the second and fourth semi-quavers with the melody, while leaving out the other left-hand notes. This passage required that the weight of the left hand rests more strongly on the upper note of the interval on each main beat. To achieve this I used variations of Cortot and Neuhaus exercises where the interval is struck together but the lower voice is released staccato, ensuring that the weight rests firmly on the top voice. Cortot uses a similar approach in his edition of Chopin's Etude, Opus 10 No. 2 in A Minor, as demonstrated in figure 18.

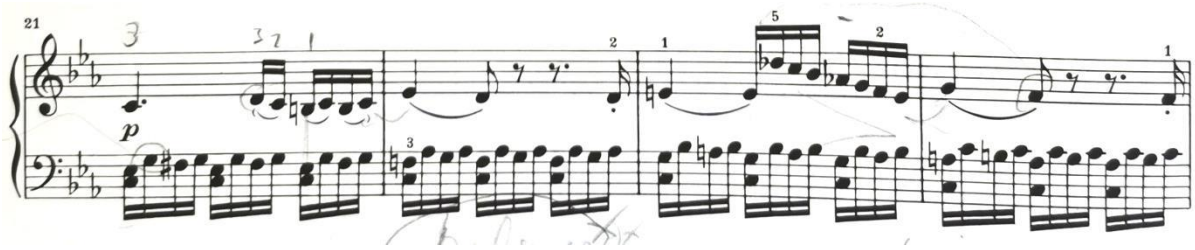
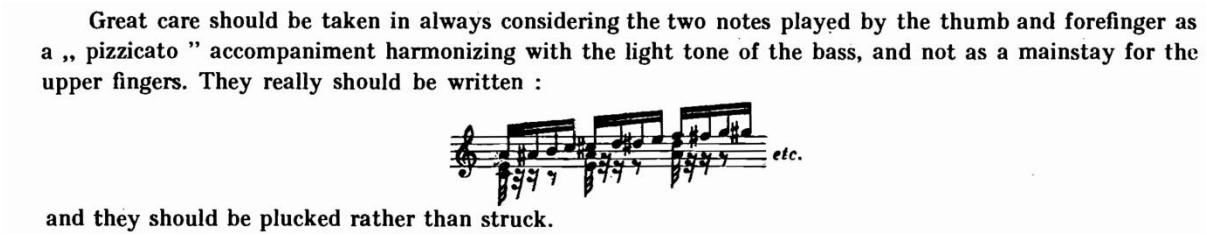


Figure 17: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 21-24.


Great care should be taken in always considering the two notes played by the thumb and forefinger as a „ pizzicato " accompaniment harmonizing with the light tone of the bass, and not as a mainstay for the upper fingers. They really should be written :

etc.

and they should be plucked rather than struck.

Figure 18: Chopin Etude, Opus 10 No. 2 Student Edition, Alfred Cortot.

Another interesting occurrence of this pattern happens in bar 30; the 'Alberti' bass briefly takes on a melodic, connecting role on the third beat and needs to be given due attention to make the link successful (see fig. 19). While there were other insights that grew out of this first reading, I generally felt as though I had an understanding of many elements of the composition from the work I had done prior to playing it at the piano. However, the musical character of certain sections was more easily understood after playing and hearing them; and I had noted before starting work at the piano that I wasn't able to hear how they would sound without playing them first.

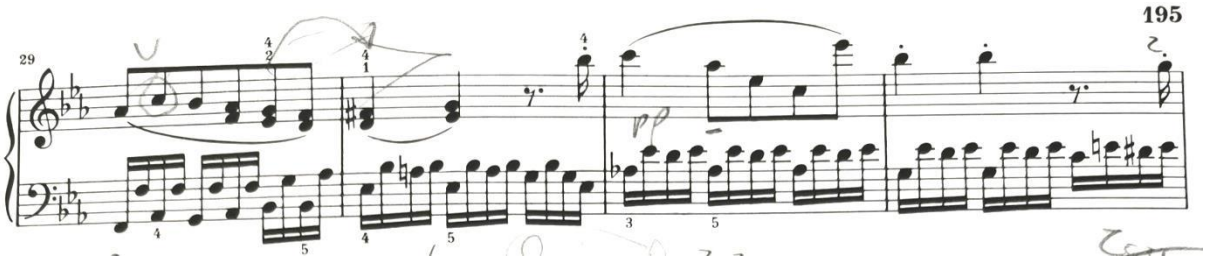


Figure 19: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 29-32.

Artistic Ideal meets Pianistic Reality

After the first read through at the piano, I put the *Allegro* movement away for several months while working on the South African piano music concert I was organising and performing in and several other performances. I subsequently went back to work at the *Allegro* in preparation for the first and second performances of the Sonata which took place in October 2019, while keeping detailed notes from my lessons, as well as my own rehearsal work. What follows is a comparison of my performance insights from the work done before starting at the piano with later insights gained while preparing the work for its first performance. The left column of this writing outlines the initial thoughts, while my performance preparation notes are on the right-hand side. I have chosen to do this using the development section, having written mostly about the exposition until this point. The notes are left in their original unedited form.

Bars	**Initial interpretation and thoughts on performance**	**Notes from performance preparation and first performances**
99-102 (Fig. 20)	The first four bars of the development in A-flat Major, already established as an important key in the music, require extreme dynamic contrast from the performer. Fortunately these do not require special methods to achieve, the quaver rest in bar 99 if strictly observed, with both hands and pedal releasing together, will allow the following *piano* to sound, while the other change in bar 100 is from *piano* to *forte*. A similar dynamic plan is followed in the next two bars. The harmonic rhythm here is very strong, the tonic chord lasts for two bars, followed by the dominant for two, both approached repeatedly by passing chords.	General comments: Release hands and pedal together. Conduct yourself through the piece [by which I mean], find the musical gestures: each phrase should suggest the next one organically. Music could suggest a string quintet (Brendel 2015a). *ffz* bar 99, find a richer sound for the chord, listen more to the inner voices, and work harder for the sound. For *p* in bar 99-100, legato, cover the key and transfer the weight of the arm, don't lift the finger here, feel the key before playing it. Make a distinction between the wedge staccato accent and the normal accent in 101. In bars 102 and 103 both chords are *ff* followed by *p*.

103-108 (Fig. 20)	Following this are two phrases of three-bar length, punctuated by syncopated accents. The passagework in bars 104 and 107 requires some rephrasing in the line, and should be worked by playing each group then pausing briefly before the next, thus following the internal shape more clearly.	In bars 103-104, right hand should just move across the keyboard, make the sounds from the key, use less arm in the production of the sound of the chords. 103-106, 107-109, hands must be exactly together, hear every note in right hand, notice rephrasing in the right-hand groups, also memorised according to phrases.
103-108 (Cont.)	Once this work is done, it can be re-joined to the left hand. Thus, the *crescendo* can be achieved by playing each group of four semi-quavers louder than the previous, and will follow more logically than just an arbitrary *crescendo*. Also, the next six-note group will then naturally achieve the *diminuendo* by following the melodic contour. The A natural in the left hand in bars 104-105, and similarly the B natural in 107-108, should be heard clearly as tension notes that resolve upwards, and these changes should be made clear.	Practiced just the main beats in left hand in an effort to get this section together. Used Schnabel device to practice left hand to sound like broken chord rather than hearing each note: play the entire group together, but attempt to voice each successive note out on each repetition (Wolff 1979: 177). Used Busoni (1894: 8) tricks to stabilise the hand here and prevent it from 'rolling', where you add the counter-balance note, for instance in bar 104, the right-hand passage, I play the E-flat and C together each time either note plays. 104-105, the *crescendo* should be terrifying and radical, find the sound from the key, transfer weight to make the sound. 107, right-hand chords should be in context of dynamic, they are not *f*. General comment, this is music of despair. General comment for left hand in this section: Not too clean, don't use so much finger in the sound.

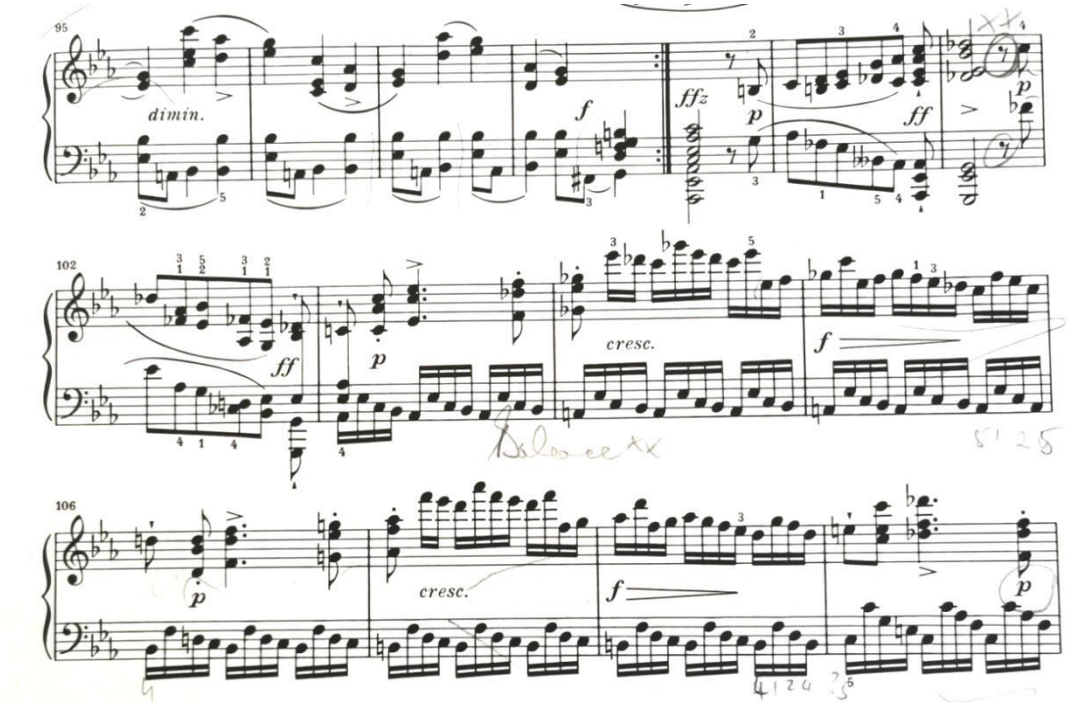


Figure 20: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 95-109.

109-118 (Fig. 21)	Bars 109-113 are complicated and require special attention to achieve the extreme dynamic contrasts at a fast tempo and within a small space of time. The *forte* and *piano* markings should be seen primarily as applying to the right hand; to try to imitate them in the left would make for a very unusual accompaniment, rather the left hand should stay at a more *piano* dynamic, following the dynamics more subtly. The syncopated harmonic rhythm of changing the chord on the second beat is again used in 109 and 110 and can be emphasised by pedalling on the second beat only (the right hand has staccato articulation on the first beat). The bass notes on the third beats of bars 111 and 112 should be brought out, not only as a contrast to the preceding chromaticism, but to achieve the modulations. Finally, the harmonic change on the second beat is justified in bar 113 as the music begins to modulate to D Major and the registers come together briefly in bar 114, increasing the intensity combined with a *crescendo*, reaching a climax at the start of the cadence to D Major in bar 115. Schubert doesn't mark the last chord in bar 116 with a *staccato*; following this will help to prepare the *fortepiano* in the following bar. These two bars should be played as Barenboim describes of pianists from an older generation, where: …the harmony was the leading element… which means that when they played arpeggios for instance, it's not only that they were making a wash of sound, they were actually not playing sixteen or eighteen notes or whatever the arpeggio may have been, but they were playing a flourish of a D-flat Major chord… (Sturrock 1999: 59:10-59:44). In this case harmonic concerns are at the forefront. After establishing the new key for two bars (117-118), Schubert returns to the unusual phrase length of 3 bars.	Bar 110, Make the sound. 110-114, left-hand passage, I had to find where to 'let go' of the left hand here to make it technically playable, for instance bar 111, third beat the low B-flat must be released. 113-114, start the phrase less, with more sound in top voice of the right hand then add more of the chord to make the *crescendo* intensify. 115, left hand articulate, right hand, count three-and, don't wait here! 116, beat 3.2, reference previous bar's articulation even though it is not marked. 117, clean the 'D' in the bass as you feel it should be done.

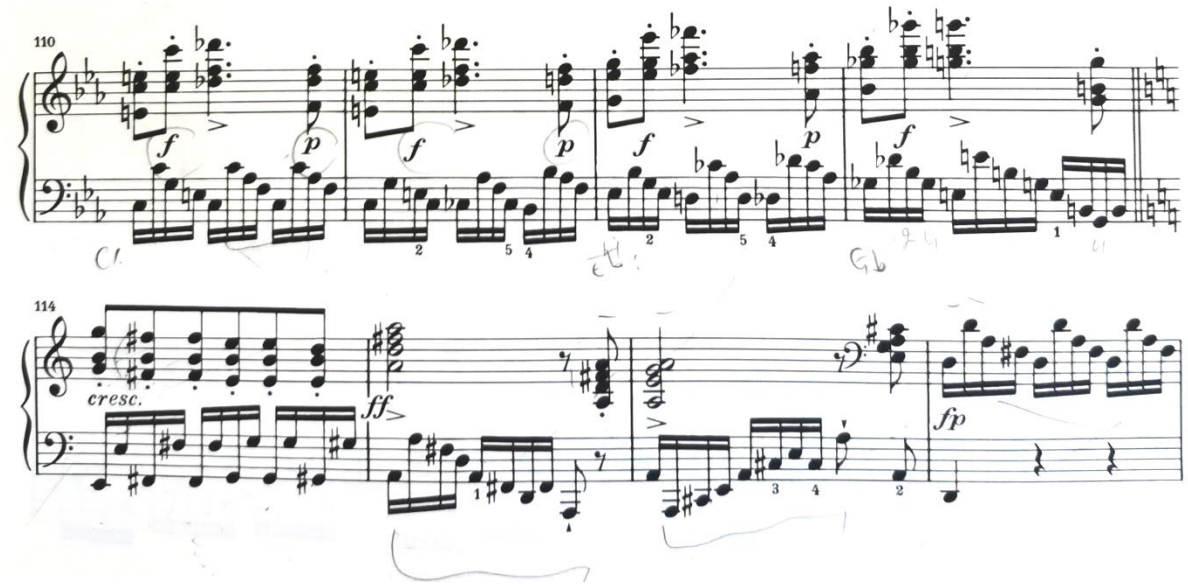


Figure 21: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 110-117.

This brief set of preparation and performance notes demonstrates how work at the piano starts to influence the development of the artistic image in a dialectical process – by no means are the initial performance thoughts cast in stone, and often the work at the piano offers up new alternatives. By this stage I have entered the phase which Hill argues that performers ought to avoid: "experiment at the piano, then reflection and self-criticism followed by further experiment" (Hill 2002: 130). However, the effects of repetition here are hopefully somewhat mitigated by having done significant work at the image prior. For the section of the development from bars 119 to 131 I have written a narrative description of how the prior work and work at the piano interact with one another, after which I will present the remaining comparison of notes from the development.

The section from bar 119 to bar 141 (see figs. 22 and 23) contained interesting melodic lines which suggested implications of alternative time signatures. These were even apparent in my initial work at the score before playing at the piano: "this highly chromatic melody (bars 119-121 and 122-124)", I wrote, "is felt as a hemiola: instead of two bars of three, the melody suggests a structure of three bars of two". As Yo-Yo Ma notes, speaking of varied phrase lengths, "such numbers mean nothing in themselves, but in the hands of a great composer they have expressive impact. The interpreter always has to be aware of questions of shape and structure" (Blum 1998: 23). Once I started to work at these lines at the piano my interpretation developed further. Within the musical context of this section they needed to sound ominous, with very little sound in the right-hand accompaniment, against which the melody needed to be clearly projected. I thought here of a conductor working with an orchestra where the melodic lines are transparent and always audible. Further reference to

orchestral playing arose in bar 127 where the left-hand melodic line implies the use of two separate instruments when it drops by an octave.

From bars 129 to 141 special care was required with regard to dynamic gradations and Schubert was careful in the score to warn against what could be considered natural performative tendencies or responses to textures and harmonies. For instance, in the notes I wrote prior to working at the piano I had observed the following:

> In bars 129 and 130, the accents are intended for the left hand; in the similar place in bars 138-139 they are for the right hand. Interestingly here, Schubert does not increase the dynamic for the lower repeat, but calls for restraint, as the following bar is again marked *pianissimo*. Bars 131 and 132 require special attention, the left hand is in a strong register, and the harmony in the right hand is changing frequently, which, from a technical perspective, could easily be played too loudly due to the shifting required. In 136 to 137 the same melodic structure as 127-128 is found, but this time the change of register moves upward then back down. Again, even though we have modulated upwards, the performer must be careful not to increase the dynamic for the D-flat Major repeat of previous material; Schubert has been careful to warn against this.

These notes seemed to be quite comprehensive as I had little to add to this passage once I began work at the piano.

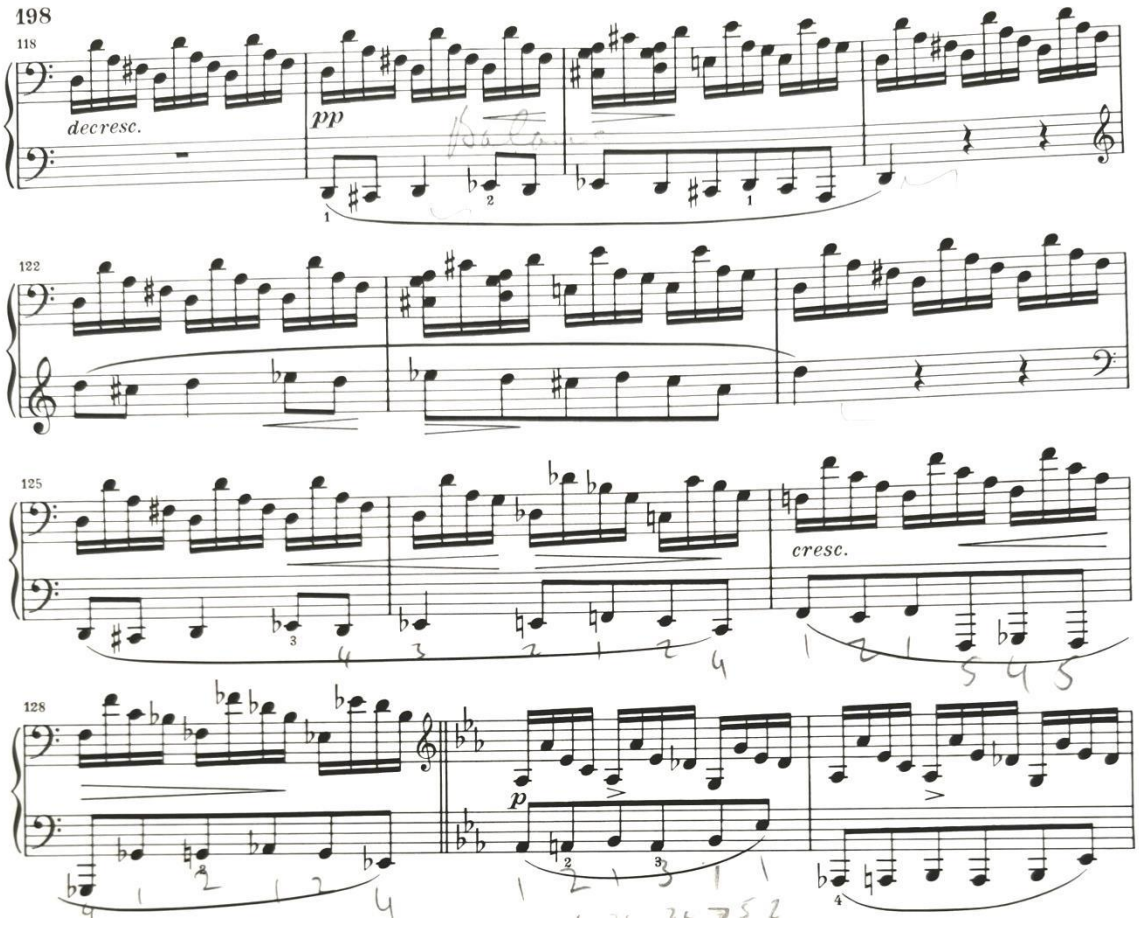


Figure 22: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 118-130.

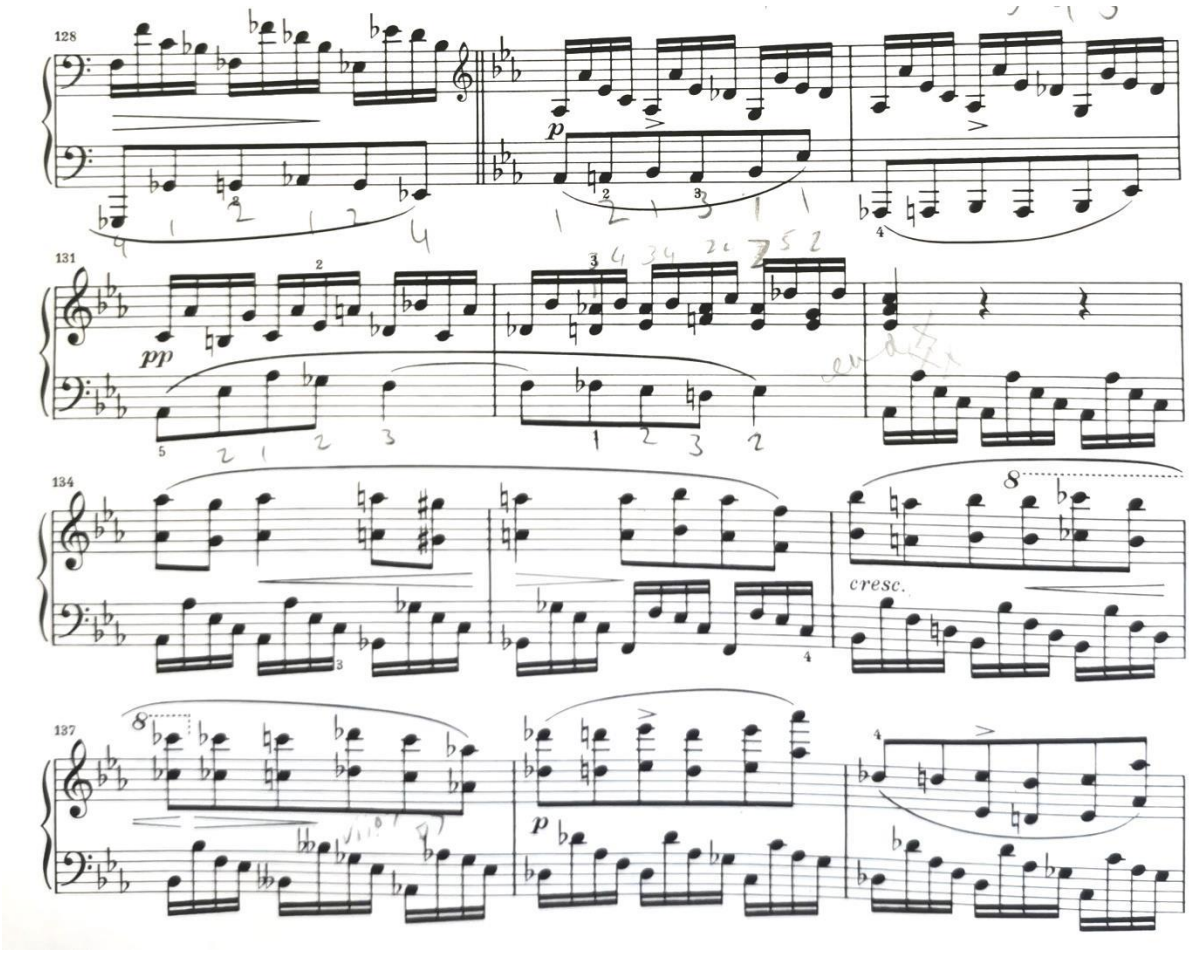


Figure 23: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 128-139.

My notes from the final section of the development are presented below as a continuation of the table format I used earlier.

Bars	**Initial interpretation and thoughts on performance**	**Notes from performance preparation and first performances**
142-159 (Fig. 24)	From bar 142 Schubert calls for a particularly delicate touch in the right hand, *pp* and *leggiermente*; an awareness of the change in register towards the middle of the piano is needed here to keep the sound light throughout. Once again, the sub-phrasing within the right hand should be worked as before and is marked in the score. As always with passagework, it is necessary to find the internal phrase structure and logic before putting it back together. At 148 we reach the softest section of the movement, along with registral changes that would normally be joined by dynamic increases (bar 150). That Schubert has kept the volume low here is important as this starts the retransition back	General comment: Right-hand sound, not so clean in this section, use more pedal, left hand has melody. 142, left hand starts on 1st beat, right hand on beat 1.2 152, left hand is ominous and should lead the *crescendo*, add pedal to the left hand. 152-159, stay softer for longer, *crescendo* only *starts* in bar 155/156. 159, left hand must go rhythmically in the right place, practice using the following methods: play a skeleton of the right hand using just the B natural and the F from the last group of six, and fit the left hand in against that. Play the right hand without the left hand. Play

	to the first theme group, and the tension is now spread over a number of bars and the dynamic levels need to be controlled until bar 155 where the *crescendo* starts. Allowing this *crescendo* to start early would spoil the drama Schubert has asked for. Beethoven's influence is noted again as the phrase lengths from 152 to 159 are shortened from two bars to one.	four semiquavers in the left hand on G against six in the right hand. Remember comment from Schnabel that the rephrases included in passage work should be "just for the pianist-performer alone" (Wolff 1979: 141) and should not be overtly obvious to the listener.

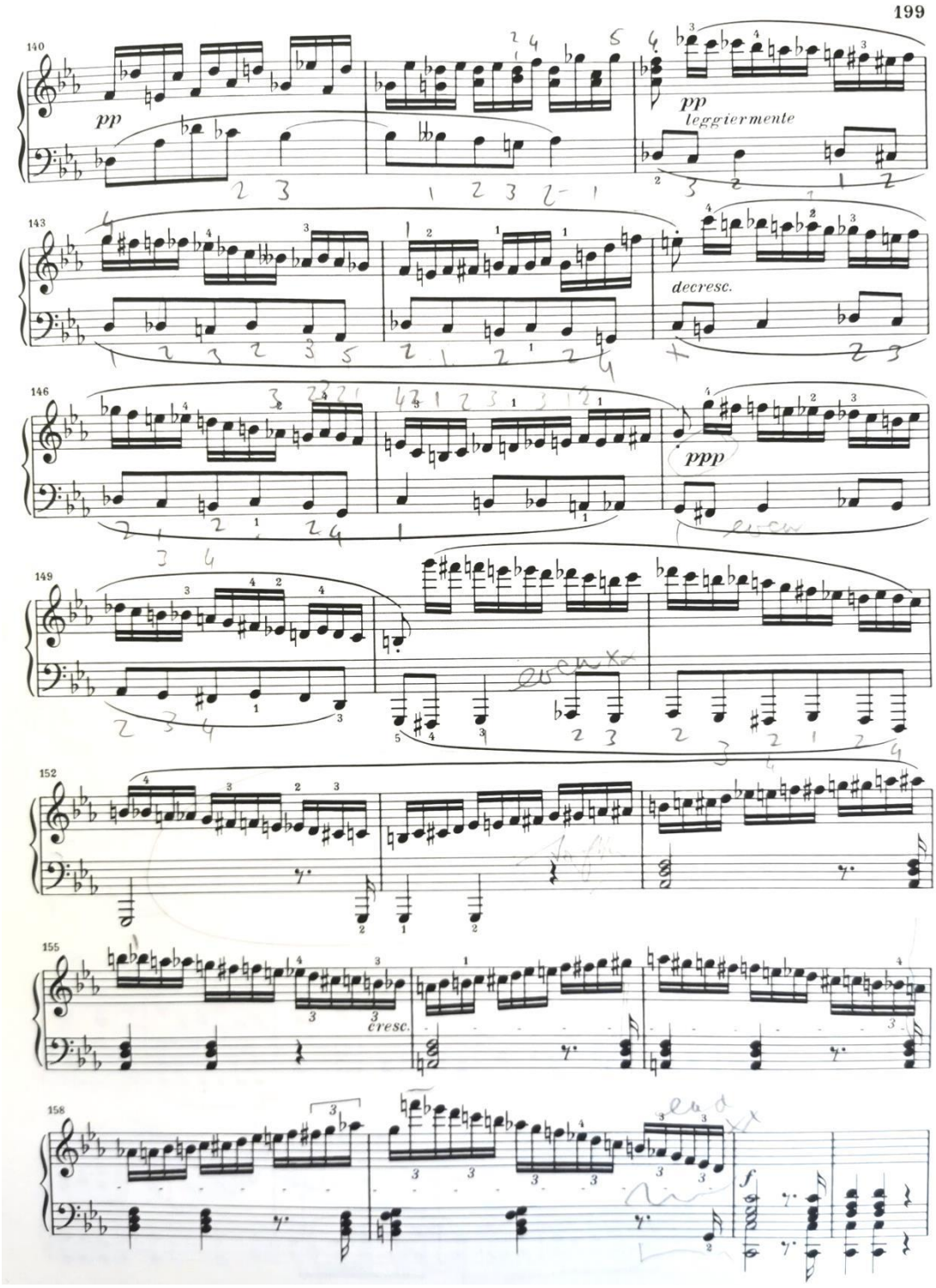


Figure 24: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 140-161.

The juxtaposition and comparison of these two sets of notes – on my thoughts about interpretation and artistic image on the one hand prior to performing the music, and further reflection on these after work at the piano – provides material for select topics for discussion. These will deal with the risks involved in undertaking so much work before starting at the piano, and ways in which intellectual and musical understanding abstracted from performance need perforce to become realised through physical embodiment and performance.

From Intellectual Understanding to Embodied Performance

One of the recurring themes that emerged from analysing these two sets of autoethnographic data is the embodied physical requirements of communicating musical content at the piano. There are several instances where my instructions from the work at the piano are more direct than some of the lengthy descriptions of musical and emotional content. For instance the pre-piano description of the first four bars of the development describes several musical features in rich detail, while the notes from the work at the piano deal almost exclusively with the means to achieve the required result. Generally, the work at the piano appears to entail less detailed structural analytical work. Once at the instrument I am more concerned with the means of playing the music and the production of the right sound to communicate the character of a certain passage or section. When there is a discussion of character and interpretation in my rehearsal performance notes this is often limited to a few phrases or pointers that can guide the interpretation while I am playing; whereas in-depth discussion of how the music functions from a compositional point of view is only considered if it becomes necessary to make a certain section more playable.

I found that there was some risk involved with undertaking so much work before starting at the piano. An in depth understanding of isolated facets of the music does not directly enable me to perform the music convincingly. Even the combined narrative account, which is designed to relate analytical details in a more integrated and performance orientated manner, does not account for several important practical realities of performance. Convincing performance at the piano requires intense physical and emotional input, both in the preparation phase and while on stage. As a performer one has to find ways to embody the music in order to communicate the various musical aspects successfully.

While I am preparing for a performance there are several practical aspects to focus on, and holding detailed analytical information consciously in my thoughts while playing could detract from the concentration needed to perform the music. I need to ensure that I am using my body efficiently and

without undue tension, or exercising "control of tension within the limbs" (MacRitchie 2012: 636), securing the various areas of memorisation of the music,[7] building sections up to concert tempo, and trying to work in the venue to adjust the performance to the concert acoustic and get used to different pianos for each performance. In this way, I am trying to engage with the "cognitive-affective processes that shape live performance" (Doğantan-Dack 2012: 36), rather than only analytical and 'intellectual' aspects of the work. Through doing this "the preparatory processes acquire their full meaning in the light of the ensuing live event" (36-37). In other words, all of the work done prior to starting at the piano can only be brought to life *in performance*, and requires further effort to become communicable to a public audience. Doğantan-Dack highlights some key elements of public performance which include:

> the transformation – once on stage – of the consciousness of the spatio-temporal continuum, and the necessity of uninterrupted flow in the activity within an inherently indeterminate or unpredictable context, requiring the mobilization of a remarkable range of skills and experiences (37).

When performing I would think of certain cues, including instructions on character, touch, sound quality and tempo. These eventually became subconscious, rather than being at the forefront of my thoughts. For instance, the direction in bars 142 to 159 to find a more veiled, covered and blurred sound should be built in while practising until it becomes second nature. Deciding to create this kind of sound influenced the type of touch I used at the piano. The scalic runs in the right hand are achieved by using less weight from the arm and the feeling that the wrist is dropped slightly below the level of the keys. In this case the arm position serves to facilitate the sideways movement of the hand (rather than connecting its weight directly to the keys) while the fingers operate 'from the knuckle' and with a feeling that they are flicking the keys forward and up to create an ethereal sound. The left hand in this section makes more use of arm weight: the wrist is level so as to allow the arm to connect to the keys and the entire arm-wrist-hand connection is used to create a deeper, more projected sound than the right hand. During performance I focussed here on projecting the left-hand melody, while the right hand creates an atmosphere and mood. Jennifer MacRitchie states what is self-evident to the professional pianist, that "the movement of the hands and body of the pianist as they approach the keys is a pivotal consideration when thinking about the produced sound and its connection to the pianists' expressive intentions" (2012: 636). In the case of the passage discussed above the initial expressive intention guided me in finding a physical approach to the keys that allowed my musical goals to be physically carried out. One of the participants in MacRitchie's study suggests that "before you start playing… you've made a kind of decision about the kind of

[7] I am careful to memorise using not only kinesthetic memory, but also, visual, aural, and structural knowledge to ensure that I understand the music on many different levels. Aaron Williamon's discussion 'Memorising Music' (2002) provides further insight into various categories and techniques of memorisation for musicians.

sound that you want. Or it might not even be the kind of sound that you want but it might be the kind of mood that you want" (637). Further to this, elements such as balance of sound and voices, resonance, character, and proportions of sound cannot be discovered without work at the instrument. Work at the score alone cannot enable us to read into the underlying musical meaning that has to be communicated.

The need to draw on embodied musical knowledge was clarified in a recent masterclass I had on the Schubert sonata by the Montenegrin pianist Ratimir Martinović, who was visiting South Africa in January 2020. After playing through the exposition and development of the first movement, Martinović offered some thoughts on my performance. While he found my musical ideas to be convincing, he thought that they often required greater effort to be clearly communicated. Changes in colour, texture and character needed to be further exaggerated so that those listening could understand them more clearly. It seems possible that having a very clearly defined image before starting work at the piano caused me to underestimate the amount of work required to communicate this image to an audience. This demonstrated that having an understanding of the various musical aspects does not necessarily translate into a performance that communicates these clearly to an audience. I now consider some methods that helped to enact this translation.

Conducting Research

A suggestion made by my teacher, Malcolm Nay, was to 'conduct' my way through the music. This was an attempt to make sense of the narrative progression of the music as it unfolded, and to try and bridge the gap between the initial artistic image I had developed and its realisation in performance. This was a way through which to "find gestures" (as I had noted to myself) and to ensure that each phrase must "suggest the next". Conducting also served as a method to determine the required space and timing needed to make sense of the various contrasting characters found in Schubert's music. The type of conducting used here does not need to be technically precise, but rather is used as a way to help me to identify with the music and to join sections and phrases together.

In terms of the methods of working away from the piano, this seems to me to be one of the most effective; as I am conducting the music I need to have very clear ideas of how I want it to sound. This is a successful way to complete what Peter Hill refers to when he says to "work intensely at the score, but heard in our heads *away from the instrument*" (2002: 133, emphasis original).

While Schubert used a similar harmonic progression to Beethoven for the opening of this movement, the musical difficulties distinct to each composer require individual solutions. While Beethoven was a composer who "draws one element from another, in what might be called a procedural manner" (Brendel 2015a: 9), Schubert, on the other hand, "was fond of daring tensions between distant keys" (43) and this is true of the Sonata in C Minor as well. While conducting the various sections of this movement I struggled at first to make sense of the rapid modulations in the development.

While starting in the tonic related key of A-flat Major, the development quickly moves to D Major, through A-flat, B-flat and C Majors, and then on to F Major, A-flat Major, B-flat Major, D-flat Major, C Major, and finally to an extended passage in the dominant key, before returning to C Minor. The challenge as a performer is to come to terms with these changes in keys as the music unfolds. In this case several keys have no specific direct relationship to the tonic, and must be seen as improvisatory in some sense, as though Schubert was demonstrating a thorough harmonic knowledge and ability to modulate with ease. Rather than trying to highlight each key as it appeared, I found that it helped to allow the music to unfold as it progressed, and to highlight features which could help the listener to follow more easily what was happening. This generally involved bringing out melodic lines against faster moving and more hidden accompaniments between bars 119 and 151. In trying to understand this side of Schubert's compositions Brendel perceptively notes that "Schubert's sonatas happen. There is something disarmingly naïve in the way they happen. Events do not unfold with graceful or grim logic; they could have taken another turn at many points. We feel not masters but victims of the situation" (115-116). He continues: "in order to move freely, Schubert needs space" (134). In an interview Brendel states that "Schubert contradicts the logic already after a few bars, and gives a very different character which is that, not of majestic energy, but of almost panic" (Brendel 2015b: 2:02-2:19). While I initially tried to uncover underlying logic and structure in the development before starting work at the piano, it became clear that when conducting or playing the music that a melodically based approach (instead of a structural one), with the harmony providing supporting colours, was more appropriate in this section.

One particular point where conducting was helpful was in determining the length of the fermata before the start of the coda. The first time the dominant seventh chord in bar 247 is heard is in bar 98, where it is presented in a *forte* dynamic, at the end of a long *diminuendo*, whereas in bar 247 the same chord completes the *diminuendo* in context. This is followed by a full bar's rest with a fermata. Out of this starts the coda, in a *pianissimo* dynamic and making use of the new theme from the development, cast here in the stable tonic key.

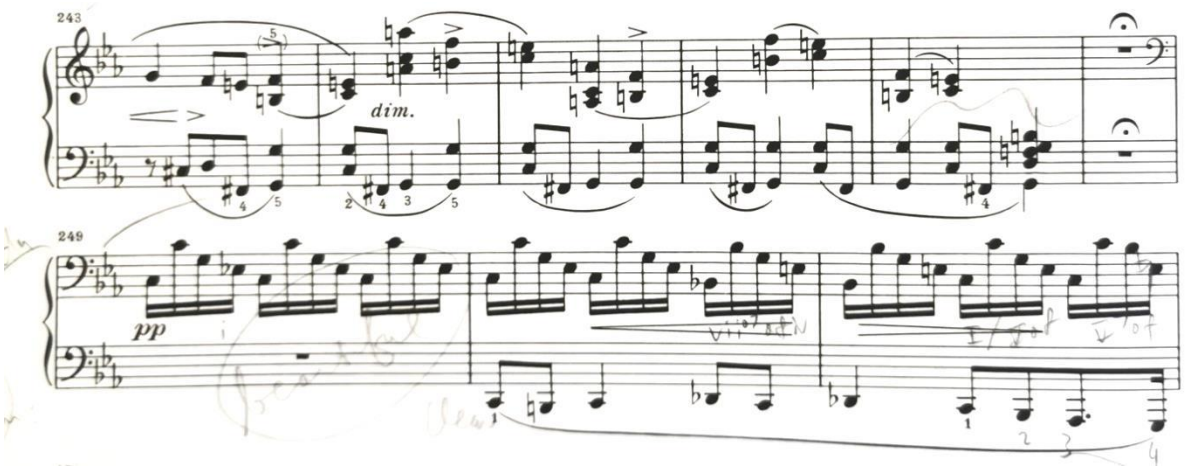


Figure 25: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 243-251.

Conducting through this particular moment helped me to feel physically how long this fermata needed to be. Rather than counting a certain number of beats (as has been suggested by Schnabel (1949) in his editions of the Beethoven sonatas), at this point one needs to wait for the unexpected harmonic ending to resolve internally before allowing the unexpected coda to enter from silence. Previously, the dominant seventh chord had led either to the repeat of the exposition or the *fortissimo* entry of the development, but this is the first time we hear the material in bar 249 in this context. Earlier this theme had played out a melodic expansion through various keys but here it remains in the tonic, becomes rhythmically displaced, and leads to the final outburst before the music dies away. Once again the two phrases in the right hand from bar 260, beat 2 to bar 262 (fig. 26), beat 4 could be written in 4/4, and clues to this rhythmic displacement could be drawn from McClelland's description of this passage: "as the Ab continually reaches higher, it seems to strive for something unattainable – perhaps an Ab harmony or a scalar flourish – but it is now trapped within the thematic material derived from the development and restricted within the confines of a tonic pedal" (2016: 252).

Conducting these bars as if they were in 4/4 helped to better understand their rhythmic impact and enhanced their agitated and urgent nature in performance.

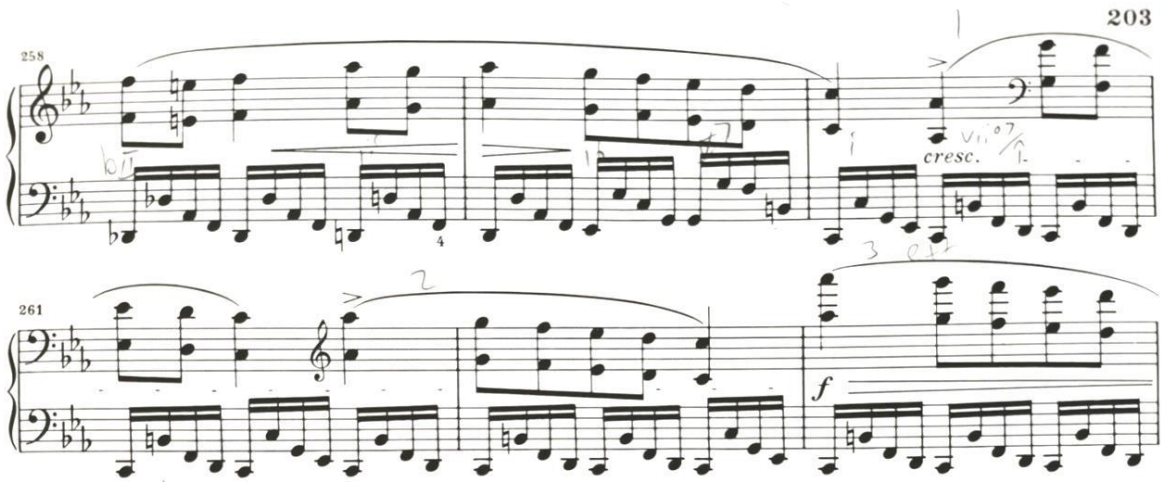


Figure 26: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 258-263.

The Influence of Recordings

In addition to work at the score and at the piano, I also started listening to as many different recordings as I could find of the Sonata in C Minor, across a range of pianistic generations and a variety of pianists on a modern piano and on period instruments. Peter Johnson asks the question "what can the performer today expect to learn from the legacy of recordings?" (2002: 198). He highlights that "comparing recordings is in fact an excellent method of revealing and celebrating the wonderful diversity of interpretations and personae revealed by the archive of recordings" (208) while warning against trying to find a definitive version of any particular work. The first recordings that I consciously listened to were those of Alfred Brendel, and specifically the last three Schubert sonatas (1990). This was done in order to select the repertoire, knowing by this point that I wanted to play one of the last three sonatas. From this video recording various aspects of Brendel's performance seemed to have stuck with me. My teacher pointed out that I was playing the opening chords in the same manner visually as Brendel, by pulling my hands back from the keyboard. In my case this resulted in a harsh sound, and it took some work to undo this and to think rather of leaving the sound behind in the keyboard. Brendel speaks about his use of physical gestures to convey certain musical features (2015a: 336) and it's possible that the gesture here was more of a visual aid to an audience than one which is used to produce sound.

The role of physical gesture in piano playing is discussed in a short article by pianist Francis Wilson, who categorises the concert-going experience from an audience perspective as follows: "a concert is both a visual and aural experience… the physical movements and gestures of the performer not only influence the character and quality of sound but also enhance the dramatic content of the work"

(Wilson 2016). Buck, MacRitchie, and Bailey, in a study of embodied musical structure in piano performance, note further that "the magnitude of physical expressive movements during a performance helps to communicate a musician's affective intent" (2013: 92), while also noting the importance of these movements for the audience. In my case, I needed to first produce the sound with the appropriate touch and then add later a physical gesture if required, which did not interfere with the sound, but rather produced a complementary visual effect.

After a return listening in more detail to the Brendel recording a number of musical features emerged. For instance, he seemed to take the most brisk tempo of all the versions I listened to. He notes in his discussion of general features of the last sonatas by Schubert that the first movement tempi are generally moderate (2015a: 113). Perhaps his choice here was by way of purposefully distinguishing this movement from the opening movement of the final sonata, D. 960, which is marked *Molto Moderato*.

In keeping with certain scholarly thought (Badura-Skoda 1969: 92), Brendel opts to play the second quaver of each right-hand-group in places like bar 57 (see fig. 27), with the last triplet in the left hand. While certainly an interesting, and possibly correct approach, I opted against this, the reasoning being that this passage then relates more clearly to the earlier appearance of this theme in bar 49. It also then serves as a link between the first, chorale-like appearance of this theme and the second variation which is more etude-like in character (see Wollenberg 2011: 240). Schubert scholar Su Yin Mak argues that variations within a sonata form serve to "focus the listener's attention on the materiality of musical gestures to communicate the sense that ideas are considered from novel and multiple perspectives" (2016: 300). This certainly seems apt in this case as Schubert takes his second theme through two variations before continuing to new material.

Other useful insights into Brendel's approach are offered in a documentary in which he shares his knowledge and experience with a young American pianist, Kit Armstrong (Brendel 2011). At one point he tells Armstrong that he should "feel what is coming in the next bar" (2011: 7:10). This feeds into my earlier discussion which dealt with how to negotiate Schubert's expansiveness of form and structure. Rather than planning structurally how the performance should progress, one should rather allow room for a more emotionally-based interpretation, which would allow for greater space and freedom in the playing. Brendel also comments that "in Schubert sometimes in the development section things have to move" (2011: 7:30-7:33). This aligned with my own findings that the development section contained increased drama and urgency, and with my teacher's suggestion that the music contained elements of despair. A faster tempo, as Brendel takes it, could contribute

to the required sense of urgency and unease here. Again, conducting through this section helped to underline the need for a quicker tempo.

After dealing at length with Brendel's recordings and teaching, I listened to a recording by German pianist Wilhelm Kempff (2012). Author and critic Bryce Morrison says of Kempff's Schubert sonata recordings that "no other pianist has communicated Schubert with a greater sense of his final transcendence of earthly pain and travail" (2000). In a review by Jed Distler for *Classics Today*, Kempff's artistic approach is characterised as approaching Schubert "not so much as a two-handed pianist as a one-man chamber ensemble, or a seasoned lieder singer backed by a sensitive accompanist" (2015).

In the opening of the sonata I was initially surprised by Kempff's unusual choice to accent the second beat in bars 4, 5, and 6, while in bar 2 he plays more strongly on the first beat. I also disagreed with the extent of his rephrasing in bars 33 to 35 where he would show clearly the top note of each line. Like Brendel he also aligns the second quavers in bar 55 with the third left-hand triplet. In opposition to Brendel, however, Kempff adopts much more moderate tempi overall in the *Allegro*; his development section especially does not move forwards when compared to Brendel. Kempff allows more space and freedom for rubato in certain lyrical lines such as in bar 134, allowing melodic dissonances and tensions to speak clearly. Perhaps the most enlightening moment in Kempff's recording comes in the retransition between bars 142 and 159. He captures the light, ethereal sound required in the right hand more convincingly than any other pianist I listened to. Of additional interest is his judicious use of the pedal, especially in lyrical passages.

Richter's studio recording was the third that I listened to in detail. Andrew Clements writes that "Richter clearly felt a special affinity for this often introspective music" (2017). Like Kempff, Richter opts for a generally more moderate tempo, with a full, rich sound. Richter allows the second theme to relax slightly in tempo, and while both he and Brendel exaggerate the length of the rests in bars 38 and 39, Brendel plays the second theme in a tempo closer to his opening. Richter is the only one of the three who plays the repeat, something he was well-known for observing.

The many other, and some more recent, recordings I listened to include those by Pollini, Schiff, Perahia, Uchida, Arrau, and recordings on period instruments by Badura-Skoda and Jan Vermeulen. While these are all of an undoubtedly high standard, I didn't find anything in particular that would have contributed something new to the overall discussion and approach to interpretation. Vermeulen's recording, however, does provide interesting insights into the sound of an instrument such as Schubert would have had access to: the sound is far less sustained, slightly more transparent

than most modern pianos, and has a slightly twangy sound, with less secure tuning. Vermeulen frequently makes a slight gap before the first beat of the bar; and while I sometimes use this approach to show particularly interesting colour changes, such as the one that occurs in bar 27, I found that the frequent use of this device can disrupt the melodic line of the music. Badura-Skoda, who has recorded all of the Schubert sonatas on both period and modern instruments, noted:

> My interpretation does not change, not even the tempi. You would think that due to the notes dying away quicker on a period instrument, you would take faster tempi in the slow movements, but I can still manage to keep a singing sound at the same tempi (Vittes 2017).

I also listened to a masterclass given by Leon Fleisher to a young Yuja Wang on this sonata (Fleisher 2004). While the first movement is not included in the video, the discussion on the degree of rubato required for this music was especially helpful to me to make sense of certain melodic passages in the first movement. For instance, in bar 61 the end of the melodic line needs to complete the *crescendo*, and the first beat of 62 needs to be reached with enough sound to make the contrast in the following *pianissimo*. I felt that stretching the end of this phrase would give away the dynamic contrast of the following phrase, so decided instead to play with a stronger sound on the last three notes of this first phrase, marked in my copy with tenuti.

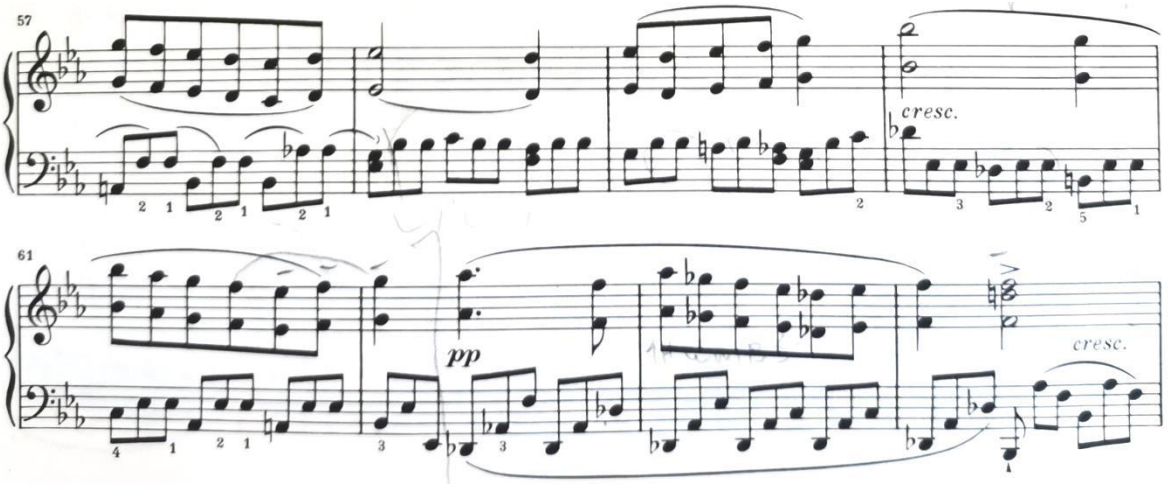


Figure 27: Schubert Sonata in C Minor, D. 958, *Allegro*, bars 57-64.

The use of recordings is primarily most useful as it can demonstrate many possibilities that would be beyond the scope or imagination of any one pianist. Hearing the same few bars played in several different ways can draw one's attention to different aspects perhaps inherent in the work but only illuminated in performance, or encourage us to rethink an approach we've settled on. Recordings also allow us to engage with other musicians (albeit indirectly), in a way similar to discussions in a chamber music rehearsal. If we follow with the score, we can try to understand why a particular performer made a certain choice in regards to tempo, phrasing, structure or pedalling, and this

forces us to be more aware of the choices we make and the justifications for them. At times we hear aspects with which we disagree, and this too can help to further clarify our own performance decisions. In short, recordings serve to 'test' our certainty with regards to the various interpretative decisions that we have made. Where we find this certainty lacking we can allow ourselves to be influenced and to incorporate that which we approve of. I argue though, that before turning to recordings it is important to ensure that the pianist has done significant work first, and formed several opinions about how they feel the music should sound. In this way recordings can enhance an existing image, rather than forming a blueprint in cases where the performer hasn't developed their own artistic ideas.

First Performances and Personal Reflections

After this second process of engagement with the sonata through the various methods discussed above, I gave my first performance of the complete work. This was for a lunch-hour concert at the University of the Witwatersrand on the 16th of October 2019.[8] The performance highlighted areas which needed further work and thought, and demonstrated overall factors that were needed in order to make sense of the work as a whole.

Listening back to the recording of the concert, and in discussion with my teachers, the element that could develop the most in the playing was a sense of greater freedom and flexibility, especially in outlining structural features and taking more time at cadences. In the development, I could probably use more sound on the melodic lines, and less sound in the accompaniment figures, especially the melodic entries in bars 131 and 140, while the *crescendo* in bar 155 starts too early. These are all features which were mentioned in my initial preparation notes.

I gave my second performance a week and half after the first at the Auto and General Theatre on the Square in Sandton, Johannesburg. By this stage I had worked through my notes and tried to improve on the areas mentioned above. I wasn't able to record the concert and the piano was not in great condition. However, I feel that several aspects that emerged from the first performance had been addressed by this point.

Reflecting on the processes of preparing, learning, and performing Schubert's Sonata in C Minor that I document in this chapter, a number of thoughts occurred to me concerning my work as a performer. A comparison of the recording of my first performance of the work with the journal that

[8] An audio-video extract of the performance can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DlU9y86kRTM.

diarised my learning thereof reveals several factors. The most obvious is that performance is by nature a live phenomenon. Doğantan-Dack, in reference to live performance for classical musicians, asks “how do performers continue to learn on stage?” (2012: 34) and suggests that “the classical performer depends on live performance to establish and define his or her artistic identity as a musician” (36). In this case the artistic image that I had created for the Schubert, initially before work at the piano, and later at the piano, only came to life with the first live performance. This is the first time that all the preparation is actually put to the test.

A number of factors, including but not limited to adrenaline and nerves, acoustics, dealing with different pianos for each performance, physical and mental state on the day of a concert, distractions from an audience, inspiration at a particular moment and insights which come to us on stage can change a performance in ways we may not have expected or planned for. I was particularly nervous for this performance as it was the first time in about 18 months that I was performing solo piano music from memory. Concern about the memorisation detracted from my ability to play expressively on stage, and the performance was at times constricted in terms of expressive and structural details. For instance, in the opening bars I felt that I passed over the climax in bar 11 too quickly (0:14-0:20) and without sufficient stretching in the preceding bass notes, contrary to my initial thoughts to move forwards through this passage.

While my preparation of the artistic image for this piece had made me aware of the many places where structural features were important and needed to be highlighted, my nervousness during the first performance meant that these were not always clearly communicated and often passed by too easily and without sufficient clarity for the listener. Furthermore the changes in character, especially in the variations of the second theme, were not always clearly conveyed. For instance, in the first variation the left-hand triplets sound rushed and don’t give space to the melodic line to sing lyrically (1:29-1:55). This figuration had taken many hours to learn, and I think the thought to ‘just get through it’ was prominent during the first performance. By the second performance, I had learned to allow the sections to have their own individual character. Even though I had taken the time to understand these characters clearly from an intellectual and musical standpoint, the reality of communicating them can only be learned from the physical experience of performance.

I was, however, surprised at the numerous points of overlap between my observations before starting work at the piano and my subsequent notes from lessons and performance. I was able to accurately predict many areas that would require special attention or practical work of a particular kind. But being aware of these areas and thinking about how to approach them in advance didn’t necessarily mean that they came off well in performance. For instance, many melodic lines in the

development which needed more sound from the start of the bar (see bar 131, fig. 23) still didn't come across clearly enough in the first performance. Nevertheless I was pleased with the extent to which I was able to develop a relatively clear image of the music, character and practical approach before starting work at the instrument.

The other factor which needs to be considered is the musician's experience of performing in a certain style or the works of a specific composer. I had performed several works by Schubert previously and had a relatively good understanding of his style and compositional aesthetic before approaching the Sonata in C Minor. In an earlier interview I had done with South African pianist Albie van Schalkwyk, he mentioned the role of experience in understanding the work of a particular composer:

> ideally for a student to get an insight into what Scarlatti is all about you do one sonata now, and another one in a year's time, it means nothing. They should do it for six months, and nothing but Scarlatti until they're so sick and tired of it that they start realising what it's all about (Author's Interview 2012).

My relative familiarity with Schubert's music thus also contributed to my ability to predict challenges in performing this sonata and helped me to outline a particular artistic image to guide my performance and interpretation of the work. The exercise of 'artificially' separating the various artistic image techniques, and working strictly at the artistic image before starting at the piano was an unusual one for me. My natural course of work is to start at the instrument, with a brief look through the score to determine salient structural features. These features are used to divide up the practice time and to develop a suitable approach to get through the material timeously. I then begin at the instrument in small fragments, and under tempo, allowing the music to suggest certain characters and colours to me, without necessarily choosing these beforehand. Most of the artistic thoughts about a particular piece of music happen as I work through the piece, and are not always planned out in advance. While this experience forced me to think methodically through all the individual aspects of developing an interpretation and working this out at the instrument, it was also at times frustrating. I remember feeling as though I was desperate to start work at the piano, but first had to work through a substantial array of artistic techniques in a way that was alienating to my instincts to get on with playing the music. I would certainly advocate a more natural and integrated approach where the various artistic and technical processes feed into one another rather than appearing in a step-by-step fashion. The development of an artistic image should not, in my experience, be done in isolation, nor worked out entirely without being informed by practical experience. Each time we return to a piece of music, new insights are revealed, and each time we prepare it for performance we are better equipped to deal with the various musical, technical and artistic challenges.

Chapter 2: Multiple Voices: South African Music for Solo Piano

Willing Participants

In December 2018 I contacted five pianists to ask if they would be interested in participating in a concert of South African music for solo piano. The concert was to form part of the data gathering for this research, rather than being an exam concert at which my own performance would be assessed. It was to provide a forum through which to interrogate the practical use of various techniques that I had gathered from literature written by pianist-pedagogues and pianist-researchers within the field of artistic research. Specifically chosen were techniques that dealt with the creation of an artistic image and its realisation in practical form.

The potential participants were given free rein to choose their repertoire within a time frame of six to eight minutes and were allowed to withdraw from the concert at any time. All five pianists agreed to participate and I confirmed the date for 12 May 2019 and secured the venue. The participants also consented to be interviewed after the concert about their preparation and performance. Later an ensemble was also invited to take part, however this group chose to withdraw closer to the time, along with one of the five pianists.

The pianists who performed in the concert were Astrid Small, Sonja van Zyl, Jean-Pierre (JP) Calitz, Eugene Joubert, and myself. Astrid studies privately with Malcolm Nay, who is also one of my teachers, and I had the opportunity to hear her perform previously at the University of the Witwatersrand (known colloquially as Wits) in a lunch-hour concert series which I manage. She is planning to register for a master's degree in 2020 at the university and has recently obtained her Fellowship from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Sonja van Zyl completed her Master of Music degree at Wits in 2015 and is currently working towards her PhD at North-West University under Professor Tinus Botha. As Sonja and I were both in the same piano studio with Malcolm Nay and Pauline Nossel we shared similar pianistic experiences and were fortunate to perform and record a work for two pianos by Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph, a leading South African composer. Eugene Joubert has performed in Switzerland, Romania, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Serbia, the USA and Denmark. He holds a master's degree in collaborative piano from Rice University in Houston, Texas, and works frequently as a lieder, chamber, and opera production pianist. Eugene is currently Head of Piano Studies at St Mary's School in Johannesburg. JP holds a master's degree in piano performance from Western Michigan University in the United States and a Professional Doctorate in Piano Performance from "Université de Montréal" in Canada. He is active in many roles as soloist, collaborator, chamber musician, recording artist, repetiteur, pedagogue and researcher.

He held the post of Head of Piano at St John's College in Johannesburg and has recently moved back to Canada. All of the pianists have been trained in university systems and tend to perform a significant amount of canonical Western art music works while having had some experience with contemporary music, rather than being new music specialists.

Shortly after inviting the pianists to perform at the concert I put together a selection of material from both pianist-researcher and pianist-pedagogue sources which contained methods of developing an artistic image and the practical realisation of this image at the piano. I had compiled these into a summarised format while providing examples and references in the case that someone wanted to access the complete articles or books in which these techniques appeared. I sent the summary of techniques to the participants in January 2019 to allow them ample time to experiment with this material while they were preparing for the concert. In this way I would be able to contribute a wider range of experiences than if I tested these methods alone. I have attached both the summary of techniques and the example sheet as appendix three. Here is an example that I included from Arthur Schnabel's edition of the Beethoven Sonatas. He uses subtle changes of tempo to highlight musical details, thus giving space to the chords, and moving forward through the *crescendo* and smaller note values as shown in this extract:

> **Finer structural details**
>
> Are there tempo changes marked in the score, or places where alterations of tempo feel natural in performance? For instance, Schnabel marked several tempo changes in his editions, see Beethoven in Example 2.
>
> **Example 2. Beethoven Sonata No. 30, Opus 109, 1st Movement, bars 64-65. Edition Schnabel. 1949: 195.**

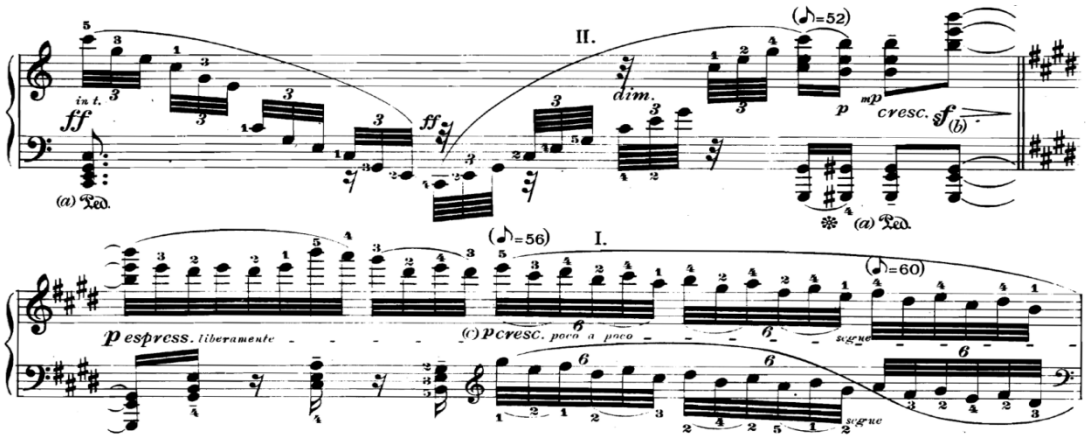


Figure 28: Beethoven Sonata No. 30, Opus 109, *Vivace, ma non troppo*, bars 64-65.

I asked the pianists to document their learning process while preparing their repertoire for performance, and suggested ways in which they could do this including written practice journals, audio recordings of practice sessions, WhatsApp voice-notes, videos taken on a cell-phone, or any other format they chose, in order to determine if any of these techniques had an impact on their performance, with the understanding that the effects of these elements can be difficult to quantify. We would discuss their learning process in the interviews after the concert had taken place. The use of the provided techniques was entirely optional and participants were also given the choice to follow their normal methods of preparation and compare them to these techniques later on.

Around the same time as I sent out the summary of techniques I started to investigate options for my own repertoire for the concert. I had played a few South African works for solo piano before, some of which were very effective concert pieces, including *Schau-fe[r]n-ster II* by Andile Khumalo, Arnold van Wyk's *Toccata*, and two pieces by Carlo Mombelli. However, for the purposes of this research I decided to choose a piece that I hadn't played before: this would be the case for the other performers and would make any findings more easily comparable. The point of the performances as research was, after all, to explore the learning and preparation processes from the very first encounter with the score. I eventually settled on the *Three Incantations* by Alexander Johnson, a well-known South African composer and an accomplished pianist. He writes for various instruments including solo piano, clarinet, flute, and voice, and has also composed larger scale concertos and a ballet. I had attended the concert at Wits when the *Three Incantations* were premiered in 2012 by Pieter Grobler, and remembered them as effective concert works. With little over a month to go I started work at the *Incantations*; it took significant willpower to put myself through the research processes I had outlined and distributed, rather than just diving into work at the piano out of fear that I wouldn't get through the music. Sonja had similar concerns about the preparation for the concert: "I thought, oh my goodness, I haven't got time for this. I think a month before the time I wanted to say Peter I can't do this, and then I felt bad." Both Sonja and I frequently perform chamber music and the time commitment required to prepare solo music can be underestimated.

Nevertheless the concert went ahead and was well received, lasting just under an hour. There was a reasonable audience and the programme was varied, with an interesting mix of repertoire and

pianists.[9] Included below is the programme in performance order. The full programme is included as appendix two.

Astrid Small

Prelude no. 7 **Thomas Rajna (b. 1928)**

Sonja van Zyl

Sonatina No. 6 **(for John Antoniadis)** **Peter Klatzow (b. 1945)**

Moderato

Slow, but alert (Sounds outside, late at night)

Vivace

Jean-Pierre Calitz

2 Nocturnes **Adrian More (b. 1980)**

Stroll in the Moonlight

Sunrise

Peter Cartwright

Three Incantations **Alexander Johnson (b. 1968)**

Andante

Energetic

Lento

Eugene Joubert

Ballata Africana **Hendrik Hofmeyr (b. 1957)**

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

[9] It is noticeable that the pianists who participated gravitated towards music that is of an accessible nature, and does not necessarily employ experimental, extended or avant-garde pianistic techniques that certain contemporary composers use as a means of expression. This choice of more conservative repertoire is reflective of prevailing pianistic training in South Africa. While this research is not an exercising in categorising the repertoire chosen, the music was still sufficiently varied from canonical compositional approaches that the learning process required a different approach and new findings could be drawn as a result.

As it turned out the pianists could have played longer works, but by the time the cancellations were made it seemed too late and would have possibly interfered with everyone's practicing. The concert was both audio and video recorded and some performances have been posted on Youtube (Calitz 2019; Cartwright 2019a).

The week after the concert I contacted the participants to set up the interviews. I managed to see both Eugene and Astrid soon after the concert, however due to work commitments the interviews with Sonja and Jean-Pierre took place a month or so later. All of the participants were interviewed from the same schedule of questions (included in appendix one) with room for deviation, which took place quite frequently. I tended to allow the interviews to take their own direction rather than to constantly redirect the focus, but ensured that by the end all the topics on my list had been covered. The interviews were transcribed and extracts thereof are included in this chapter. They lasted between 40 and 60 minutes each. Due to the length of the interviews the transcripts are not included.

Knowledge Backgrounds

I asked all of the participants to speak about their knowledge background with contemporary music, solo or chamber, South African or international. This was the first subject on the list of questions relating to an artistic image, and it seemed to be an easy way to get into the discussion. It is worth noting that none of the performers are specialists in contemporary music, and have had varying amounts of experience in the field. Astrid had performed works by Ginastera and Grainger, Eugene had performed contemporary chamber music while studying in the United States, JP had looked into contemporary music for pedagogical purposes, and had recorded some music by contemporary composers, also in the United States, while Sonja had some prior experience with South African contemporary music having performed a clarinet sonata by Hendrik Hofmeyr in 2019.[10] A recurring response was that contemporary music can often be inaccessible at first reading and tends to be difficult to understand at sight compared to the canonical, pre-twentieth-century repertoire where musical elements including harmony, melody and rhythm often present themselves more clearly on the page. Eugene highlights these differences and provides possible reasons for them:

[10] Typical South African pianistic training involves limited exposure to contemporary music, and is normally included in the final list of graded exam syllabi. Some universities have made it a requirement to perform one contemporary South African work per year. Additionally, the UNISA International Piano Competition always includes commissioned works by South African composers in the second round.

> If you're reading a piece once or twice just to get an idea of what's happening, there's little that I can't get through usually with some sort of sense of what's going on, but with a lot of contemporary music, I don't know whether it's avoiding traditional harmonic structures or, it just seems that composers are trying to find a new way of saying things, so that your sense of what you do at the keyboard is taken out of context. You have to really go into another gear and change and that is something you have to work at, it's not something that's easy.

Sonja mentioned wanting to learn a clarinet sonata by Hendrik Hofmeyr specifically because the sound was more romantic which made the music more accessible. If a student is learning a work by a canonical composer and it's their first time doing it, it will most likely be quite challenging, whereas once they're playing their third or fourth work by that composer the process of how to approach it becomes easier. Further clues to the problem of accessibility can be found in Brendel's essay on Schoenberg's piano concerto:

> There is no doubt that Schoenberg wanted to be precise and explicit to the dot - and that, when it came to the requirements of the performance, he sometimes left the firm ground of practicality… Schoenberg tended to be over-explicit in marking his scores. He himself asked 'whether we hear more than our predecessors did, or are merely willing to leave the performers less freedom than they did' (2015a: 258).

Overloading the Score

While Schoenberg is not a contemporary composer, the trend of loading the score with expressive details prevails with many composers. Astrid mentions a similar experience while learning the Prelude by Thomas Rajna, noting that:

> It's very interesting to see, especially how they approach scores, the information they put, that's not the same as the information they put on Beethoven scores, those other older scores, so it's nice to see things, almost more detailed as to what I see generally, it's more detailed than what we see in older scores, and it gives you almost more insight into what they were thinking.

This need to put more detail into the score could have come about as a result of pianists only performing a few works by a particular composer and not always having time to become acquainted with their style, or from contemporary composers' awareness of the problems that arise in dealing with a score from the past where there is a large amount of room for debate and interpretation. It seems that they want to be more explicit with their performative intentions and parameters.

Getting into the Style

When performing contemporary music it's frequently the case that a performer will be learning their first work by a particular composer, and sometimes won't ever perform more than one work by that composer. It's a commonplace thought to say that it often takes repeated encounters with a particular composer to start to discover their compositional style and approach. I had a recent

experience of a similar nature learning music by Hendrik Hofmeyr. The first work I learnt by him was the *Canto Notturno* for Clarinet and Piano several years ago. In 2018 I studied and performed the '*Mabalêl*' Fantasy for Flute and Piano, which I discussed in the introduction, and which was extremely challenging from an ensemble perspective. More recently, in 2019, I studied Hofmeyr's song cycle *'Wintersprokie'* for Mezzo Soprano and Piano. It was only at this point that I felt I was starting to grasp his compositional techniques and develop a strong sense of how to approach his music at the piano. Undoubtedly, further encounters with his music would deepen and grow this understanding, as is the case with any composer, canonical or contemporary. Eugene confirmed this, having spoken to the composer directly:

> Hendrik's pieces, are very accessible, even though there are some things that he told me, many pianists said it took them a while, or learning more than one piece to really get into his way of writing. Once they're there it's fine, it actually works well. But that's something you could say of work by any composer, you're not trying to give a fifty-percent performance, things are not so if you think about more traditional repertoire, things come easier, it seems to be more straightforward.

Daniel Barenboim makes the case for the importance of studying contemporary music as a means to enhance our understanding of canonical repertoire, even though he is a non-specialist pianist who is extremely well acquainted with the classical repertoire:

> there is a need to be in touch or even abreast of contemporary music in order to keep one's curiosity constantly alive. The knowledge and performance of contemporary music enhances one's understanding of the masterpieces of the past. I have not only enjoyed conducting many works of Pierre Boulez and Elliott Carter, but have learned from this experience many important aspects of music making that proved very enlightening and useful when returning to Beethoven and Wagner (2008: 78).

However, he also acknowledges the difficulties associated with performing contemporary music, which include that it is typically less well-known and more difficult to access than canonical repertoire: "the exploration of the music of today may be considered different from that of the music of the past, in that it requires a greater effort to discover it, and then to develop individual preferences and tastes as one has toward earlier music" (78).

JP knows Adrian More, the composer of the two Nocturnes he performed, and used the concert as an opportunity to learn and perform the works: "I know the composer so I've always wanted to find a particular space to play his music and these two particular pieces also have never really fit into other opportunities that I've had so this was an ideal opportunity". This suggests that pianists could also gravitate towards music by contemporary composers with which they have some sort of personal relationship. Most of the contemporary South African music I have performed and recorded has been written by composers I have interacted with at Wits.

I think it's possible that pianists often dismiss contemporary music as difficult to get into, when it would surely be the case with any composer when you play their music for the first time. A further factor in this regard could be that with canonical music, even in the case that the pianist hasn't performed it, they would most likely have heard several recordings or live performances of the music, and possibly even the specific work that they are going to tackle. They would have a strong aural sense of how a particular composer's music will sound. Eugene confirms that with canonical music a pianist "can't help but start thinking how is this going to sound, how are you going to phrase this" which comes from having read through and performed a lot of music in that particular style.

Phrase, Form and Structure

The next section of my artistic image techniques dealt with the structural concerns of contemporary music. One area of particular interest was that of varying phrase lengths; in the list of techniques I provided the participants was one extrapolated from research by John Rink. In relation to a Chopin nocturne Rink devised a method of representing phrase lengths with corresponding note values (2002: 52). For instance, a two bar phrase could be represented by a minum, and a four bar phrase by a semibreve. I tried to determine the phrase lengths in Johnson's *Three Incantations* using Rink's system. However, after an initial scan through the music this appeared to be a very complicated exercise. There were no evenly divided phrases from which to find a common measuring unit. Instead I attempted to describe the phrases by their length in quavers; my initial, and possibly flawed attempt for the second piece yielded the following (see fig. 29a):

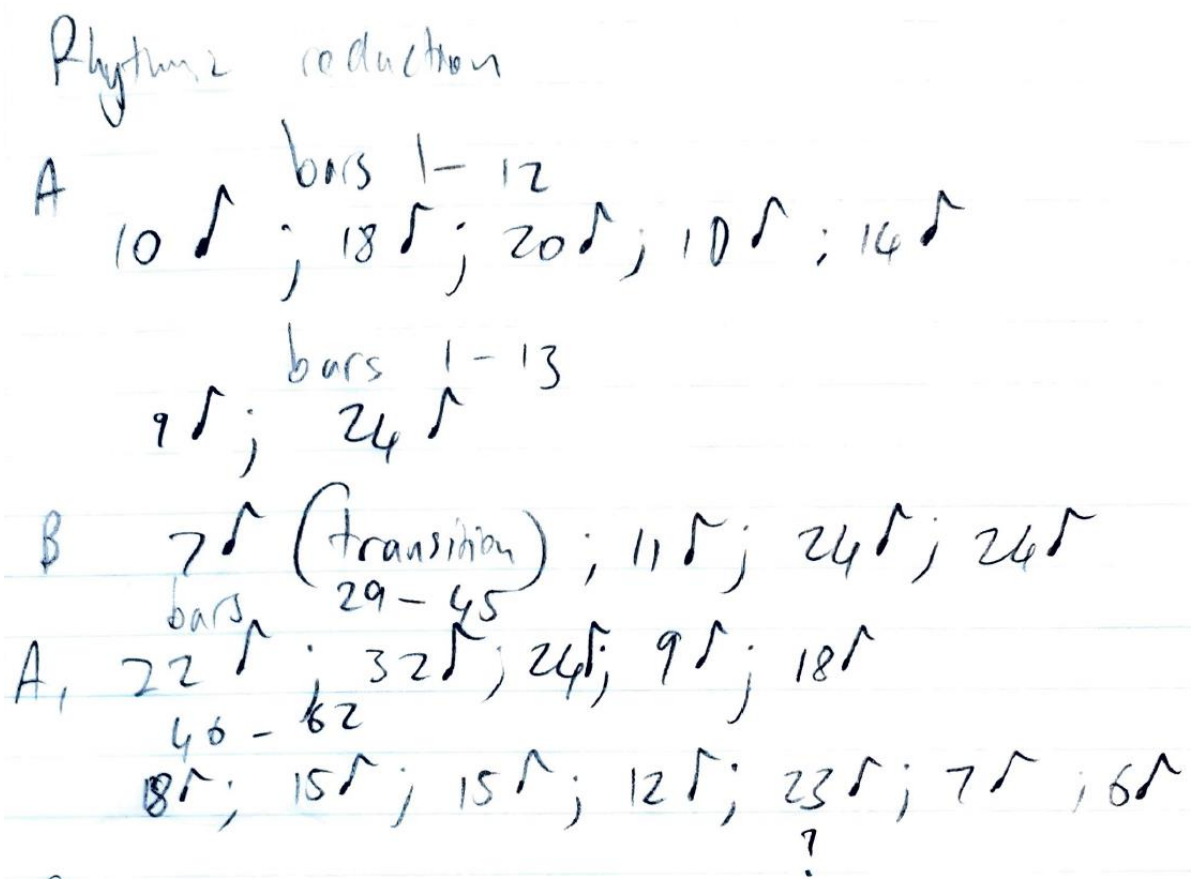


Figure 29a: Rhythmic Reduction of Alexander Johnson *Incantation 1*.

The first 9 bars of the score are included in figure 29b.

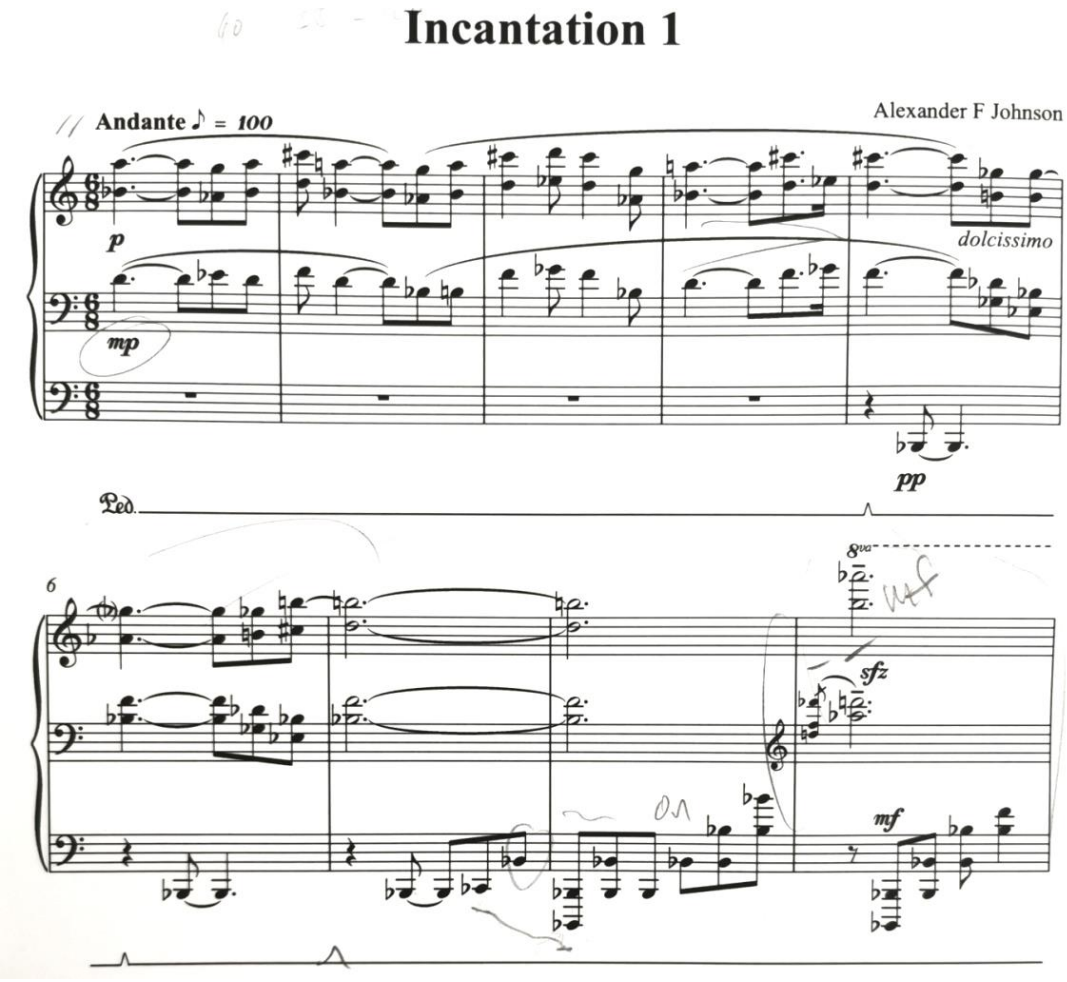


Figure 29b: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 1*, bars 1-9.

What is immediately clear is that the phrase lengths are not evenly divided: in classical music the upbeat phrasing that starts in bar 2 would often be set up from the outset, and a similar structure would be maintained throughout the movement. Charles Rosen notes that phrasing in the classical era was notable for being "short, periodic, articulated" (1997b: 57). However, an irregular structure is of course not a feature of all contemporary music. In the case of Rajna's Prelude, which Astrid performed, the pianist noted that the composer "likes symmetry, he never totally discarded that kind of a thing". Her claim for this was that Rajna enjoys composing "melodic lines" for which a sense of unity of phrase lengths is important. She continued, "he never discarded that idea of structure being very important, and you can see there are two bar phrases, two bars at a time, or four bars at a time of ideas, so it's got that". For Astrid, one of the consequences of the material being "the same all the time" is that, as the performer, "you have to vary it, because otherwise it would just be the same".

In terms of making musical sense of these phrases Astrid noted that "the challenges pertained to the repetitive nature of the musical material, to make sense of it one must vary the lines, shorter ones

alternating with longer ones". She noted that the piece "had a sense of symmetry, there are question and answer phrases, so I could alternate between opening the phrase and then closing it". However, she found that this became predictable and she had to "look for different ways to bring out contrast, either through slight inflection at different points of the melodic line, or through a slight time delay on certain notes, placing certain notes late for emphasis". This demonstrates an integrated approach to performance where musical details are observed in the score, but the desire to present an effective performance with variety and interest is what guides the decisions of how to connect one phrase to the next. Rather than showing that each phrase may be symmetrical or of equal length, Astrid looked for ways to vary the structure to create a narratively cohesive performance and avoid a predictable phrase-length structure.

Referencing the Known

Another technique that was helpful for Astrid to develop an interpretation and cultivate a deeper understanding of the music, was to try and find references to composers for whom she had a deeper knowledge background. For instance the Rajna Prelude that she played was an homage to Bartók. This allowed her to approach the Rajna piece in a similar way to as if she were playing Bartók. Astrid told me that the Rajna work

> was a homage to Bartók, so if you think of it as how you would approach Bartók, there's a lot on him, there's a lot of nuances that would be in his things, and people that study so long to be able to do his pieces, and if you approach it with that sort of spirit you pay more attention to every little thing, and then it helps you to respect it.

Astrid also mentioned finding musical similarities to other composers, including Debussy and Shostakovich, as a method to find appropriate colours in her performance of the music. This topic also came up in an interview I did previously with Jill Richards, a South African pianist who specialises in performances of new music and has several years' experience working with contemporary composers:

> About learning, when you work on a Beethoven sonata, it's easier in the sense that you understand the harmonic language, you can see development, recap, and you think, but this guy is a genius, look how he's made the modulation, and that structure is obviously a function of many things, but it's a critical function, and then, later stuff that I've worked on, which could also be a sonata, and you can take that same blueprint, and the sense of deep understanding of the structure, into a new work, so that you can perceive the structure, and that makes for a better performance. You can learn those

> kinds of things. I've worked a lot with Kevin Volans, and he's very sensitive to sound, and would say, make a Brahms kind of a sound (Richard's interview, 2013).[11]

Eugene was also encouraged to draw on his knowledge of sounds from composers that may be more familiar. He recalled that in a masterclass he had on the Hofmeyr *Ballata Africana* with touring German concert pianist Caroline Oltmanns, the latter

> had very interesting ways of, the middle section of this piece is very arpeggiated, she said Ravel Scarbo, all the colours, Scriabin, and I obviously know what she was referring to, and having that really helped me to get into a new colour, or sense of what's going on here… the main rhythmic section when it goes into 5-8 [see fig. 30], it was very soft, and she said this is kind of like Carmina Burana, it's not meant to be pitch like, just drum-like.

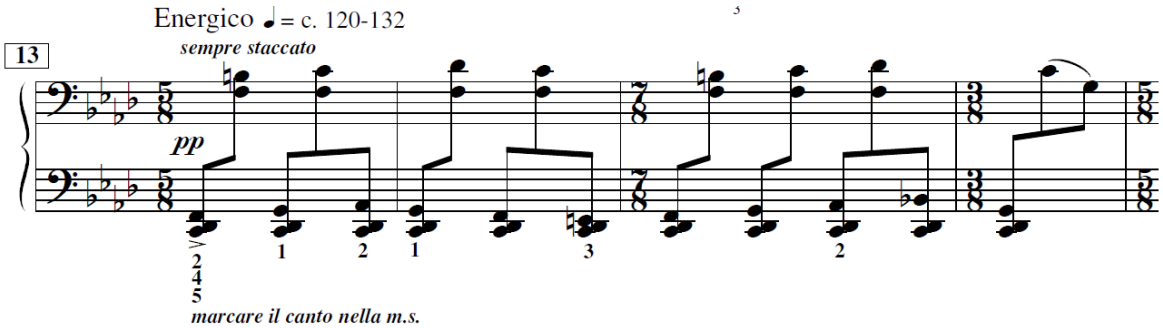


Figure 30: Hendrik Hofmeyr *Ballata Africana*, bars 13-16.

Finding references to composers whose work is more familiar to the performer is an effective way of approaching contemporary music for the first time, and can make it feel more musically accessible. A pianist can draw on their existing knowledge background of canonical music and find ways to translate it to the contemporary work. This can be done through finding similar colours, sounds, structures and characters to music that is better known to the performer. A further method would be talking oneself through the structure of the music, not necessarily trying to fit it into an existing mold, but rather trying to underline main features that hold it together.

JP mentions a similar approach based on relating the form of a contemporary piece to an established norm: "I think most of the work that I did was still rooted in so-called classical traditions in terms of form, but just plugged into those composers' voices". As mentioned previously the pianists who participated in this concert deal mostly with canonical repertoire, while having some experience with contemporary music. As a result, we all had to find ways to become accustomed to the musical language of the contemporary works we performed. JP performed two Nocturnes by Adrian More for the concert and highlighted the importance of the existing nocturne form: "it would be hard to

[11] Kevin Volans is a South African/Irish composer based in the United Kingdom. His music has been performed and recorded by some of the world's most celebrated performers. Richards has a close working relationship with Volans.

ignore that idea of a nocturne, probably the same way that if I had learnt a sonata I would be affected by the structure of the piece and made that important, affected again by the tradition that we're brought up in musically".

Astrid also found that referencing composers whose work she was familiar with helped her to find an emotional progression in the Rajna Prelude: "I wouldn't describe a programmatic narrative as such, I think emotional progression there is, it begins softly, sweetly, almost veiled". In order to achieve this she "used the 'una corda' for the opening chords and fifths, which reminds one of Debussy, like Pagodas even, Sunken Cathedral, the chords that do not move, the animal sounds here, it was a bit like that night music of Bartók".

Fruitful Analysis

The list of techniques to develop an artistic image of the work that I provided to the participants before the concert involved a significant amount of what Rink refers to as performer's analysis (2002: 39), which should allow for the input of the performer's experience and insight. Early in my interview with Sonja she highlighted some of the difficulties of this approach: "I think I would need a whole holiday to sit and do this, you know to fool around with this, and then I don't get to learn it. I just don't have the time. I just have to get through the notes and go as quick as I can and get it done; but I assume it will be the correct way".

For this particular concert I thought it necessary to divide the learning and analytical techniques I provided the performers into categories and present it in some kind of systematic format to make it more accessible for the pianists; with the knowledge that when working at the piano and at the music, one would normally integrate the processes instinctively. They wouldn't have to happen in a particular order, but rather tend to function cyclically. As one learns more about the music so certain elements take on new meanings, and one can revisit them in a new light. For instance, making a structure table or a rhythmic reduction before playing through the music a few times can be challenging, especially with contemporary music where the performer may not know how it sounds at first. I encountered difficulty in trying to determine the structure of the third *Incantation* that I performed. This attempt was made before hearing the music, however, once I knew what the music sounded like the sections became immediately apparent. Once the performer has a feel for the music phrases tend to present themselves more clearly, and cadence points become more pronounced allowing one to determine structural and phrasing marks more easily. This was a further

pitfall of trying to artificially separate the interpretative techniques, which would instinctively be dealt with simultaneously at the instrument for many pianists.

This separation of ideas and presentation of them in a worksheet could have been immediately off-putting for some participants as well. Many pianists are instinctively wary of over-analysing musical details before performances or work at the piano. German pianist Artur Schnabel was especially wary of this kind of work where the analysis came first: "*fruitful* analysis is the result of spontaneous reaction to some musical detail which puzzles the musician so that he investigates what happens here in particular" (Wolff 1979: 18-19, emphasis original). From this point of view an overall analysis would only grow out of a curiosity to understand the various musical elements, rather than analysis being the starting point for performance of a composition. As an opposite approach, Schnabel "worked over each phrase hundreds of times to find the fingering, the hand position, the finger and arm movements that would secure the perfect inflection of melody, rhythm and harmony which he heard inwardly" (174). It seems that he did not find that the many repetitions dulled his enthusiasm as discussed by Peter Hill: "clearly if repetition is at the heart of the problem, we need to find a way of working which minimises its role, or at least build into our method a means of mitigating its disadvantages" (2002: 131). One of the ways Hill suggests we do this is to develop some kind of image before tackling the practical work at the instrument. JP confirms that this is an approach he also tries to follow: "I think the first and most important part is to create some sort of a musical conceptualisation, even before touching the instrument, to try and ascertain exactly what it is that you're trying to say, and by extension what you're trying to do". For him, this involves an initial read through followed by a break away from the instrument: "I have sort of a read through, and more often than not I don't work on it straight away, I try to never practice anything without what I'm trying to say in mind". Sonja however, seems more aligned to Schnabel's approach of allowing the interpretation to develop at the instrument: "interpretation, I think that comes while you are practicing; it comes in the process for me".

Despite her initial concerns with time constraints in relation to analysis, Sonja outlined how some of this work helped her to make a convincing link between the second and third movements of the Klatzow Sonatina that she performed:

> No actually I think that came along when I started analysing this thing, and then I saw it started in B Minor and especially I think from the second movement to the third movement it ends off on a note, and then the third movement starts on that note, slow. It builds up, and then it starts running away with you, so I think that actually helped me, when I did that.

A Musician's Intuition

Sonja also mentioned the role of her intuition in deciding how to shape musical phrases where the composer had not marked them – Klatzow provided only the larger structural dynamic indications: "I think the more you play it you feel where it must go, because there was really a *piano* here and a *forte* there but in between there was nothing written and maybe a little *crescendo* here and there but not much... and where does one have a climax and then it must come down again". In this case repetitions of the material were necessary in order to develop ideas as to what happens when dynamics are not indicated but internal phrasing still requires shaping and direction. The necessity of the involvement of the performer in determining structural elements not included in the score is also attested to by Amanda Bayley and Michael Clarke in an article that reflects on the process of preparing Michael Finnissy's Second String Quartet.

> Adopting a performative approach to the piece involves consideration of the interpretative elements that *surround* the 'script'; these are the details emerging from the processes of rehearsal and reflection surrounding the composition and its performance(s), above and beyond what is actually notated (2009: 2, emphasis original).

JP had a similar experience to Sonja's with the Nocturnes, where there was contrasting information in the score to what he heard in the recordings by the composer. In this case he suggested the improvisatory nature of the music, and the composer's own skill at improvising, may have been the cause for this. He felt that this gave him some freedom with regards to the interpretation, and this demonstrates again the importance of the performer's personal voice in giving shape to the music.

At the beginning of the list of techniques given to the participants I had included an important quote from John Rink to contextual the manner in which these techniques could be approached. It spoke about the necessity of the performer's role in the use of analytically drawn conclusions:

> Any analytical element that impinges on performance will ideally be incorporated within a larger synthesis influenced by considerations of style (broadly defined), genre, performance tradition, technique, instrument and so on, as well as the performer's individual artistic prerogatives. In other words, analytically determined decisions should not be systematically prioritised.
>
> 'Informed intuition' guides, or at least influences, the process of 'performer's analysis', although a more deliberate analytical approach can also be useful (Rink 2002: 39).

Astrid spoke about this relationship between analysis and performance, demonstrating that analytical concerns are not always to be brought to the forefront of the performance. Referring to Rajna's Prelude she explained to me that in bars 13 and 14

> it's been with the same chords and then here it starts to change, but at this moment, you don't want to see this chord is going to that chord, when I was playing it, [Malcolm Nay, her piano teacher] was saying, no you're showing the structure, but musically it shouldn't, it should be soft, so that would be

> a place where your analysis would tell you memory wise, I need to go here, but musically, it's a quiet part.

She also speaks about the need for an element of spontaneity with this particular piece, a concern that Peter Hill discusses too: "how, indeed can we perform at all – in the sense of creating a unique event, with insights which arise from the inspiration of the moment?" (2002: 131). For Astrid the Rajna Prelude was a piece that if she had played in another venue she "would make different choices in that moment, it is such a piece that on one day I would go here or I would take time there". She concurs that the role of the performer is vital in mediating analytical decisions in performance, and that often musical considerations should take precedence:

> analysis can show you where chord changes occur, but sometimes the musical context doesn't call for those changes to be highlighted or emphasised. Analytically, you know the chord is moving to the next chord; bringing it out would show the structure of the piece, yet musically it occurs at a point that it should be soft and light to be meaningful, at such an instance, musical communication would require you don't highlight the chord change, but keep within the mood of a particular section or passage.

Programmatic Emotional Narratives

One of the questions in the techniques that I sent to the participants that dealt with interpretation asked if they could describe the music in terms of an emotional progression or using a programmatic narrative. Eugene mentioned needing to find a personal connection to the narrative unfolding in the *Ballata Africana*, from a discussion he had directly with the composer: "he speaks about this ballade and the effect of having stories being told… you have to find your own version of what it means. I think there is a sense of going somewhere and coming back to things, themes come back, but slightly varied". In this work there were sections that repeated musical material but with a different character; the same (or similar) notes would be reprinted with a different performance indication: "well the melody is the same, he adds small things, but actually if you hear it, you hear this is that melody, and yet he has given it now a tempo indication or a performance indication that seems to be quite removed from what it was before".

For instance, the melody in bars 58-63 is repeated in bars 197-203 with some pitch alterations, but also with a new performance indication. In the first appearance the melody is marked *ammaliante*, which means haunting, however when it returns later it is marked *estasiato* or ecstatic. This would indicate some kind of musical transformation that any performer of this work would need to come to terms with from a narrative point of view.

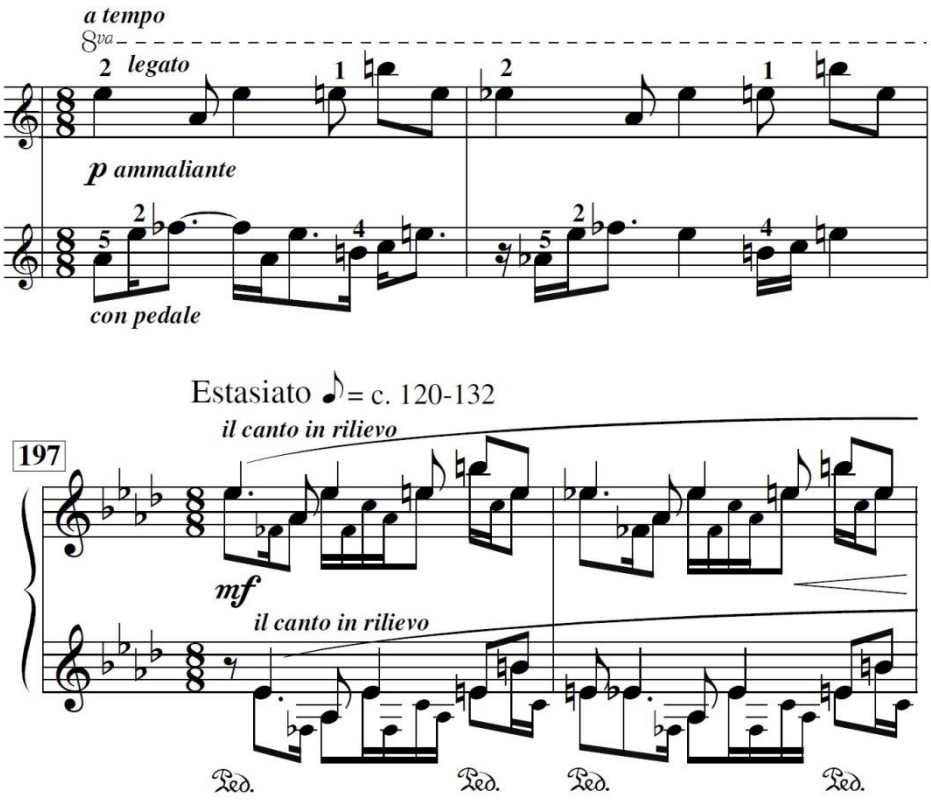


Figure 31: Hendrik Hofmeyr *Ballata Africana*, bars 58-59 and 197-198.

For Eugene, these performance indications "really guided me structurally to find what was happening". Astrid includes some programmatic elements in her description of the emotional progression of the Prelude: "a flowing stream of water bubbling as the melody meanders; it escalates as the accompaniment continues, dynamically increasing all the time to create the idea almost of a gushing waterfall, torrents of water, falling with power and immense energy". Sonja also mentioned that once she has an emotional understanding of a piece she is able to learn it more easily. It seems that the idea of a programmatic narrative was most useful for making sense of musical material that is repeated with slight changes or in a different setting. The 'story behind the music' helps to justify thematic variation, and can make the musical changes seem more convincing in performance.

Divide and Conquer

The final section of the techniques given to the pianists dealt with practical ways to achieve an artistic image at the piano, either by reducing technical difficulties to their constituent parts or increasing the difficulty to make the original version appear easier. Astrid used exercises similar to those of Alfred Cortot to find fluency in a five-finger figuration. She would over-hold one finger while

playing the other four, and then alternate which finger is held to develop an awareness of how each finger was sounding, and to create a sense of musical independence for each finger. She would also reduce chords to their constituent parts by practicing voicing with each note individually. This created greater sensitivity to the sound of each note within a chord structure, and would allow her to choose which ones to bring out with clarity: “in that chordal moment everything is present, because sometimes you can be emphasising or missing something”. Schnabel used a similar technique for practising chords: “he would practise, for instance, full chords so that he could hear exactly each single note in its proportion to the others” (1979: 173).

Sonja and Eugene both mention the importance of muscle memory and the time required for a piece to sink in, as well as finding fingering solutions that suit their particular hands. Sonja says that repetitions are required for a pianist to “know where the hands are going”, while Eugene demonstrated that he had to choose fingering that was different to the composer’s suggested scored fingerings. While Astrid seemed willing to experiment with some of the technical ideas, it seems that the others were reticent to interfere with technical processes that have served them well in the past.

Reflections on the Process

The process of inviting participants to perform in a concert of contemporary South African piano works was rewarding, both in terms of the information gathered from the interview process and from the point of view of providing a forum for the performance of South African piano music. The choice of pianists who typically perform more canonical music than contemporary music may have further helped to address the aims of the research, as the pianists were possibly more willing to experiment with new artistic techniques during the preparation process. Many of them made references to new experiences that they encountered while preparing the contemporary works, and it’s possible that asking them to document their learning helped to make them aware of these. I think this also provided an opportunity for them to use their extensive knowledge of canonical music and pedagogical techniques in a new context and it is my hope that they all gained something valuable from the experience. As noted by Barenboim earlier, contemporary music can also help us to understand canonical music in greater depth. Despite the usefulness of the concert of South African music as a research tool, the participants understandably engaged with the learning techniques in varying degrees. In addition to their feedback, I kept detailed notes of my own learning

process in which I applied the various suggested techniques in a systematic manner. Presented below are these findings.

Learning the *Three Incantations*: A First-Person Narrative

Most of this chapter has focused on the experiences of the other participants in the concert, but I also want to examine in detail – through a granular, descriptive narrative account – my learning of the *Three Incantations* by Alexander Johnson. I do so with specific reference to the input I received during my lessons, my notes taken while learning the piece, and the video recording of the work's performance in concert (Cartwright 2019a).

At first I had decided only to perform the first two of the *Incantations*, however as some of the invited performers had withdrawn from the concert I decided to add the last of the three at a later stage. After completing the rhythmic reductions and structure tables mentioned earlier I started to work at the piano on the first *Incantation*.

I first heard the *Incantations* at their premiere in 2012. Since then I have had the opportunity to teach one of Johnson's Jazz Impromptus to an advanced student. While this gave me an indication of the type of writing he used I had no further experience with his music until this concert, so I had few preconceived ideas about how to perform or interpret his music. This provided me with something resembling a blank slate with which to test the various techniques of developing an artistic image.

The programme notes from the premiere of the *Three Incantations* (Johnson 2012a) offer some clues as to their influences. The first of the set draws on the quasi-Arabian musical language of North Africa, the second represents a tribal dance from Central Africa, while the third combines both of these with Western influences in an attempt to portray the multicultural South African context. This practice of drawing on and using African influences in a Western music context has been a contentious topic for composers in South Africa, causing conflict between musicologists and composers (see for example Muller 2000 and Scherzinger 2004). As a performer my role is to try and present the material in the most convincing fashion. The original programme notes make no mention of the meaning of the word 'incantation', however it would seem to imply a relation to witchcraft and spellcasting, perhaps here in a musical-metaphorical sense. In the discussion that follows I deal with the first movement in a bar-by-bar manner, after which I selectively discuss relevant features arising from the other two movements.

Incantation 1

At the start of the movement the middle voice is marked *mezzo-piano* while the top voice in sevenths is marked *piano*, and later when the bass enters in bar 5 it bears the indication *pianissimo*. I tried to find a musically satisfying sound and phrasing for the middle voice as it is the most dynamically prominent – a sound that was *legato*, *dolce* and *tranquillo*. It also needed to have some 'ping' to it, as the pedal runs through the first four bars. If the sound was produced without firmness in the tip of the finger it would not project clearly through the pedal. This was made easier by the placement of the middle voice in a naturally resonant register of the piano. This can be heard at the start of the recording (Cartwright 2019a: 0:00-0:19; and see fig. 29b above). In bar 8 I had to think about whether to add a slight *crescendo* towards the *sforzando* in bar 9. Due to the texture of the writing whereby the sound accumulated and thickened in a continuous pedal, a literal *crescendo* was not necessary. Instead I opted to move the tempo forwards slightly towards bar 9. In bar 10 the top voice needs to participate more prominently; indicated by the *mezzo-forte*, and the indication to play *dolce*. This inclusion of sound in the upper register allows the high figuration in bar 13 to blend into an existing sound held in the pedal, rather than appear out of nothing.

The passages in bars 13 and 17 called for specific technical attention in order to arrive at a satisfying rendering. I experimented at first with playing them as written – in other words the treble with the right hand and the bass with the left. However, it quickly became apparent after trying this at speed that this division would not work. It sounded clumsy, uneven, and lacked power at the end of the *crescendos*. After some experimentation I eventually settled on a division in bar 13 (fig. 32a; 0:55-1:01) where the right hand played the small notes at the start of the bar with fingers one through five, the left hand took the fifths and fourths at the top of each group of four demi-semi quavers following, while the right hand played the notes underneath with fingers 5-2-1. This resulted in an arrangement which was comfortable to control, allowed for the *leggiero* touch especially at the top of the passage, and lent power with which to create the *crescendo* as the pattern descended. This passage also tended to move slightly forward in tempo even though this is not called for in the score; as it felt natural I decided to let it happen. The passage in bar 17 (fig. 32b; 1:13-1:17) has a somewhat opposite effect to that in bar 13 in that it rises from the bottom of the keyboard's range to the top, and needs a stronger sound from the bottom as the *crescendo* starts in a loud dynamic. Here, I opted to play the first two notes of each group of seven with the left hand, using fingers 3-2, while taking the rest of the pattern with the right hand. Using the same arrangement for each group of seven allowed me to focus on creating the required sonority for the *crescendo* and to successfully reach the *sforzando* in bar 18. As Neuhaus noted, "fingering should be convenient for the hand in

question taking into account its peculiarities and the pianist's intentions" (1973: 145). In this case the chosen fingering allowed me to achieve most easily the required musical outcome – the passage grows out of the depths of the piano with a thunderous *crescendo*. All of the following musical examples have been extracted from my performance copy of the work, with only certain fingerings added in later.

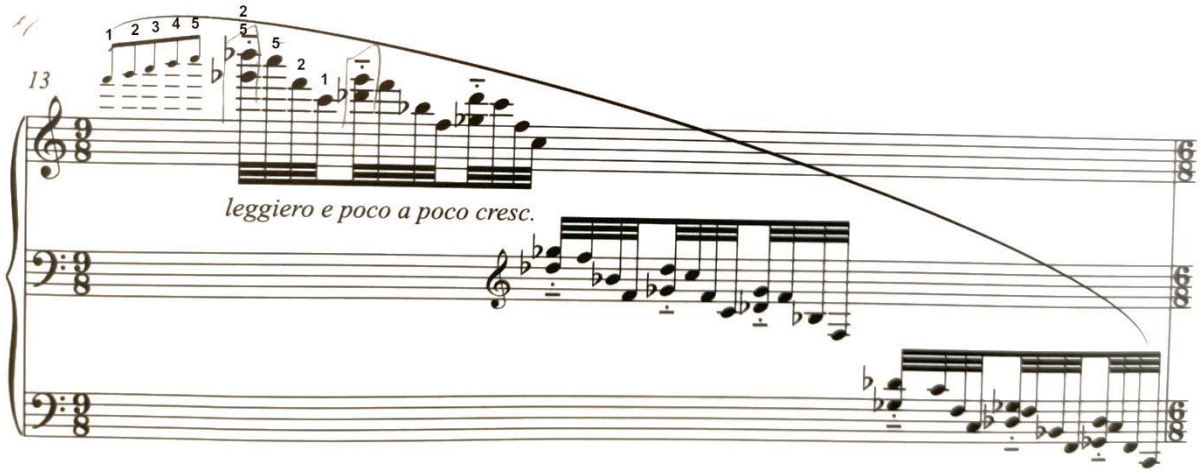


Figure 32a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 1*, bar 13.

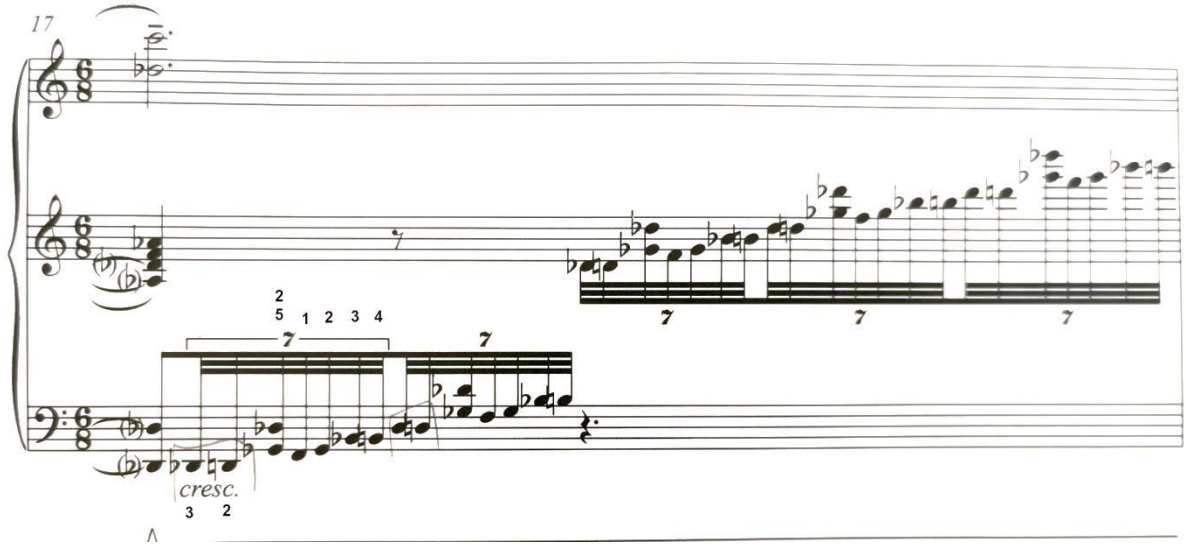


Figure 32b: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 1*, bar 17.

In a lesson on this movement one of my teachers, Malcolm Nay, asked me to create a more Brahms-like sound in the middle voice in bar 14 (see fig. 33a). The touch, he suggested, should be similar to that when playing the upper voice in the opening (see fig. 33b) of the *Adagio* of the Sonata for Violin and Piano in G Major, Opus 78, which I had performed earlier in the year with violinist Rupert Marshall-Luck. This section of the *Incantation* (Cartwright 2019a: 1:01- 1:13) called for a sound that was rich and deeply sonorous, which had to project over the outer voices on either side of it. This

was achieved by using more of the pad of the finger, rather than the tip, and was developed by practicing the top note of the interval or chord with a strong sound, and then filling in the lower parts with a sound that blends into the top note, ensuring that one can always hear the top note over the rest of the chord. This was alternated several times until the hand became accustomed to feeling the weight at the top, with less pressure on the lower voices. This reiterates the significance of embodied musical knowledge drawn from prior experience and transposed onto new material. Having used this technique several times in learning the canonical Western repertoire, I felt comfortable translating it to the contemporary context, with the knowledge that it was reliable in producing the desired effect.

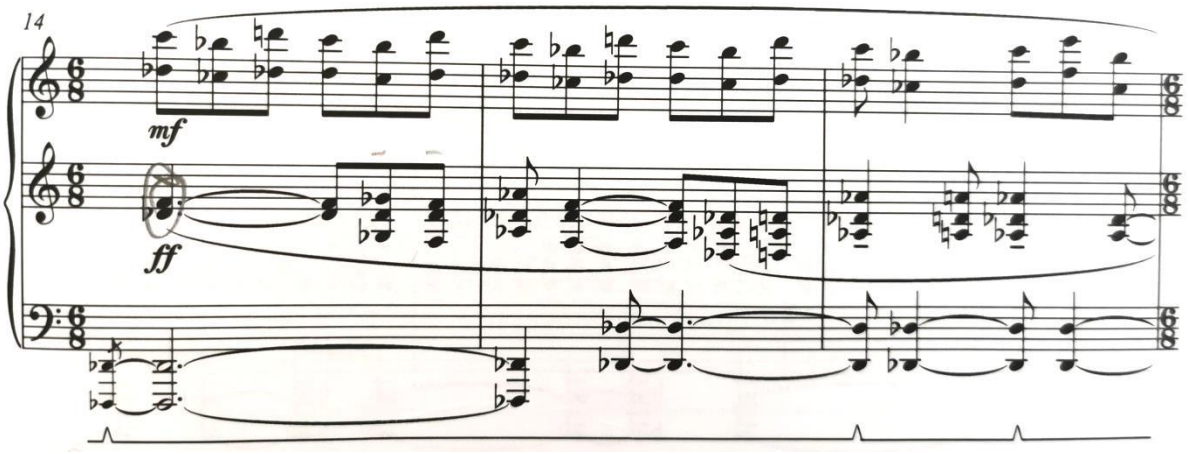


Figure 33a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 1*, bars 14-16.

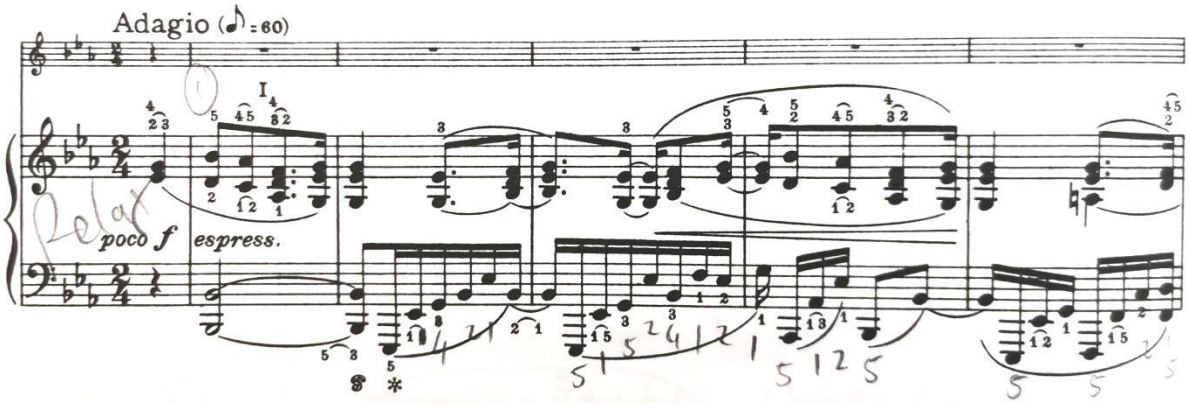


Figure 33b: Brahms Sonata for Violin and Piano, Opus 78, *Adagio*, bars 1-5.

The subsequent section from bars 18 to 28 (1:17-2:06) required slow and careful practice at first in order to understand and follow all the directions for the various voices. Especially challenging here was avoiding unnecessary accents in the passages taken by the left hand, which frequently crosses over the right. I had to build in the jumps so that the hand was always in position before it needed to play, rather than feeling that it was jumping and playing in one movement. For instance, in bar 25

the left hand plays a melodic note, followed by a bass note in a different dynamic, and then returns, by leaping over the right hand, to the following melodic note without accent. This B-flat in the upper stave is a continuation of the melody that starts on the G-flat, and needs to grow out of it. Without careful preparation the B-flat can sound accented, which would interrupt the melodic line. This section required careful practice of the individual voices to ensure that I had an ideal image of the phrasing for each; and a pianist would likely practice most types of contrapuntal music in this way to achieve a similar level of musical integrity. This section from bars 18 to 28 represents for me the most explicit sonic reference to an incantation in this movement. The insistent repetition in the middle voice, surrounded by the broadening melodic line, combined with a *crescendo* in the higher register all serve to conjure images of a repeated mantra growing in intensity.

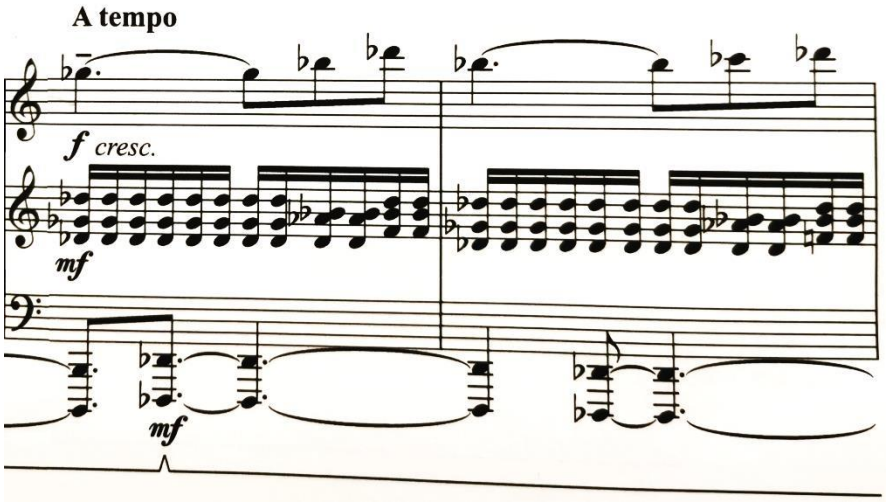


Figure 34: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 1*, bars 25-26.

In bars 43 to 45 (fig. 35a; 3:15-3:22) I used exercises derived from Cortot's edition of Chopin Etudes, specifically those for Opus 10, No. 1. This involved playing the right-hand figuration in various chordal combinations, as outlined in the extract from Cortot's edition (see fig. 35b). Working in this way allowed greater freedom in the right hand, making it easier to achieve the dynamic balance required to allow the melodic line in the middle voice to project clearly. The idea of contrapuntal voices at distinguished dynamic levels became a recurring theme in the preparation of this movement and required various inventive methods of practice to project clearly: these included practising the various possible combinations of voices, and increasing the distance between two voices to hear more clearly their individual characteristics. Projection of the middle voice was a consistent challenge throughout this movement and needed special attention in order to be heard clearly over the lines on either side of it

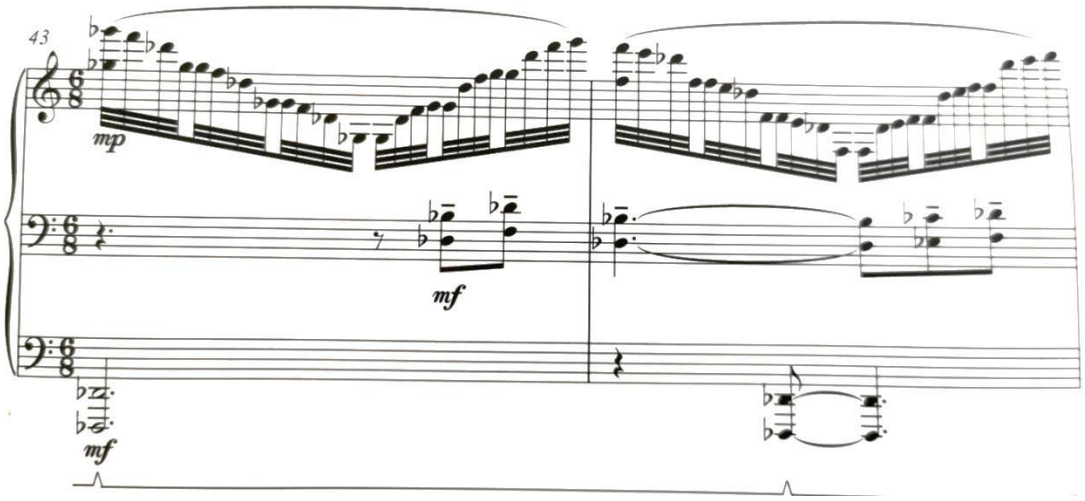


Figure 35a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 1*, bars 43-44.

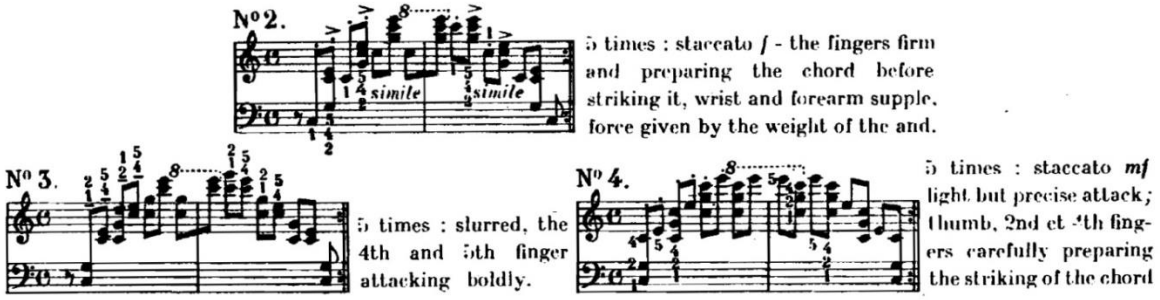


Figure 35b: Chopin Etude, Opus 10 No. 1. Student Edition by Alfred Cortot.

The final challenge presented in the first movement came in bars 55 to 60 (4:09-4:30): the opening theme is rewritten note for note, but instead of being in 6/8, it appears here in 5/8. This immediately raises the question of whether to follow the rhythmic feel of the new time signature, or rather to play the phrase with the same rhythmic stress as it appears at the opening of the movement, which I eventually chose to do. After trying to make it convincing in 5/8 I found that it didn't relate back to the opening in a passage that otherwise was quoting it directly. This decision seemed justified as the phrase marks fell in the same place as in the opening. This alludes once more to Rink's technique mentioned previously of rescoring certain passages in a different time signature to better understand the underlying rhythmic pulse.

Having dealt in some detail with my process of learning the first *Incantation* I organise my findings from learning the other two movements by topics, rather than continuing to narrate a bar-by-bar analysis. The second of the *Three Incantations* serves as the fast movement of the three, placed unusually in the middle of the set with the slower movements on either side of it. This is undoubtedly the most technically challenging and virtuosic of the set, containing many leaps, fast

passage work, extended ostinato patterns and frequent changes of metre. The final of the three *Incantations* serves as a calming epilogue after the drama of the second one. It is marked *teneramente e cantabile* and the tempo is slow.

Drawing from the Known

The first point of discussion relates to how I drew inspiration from comparisons to other composers and their music, a point raised by the other participants in the concert of South African compositions discussed earlier in this chapter. Here, aspects of already existing artistic images are combined and similar musical executions are recycled for use in a new context. This also provides some insight into how various musical experiences are built into one's intuition – the next time we come across something similar we are better equipped to understand, interpret and perform it.

In the second *Incantation* a melodic left-hand line is interrupted by a short outburst in the upper register of the keyboard in bar 37 (fig. 36a; 5:31-5:32). This, I felt, should not be prepared and needs to register as a surprise, in other words the *crescendo* should be drastic, and the music should continue after a very short comma. I was aware of pianist Vladimir Horowitz's similar approach in his live recording of Mozart's Rondo in D Major, K. 485 (Horowitz 1987). In bar 135 the music has reached a point where we expect the cadence to resolve back to the tonic chord in D Major, after a trill over the dominant-seventh chord. However, instead it goes to the unexpected key of B-flat Major or bVI via an interrupted cadence. Horowitz keeps the trill loud throughout the bar, without any *diminuendo*, takes a slight breath, and plays the B-flat chord *pianissimo* thereafter (Horowitz 1987: 6:14-6:18). Any *diminuendo* through the trill would give away the unexpected cadential resolution.

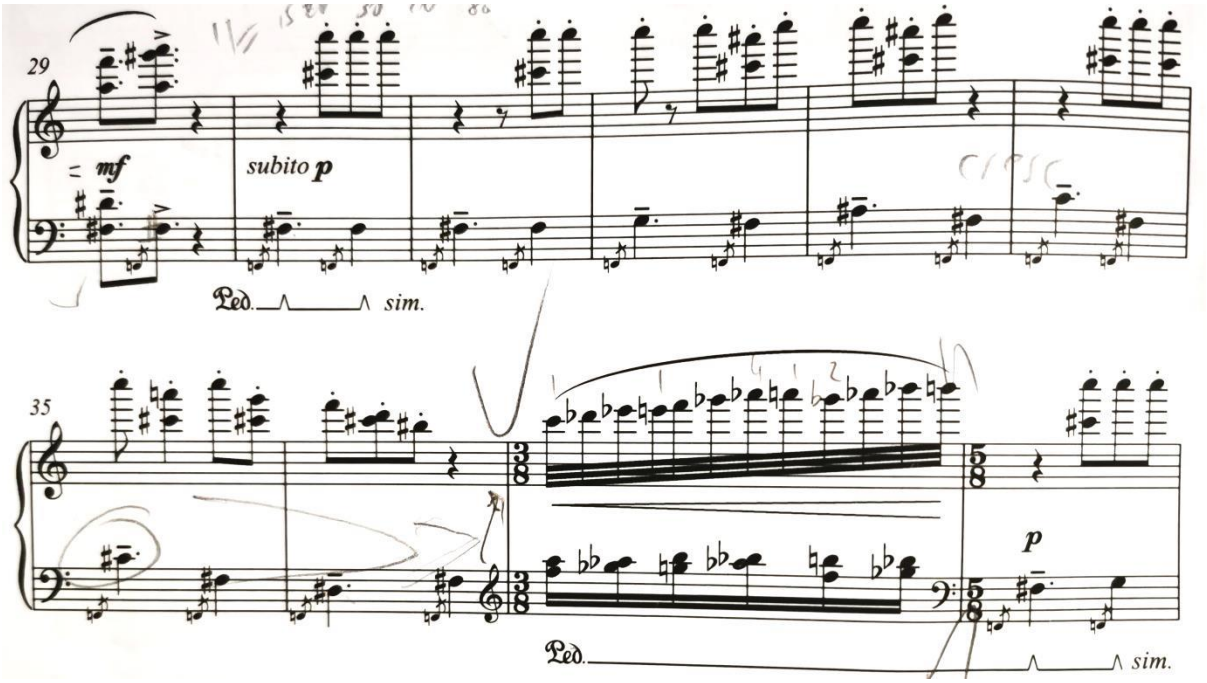


Figure 36a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 29-38.

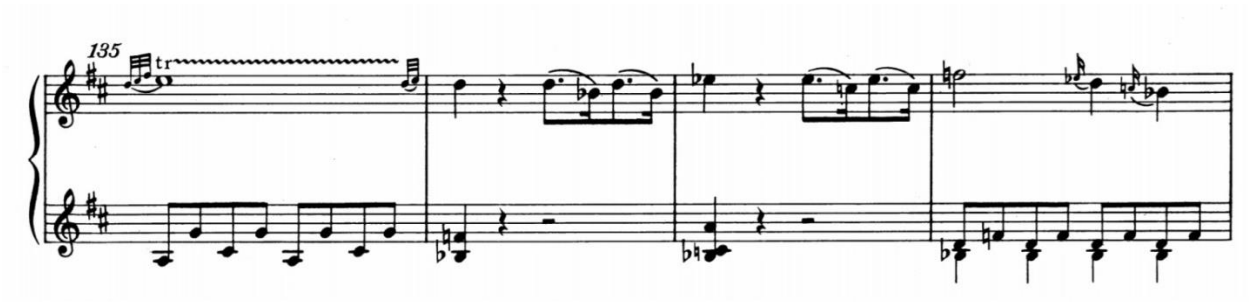


Figure 36b: Mozart Rondo in D Major, K. 485, bars 135-138.

Further along in the same *Incantation* a three-bar passage from bar 45 to 47 (Cartwright 2019a: 5:40-5:44) calls for a sound reminiscent of Gershwin's Piano Preludes – the tension between the G-Sharp in the left hand and the A natural in the right creates a blues-like feel similar to the middle section of Gershwin's Prelude No. 2. Johnson's indication to play *dolce e sonore* gives some license to play with a slight rubato in this passage, especially in bar 46. This approach also helps to frame these three bars as if they were a brief quotation from Gershwin, in the same manner that the composer has interrupted the musical texture of the section discussed above. In figure 37a the lower stave is in the bass cleff.

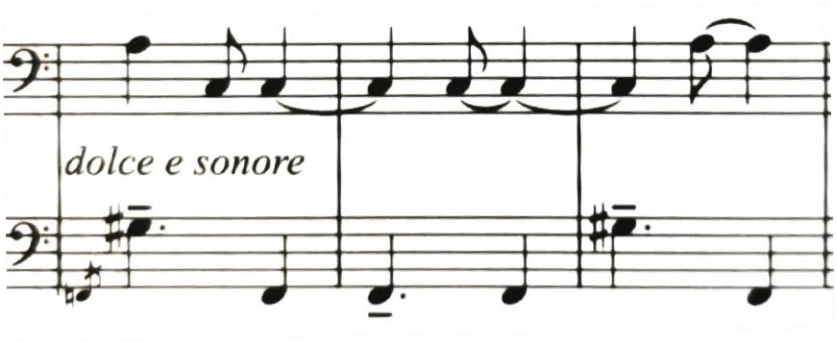


Figure 37a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 45-47.

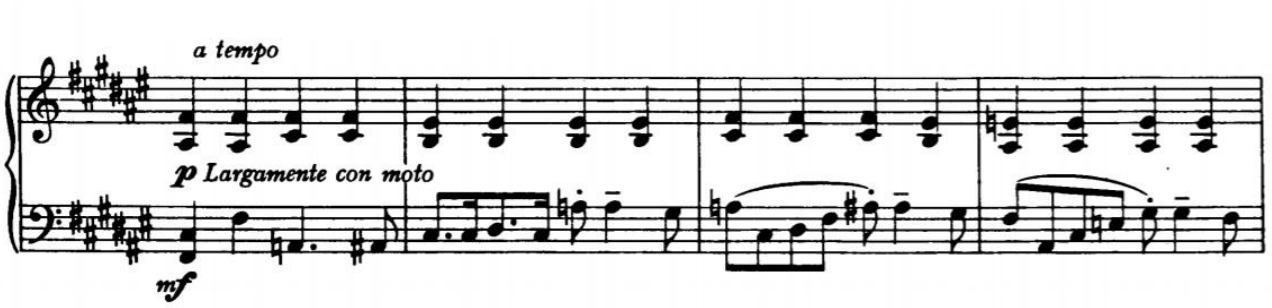


Figure 37b: Gershwin Prelude No. 2, bars 31-34.

After a return of some earlier material, in bars 110 to 125 (7:18-7:44) Johnson conjures a sound reminiscent of the tonal palette and colours used by Rzewski in some of his blues-derived works as heard in his own performance of North American Ballade No. 5, It Makes A Long Time Man Feel Bad (Rzewski 2000); for instance the use of octaves with added dissonance provided by a major seventh. While I have never performed any music by Rzewski, I have listened to several of his works and am aurally familiar with his style. Finding this common feature provided me with an insight into the sound colour I wanted to create in the second *Incantation*.

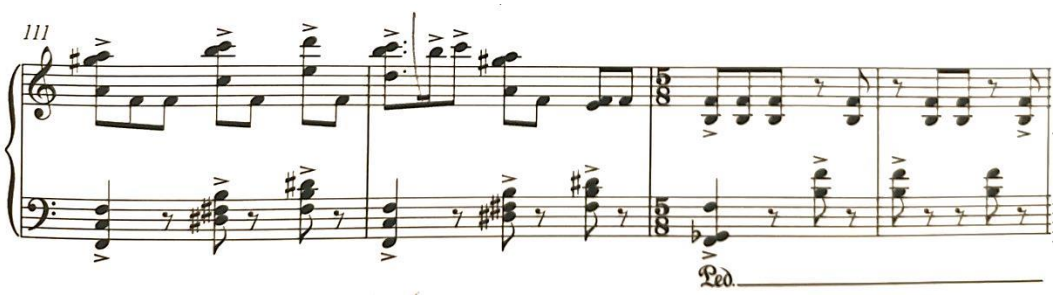


Figure 38a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 111-114.

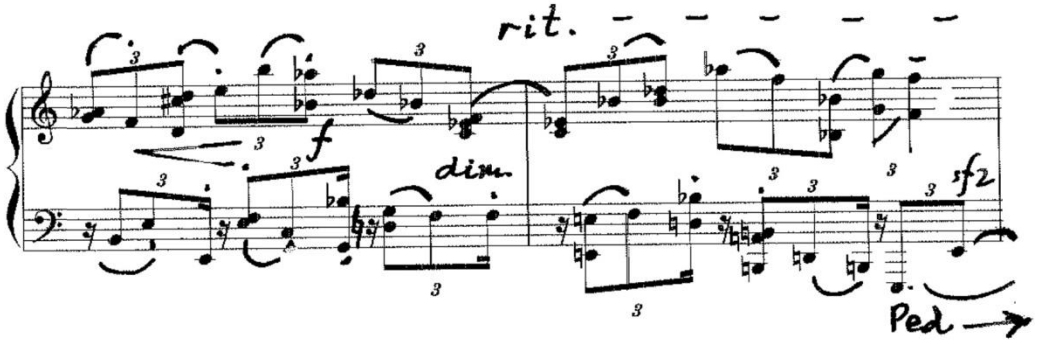


Figure 38b: Rzewski North American Ballade No. 5, It Makes a Long Time Man Feel Bad, bars 66-67.

The final section of this movement, from bars 126 to 143 (Cartwright 2019a: 7:44-8:27), is written with an ostinato pattern in the left hand, played with all five fingers. Underneath this the right hand plays a low fourth, switching to chordal melodic lines above. One has to constantly manage the pedal and sound volume of the left hand here so that it doesn't accumulate too much over the following pages. The lower part played by the right hand reminds me of a masterclass taught by Daniel Barenboim on the Beethoven sonatas, specifically bars 27-29 from the 'Appassionata'. Barenboim advises the pianist Lang Lang that one should always have "a complete independence of what is the statement, and what is the commentary" (Barenboim 2005: 19:37-19:44). In this case the right-hand notes played from beat 4 of bar 27 to beat 2 of bar 28 are the statement, while beats 2 and 3 of bar 28 are commentary on that statement. Barenboim demonstrates that those two beats should be played slightly softer to be heard as commentary, rather than as a direct continuation of the statement. I found it useful to think of the passage from bar 126 in Johnson's second *Incantation* similarly. The low fourth in the right hand takes on a role subservient to the melodic chords in the second half of bar 126, all while an ostinato pattern is repeated by the left hand. While the low voice here has a different function to that in the Beethoven, the idea of how to separate the voices remains valid and useful.

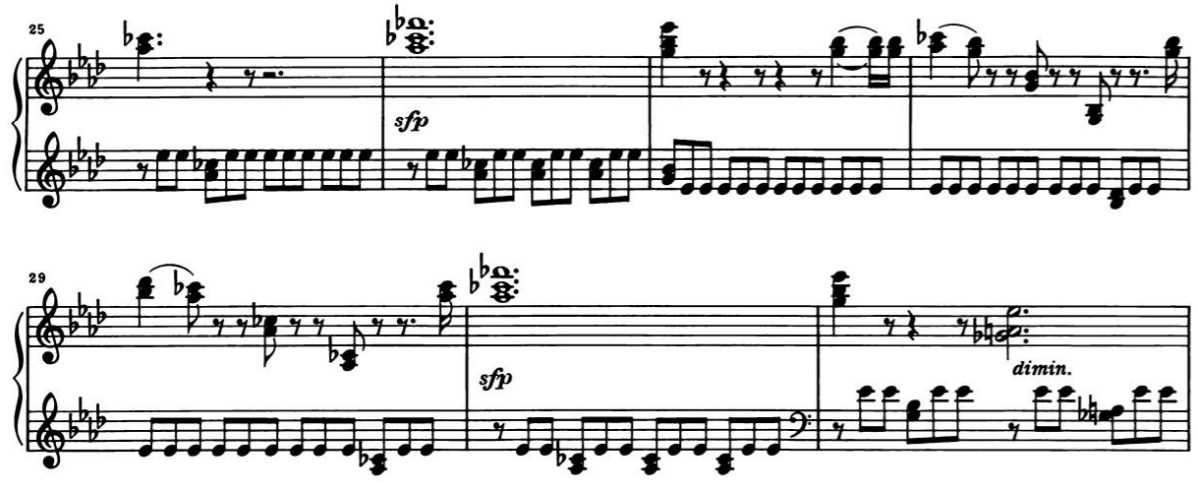


Figure 39a: Beethoven Sonata No. 23, Opus 57, *Allegro assai*, bars 25-31.

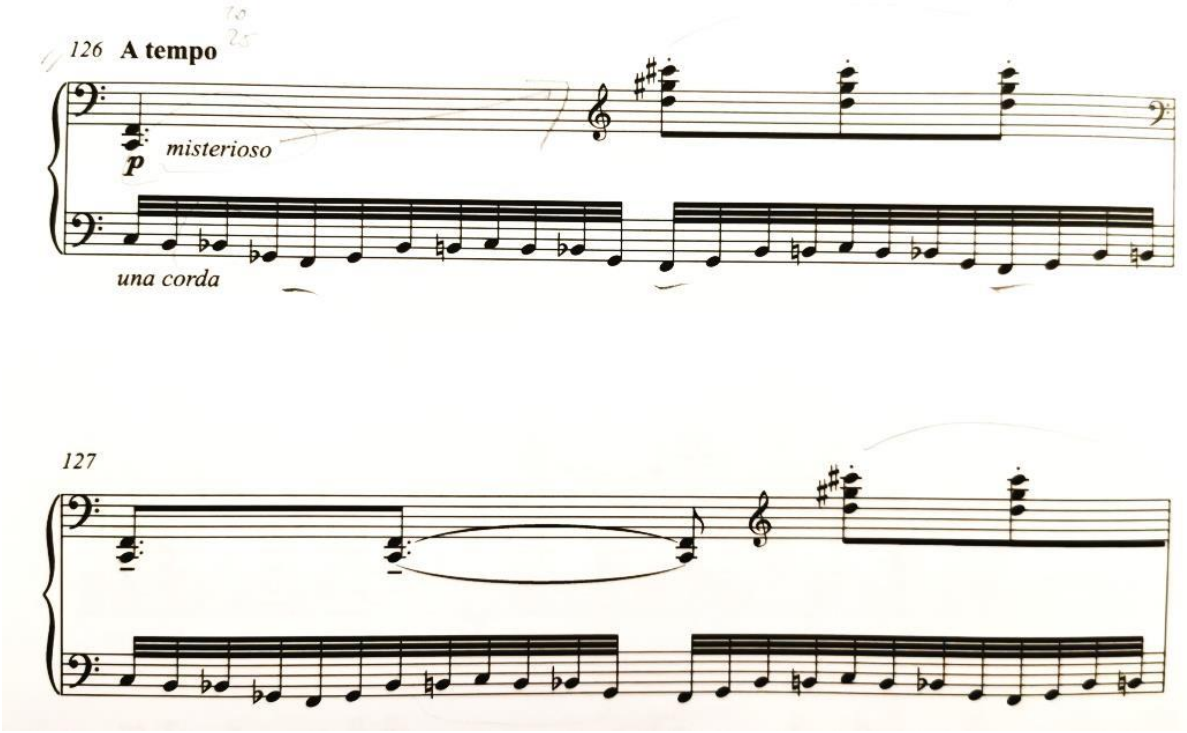


Figure 39b: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 126-127.

The final reference for me is when Johnson uses a technique similar to that in his second *Jazz Impromptu* (see fig. 40b) which I had taught prior to learning the *Incantations*. The left hand plays a chordal accompaniment in the middle register over a pedal point on F, while the right hand crosses over to play either bass notes underneath, or melodic notes above. I made substantial use of both the *una corda* and sustain pedals to create the veiled atmosphere required for this movement.

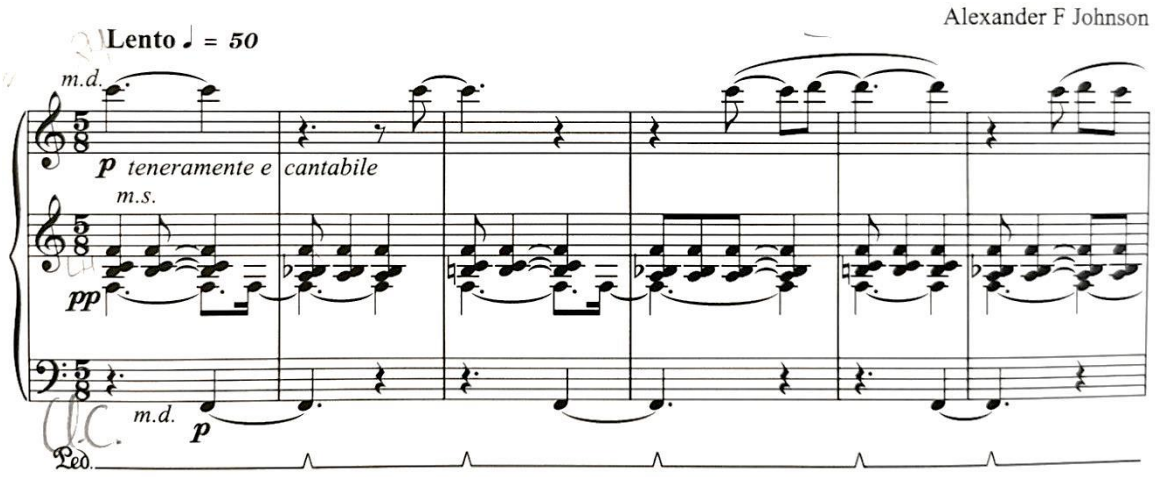


Figure 40a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 3*, bars 1-6.

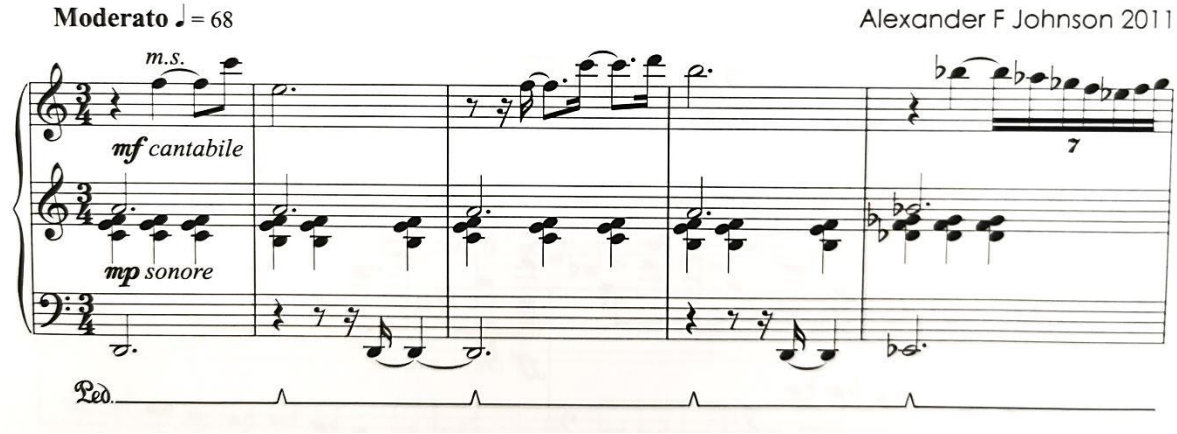


Figure 40b: Alexander Johnson Jazz Impromptu 2, bars 1-5.

Embodying Music through Technique

Pianist-researcher Mine Doğantan-Dack notes that "integrating embodied artistic practice into musical thought requires thinking about and in terms of the musical instrument and the performer's bodily engagement with it" (2015a: 172). In both the second and third *Incantations* there were several sections that presented specifically physical challenges that required a variety of technical methods to solve in order to be able to produce an artistic rendering. The second *Incantation* starts with a call of three bars (fig. 41; Cartwright 2019a: 4:48-4:50) using dissonant harmony and strongly accented rhythms. This required careful practice to negotiate the simultaneous leaps in both hands. The hands should be prepared on their notes before they play, with a combination of grasping and a springboard movement to propel the hand from the chord to the single notes following. When one hand has a larger leap than the other, as the left does in bar 3, that hand becomes the point of focus

for the eyes, and should move to its notes before the other. Knowledge of how to negotiate passages such as this is somatic and accumulated over many years from the pianist's-body's regular encounters with the instrument.

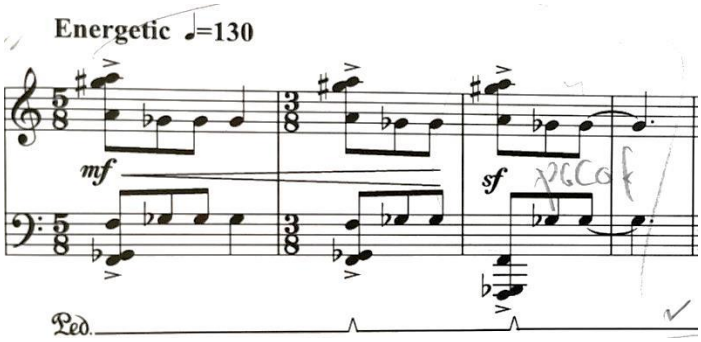


Figure 41: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 1-3.

Later in this section the lower voice takes on more prominence, playing a rumbling, chromatic passage underneath an ostinato (see fig. 42a). This proved tricky to put together with the left hand, and required several practice variants, combined with the choice of a suitable fingering, before I thought I could play it successfully. I eventually settled on using fingers 1 through 4 for the right hand, allowing the thumb to land on the first of every group of four demi-semi quavers. I practiced this section in several rhythmic variants, including stopping on each note of every group of four, while playing the others in tempo, and also playing dotted rhythms in two-note groups. This allowed me to work on short fragments 'in tempo' and to successfully coordinate the two hands. Other useful practice techniques for the left hand included playing just a skeleton of the pattern, using just the C and the G to orientate the right hand, as well as practising the entire pattern in unison with its physical pianistic mirror image in the right hand. I first came across this technique in a video tutorial by pianist Chick Corea (2014). In the Johnson work the notes C, B, B-flat, G-flat, and F in the left hand equate to E, F, F-sharp, A-sharp and B in the right, when dividing the keyboard symmetrically in two. This method of practising is especially useful to help develop the requisite flexibility and shaping in the wrist required for lengthy repetitions of this pattern. I practiced this with varying tempi and dynamics, while experimenting with the proportions of vertical and lateral wrist movement and the participation of the finger. It took several attempts to find a satisfying balance of articulation and rumbling pianistic effect, without sounding like a technical study or being indistinct.

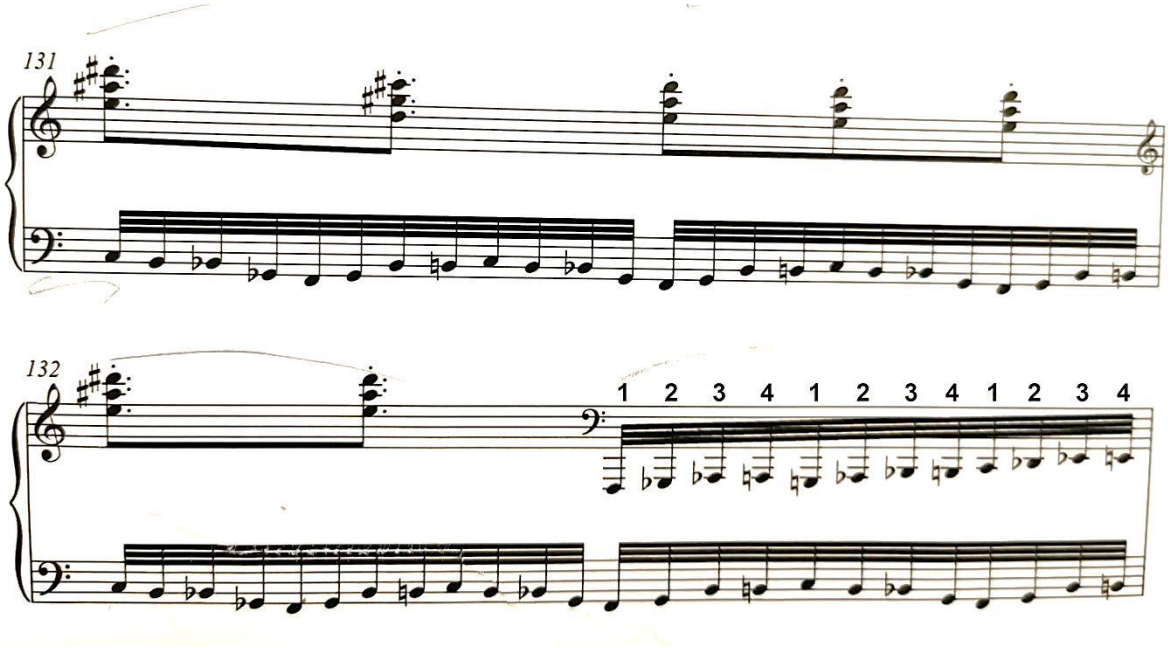


Figure 42a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 131-132.

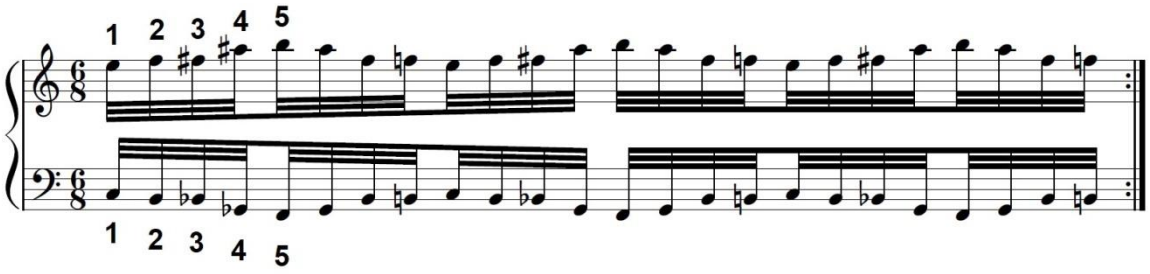


Figure 42b: Mirror Image Practice Arrangement of Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bar 126.

Playing Different Characters

Various musical characters arose in the learning of the *Three Incantations*, with the second and third demanding the ability to produce several contrasting images with control of different layered textures and colours, often achieved by using a different physical touch for each. In this way the contrasts become embodied while practising, so that other aspects such as melodic lines and rhythmic precision could be focussed on during performance.

In bar 24 (5:14) of the second *Incantation*, the character is a playful *scherzando* within a *pianissimo* dynamic. This section required careful attention to pedalling and touch with a sound in the left hand that could still be heard as staccato through the pedal. This was achieved through a combination of wrist and finger staccato played loosely with a bit of air and a 'slapping' movement. The right hand

here plays more legato, and at a slightly lower volume than the left, achieved by keeping the fingers closer to the keys.

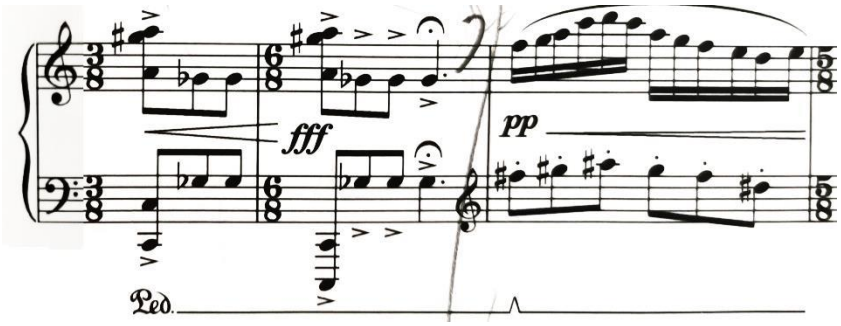


Figure 43: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 22-24.

From bars 30 to 36 (5:22-5:32, see figure 36a) the lower voice becomes more lyrical, with the left hand singing a melody in the lower-middle register of the piano. This legato line was enhanced by making sure the left-hand thumb holds its note for as long as possible before playing the *acciaccatura*. The elbow here needs to stay close to the body so that the weight is distributed more on the melodic line than the bass notes. In opposition to the low melodic line, the right hand plays staccato textures above, which should be heard distantly, and not detract the listener's attention from the lower part. This was achieved by using a sound combining a loose wrist and a firm fingertip, playing as if drawing the hand back from the surface of the key. In this way the sound is sufficiently light and clean, without being overpowering. In this case the two hands need to function somewhat independently of one another: the sound in the left is *cantabile*, rich, and lyrical, while the right hand plays light, *scherzando* commentary. Doğantan-Dack speaks of this necessity of touch sensitivity: "With regard to the instrument of the modern piano, this kind of sensuous knowing is a function of a cultivated sense of touch in both hands" (2015a: 175). In this case the sense of touch required here has to be sufficiently developed so that each hand can carry out an individual musical function, creating a textural contrapuntalism. Doğantan-Dack highlights further that

> even if a pianist works from a directly embodied understanding of singing by actually studying it in practice, to translate this understanding into a cantabile delivery on the piano requires further specialist knowledge about the kinds of pianistic touch and gestures that are necessary to produce the desired tonal effects on this instrument" (181).

Taking Time and Changing Time

In the third *Incantation* a balance is required between an improvisatory approach and the maintenance of an underlying rhythmic pulse. While learning it I would frequently extend certain beats to try and create a sense of spaciousness (for instance beats 4 and 5 of bar 3, see figure 40a);

but these distortions had to be 'undone' later in the learning process so that the rhythmic pulse was not completely lost. Having worked in this way allowed me to have a sense of freedom with the phrasing once the melody was returned to its original rhythmic context. I made liberal use of rubato to lend an expressive quality to certain melodic intervals, for instance in bars 16-19 (fig. 44; 9:34-9:51).

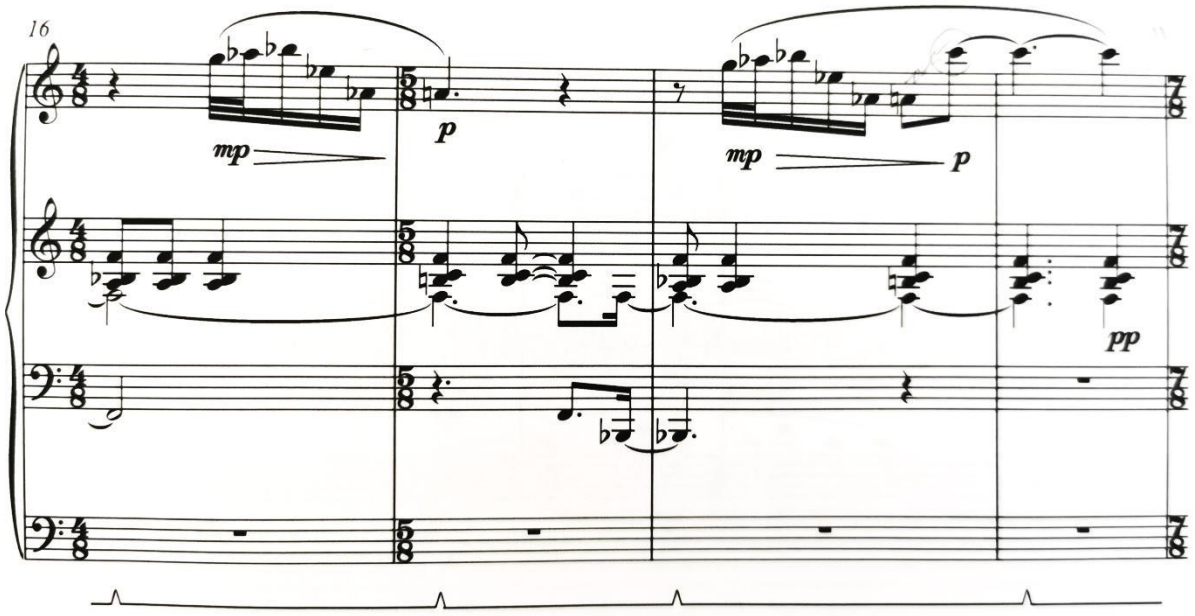


Figure 44: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 3*, bars 16-19.

The first melodic figure in bars 16 and 17 needed special attention and timing when passing from the A-flat to the A-natural. This time was 'repaid' by keeping the accompaniment in bar 17 moving gently forward. Similarly the melodic figure in bars 18 and 19 is played 'straight' so that the A-flat, A natural and high C can be stretched slightly to enhance their melodic significance, in the same way a singer could take expressive license to reach a high note in a slow melodic context with a 'covered' sound. One should always follow principles of good taste through judicious use of rubato. What time is taken needs to be restored, in keeping with Casals' principle of "*fantasy with order*" (Blum 1977: 87, emphasis original). By way of contrast, when Johnson has marked *semplice* for a melodic voice in this movement, I opted to play without rubato. This normally occurred in passages where the melodic voice was cumulative, in other words, each statement was slightly louder and more intense than the previous. In this case any distortions to the upper melodic line would detract from the overall *crescendo* and structural progression of this section – furthermore the rolled chords at the start of every bar already require some extra time. This is especially difficult as the melodic lines continue right up to the bar line and it isn't really possible to play the chord 'early' to account for this. This melodic material is derived from the second movement, for instance, the melody in bars 22

and 23 (fig. 45a; 10:04-10:12) uses the same notes, and similar rhythmic proportions as the left hand in bars 69 to 71 from the second movement (fig. 45b; 6:12-6:14).

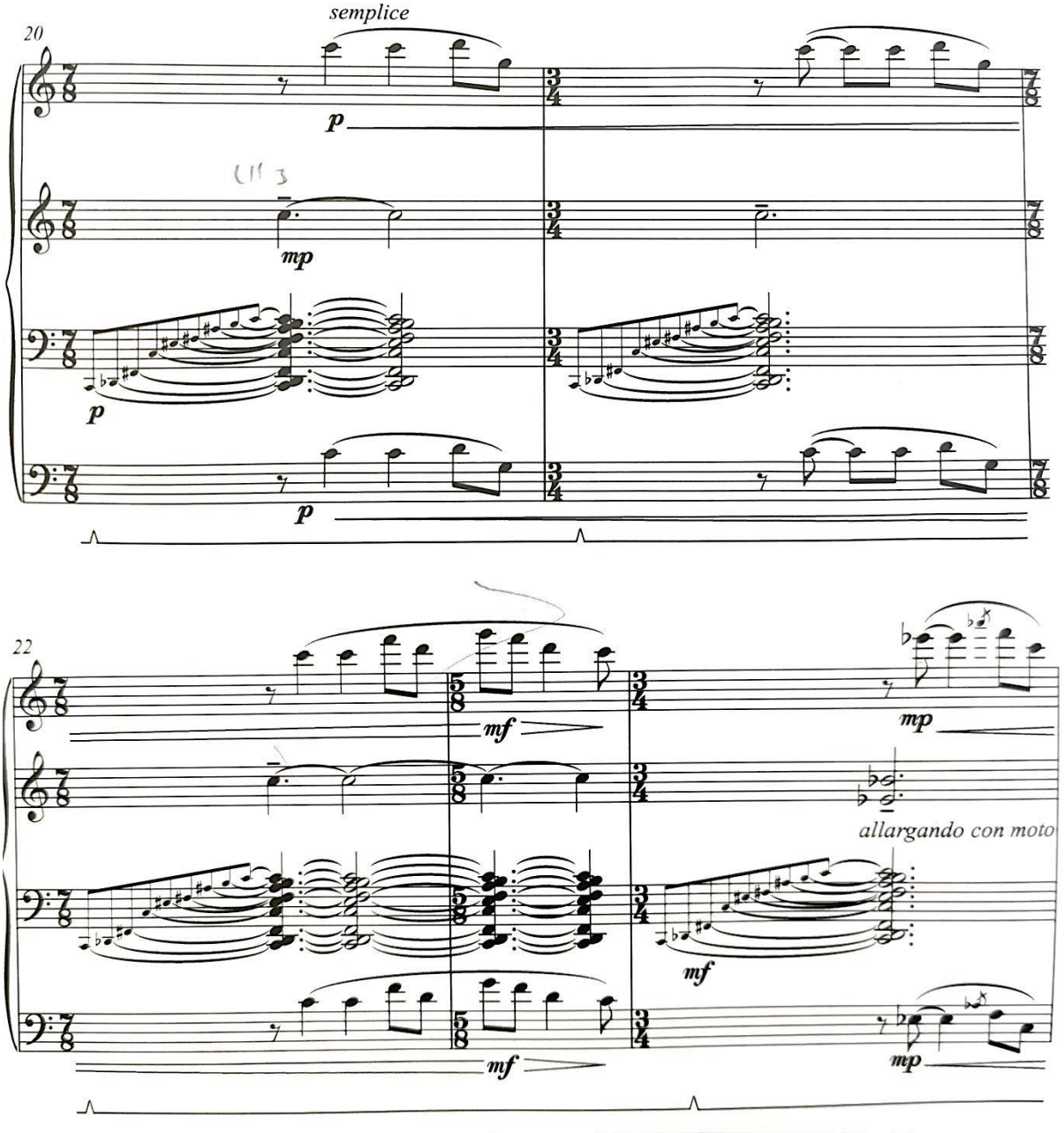


Figure 45a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 3*, bars 20-24.

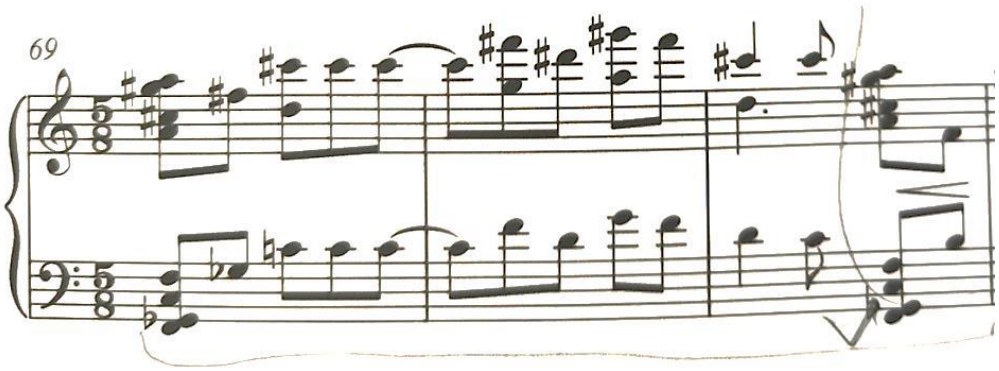


Figure 45b: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 69-71.

Not only do the *Incantations* raise questions of tasteful rubato and freedom of the melodic line, but they also play with divisions of odd time signatures, often changing from one bar to the next. In the second *Incantation* the two voices not only have different textures, but use different divisions of the 5/8 time signature: the left hand is firmly rooted in a 3 + 2 grouping, while the right darts between 2 + 3 (as in bar 30; 5:22) and 3 + 2 (as in bar 33; 5:26). The coordination of these contrasting groupings had to be embodied in certain ways: it needed to be rhythmically and musically understood, enhanced by practising with emphasis on the respective groupings of both hands, while the other followed sympathetically, and also built in to a muscle memory by conscious repetition. In order to bring out these contrasting groupings in performance, it is easiest to show the changes in the right hand, while the left remains stable. I achieved this by placing a slight emphasis wherever the right is in opposition, for instance the third quaver of bar 32 (see fig. 36a).

The passage from bars 57 to 65 (5:58-6:08), while notated in 3/4, feels closer to 6/8 in that the underlying structure suggests two groups of three quavers per bar, or two dotted crotchets, as opposed to three crotchets. This seems to be confirmed in bar 61 which is in 4/4 but is in a quaver grouping of 3 + 3 + 2.

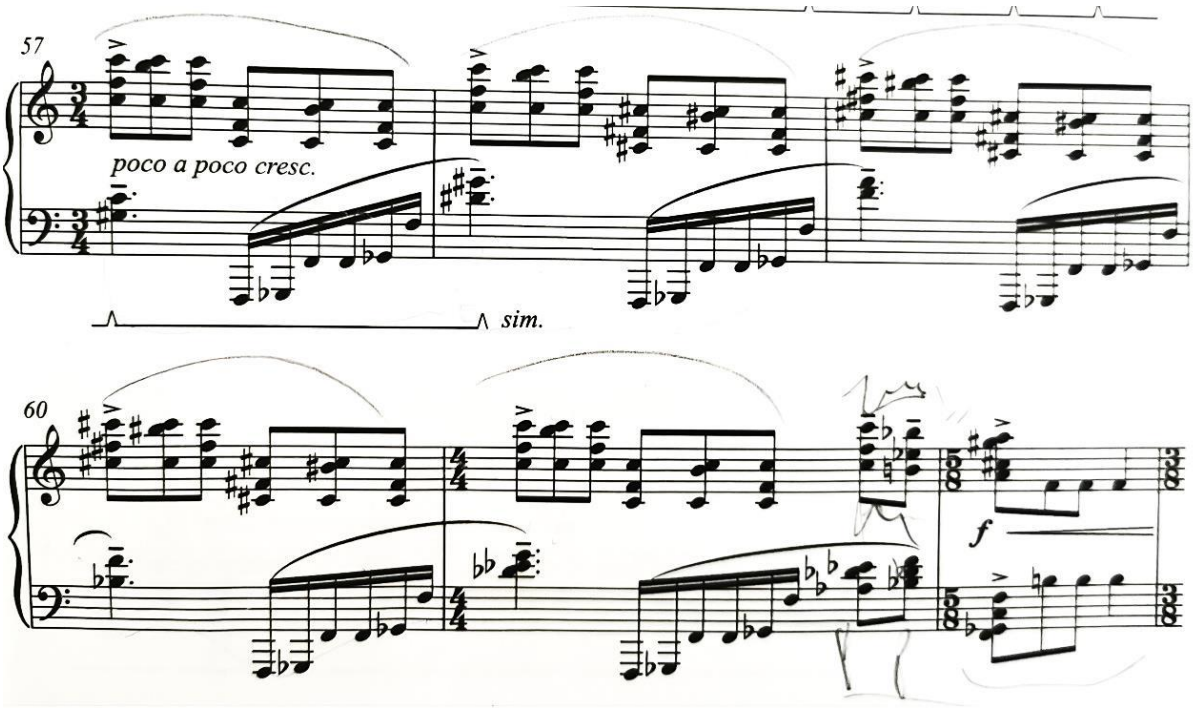


Figure 46: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 57-62.

Micro and Macro Structures

One of the techniques that I extracted for use in determining the intensity curve for the first movement of the Schubert Sonata was to chart the dynamic progression over the course of the movement. While I didn't do the same for the *Incantations*, I did find places where careful gradation of dynamics helped to clarify the structure and climactic points of these pieces. For instance, at the start of the second *Incantation*, I had to resist the urge to start *fortissimo*. The opening is only marked *mezzo-forte*, but the energetic character and brisk tempo can easily cause one to start too loudly and leave no room for the *crescendo* to take place. From bars 1 to 23 there is a constant juxtaposition of the opening material with a pentatonic melodic line, with the two jostling for attention, even interrupting one another as in bars 17 and 18 (see fig. 47; 5:04-5:06). Throughout this section I tried to reveal the difference between the accented chords and the more playful pentatonic melodies by using strong accents and *sforzandos* for the chords, and a lighter touch on the melodic sections. The section reaches a climax in bar 23 with a dynamic of *fff* and a fermata on the last note.

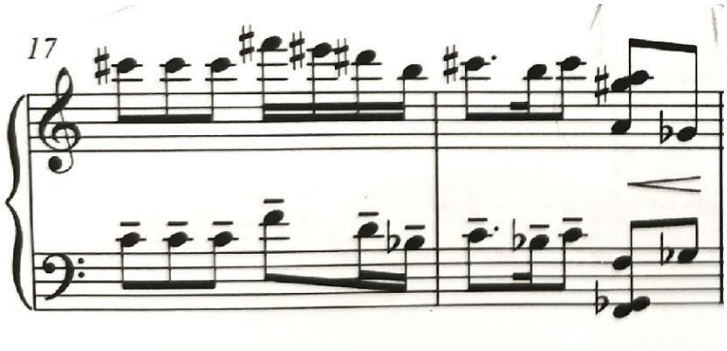


Figure 47: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 17-18.

In bar 56 I decided to add a *subito piano* after the initial accent, which served both to make sense of the *crescendo* starting at bar 48 (which would otherwise continue until bar 80) and to allow room for the following *poco a poco crescendo* marked in bar 57. Without this effect the section from bars 57 to 65 (5:55-6:08) is too loud for too long and doesn't have enough direction.

Even though it is not marked, I chose to follow the hairpin shape indicated for the left-hand ostinato in bar 80 (fig. 48a; 6:24) throughout this section. The melodic line here is carried by the right hand, which also provides textural effects over the ostinato in the bass. I chose to bring out the chords in the right hand, which were frequently accented, and to play slightly less on the demi-semi quaver runs, which carried more virtuosic effect than musical significance. Hence the note to myself to 'sing' on the melodic chords (see fig. 48b), and to play *mezzo-forte* on the arpeggios to create a varied texture.

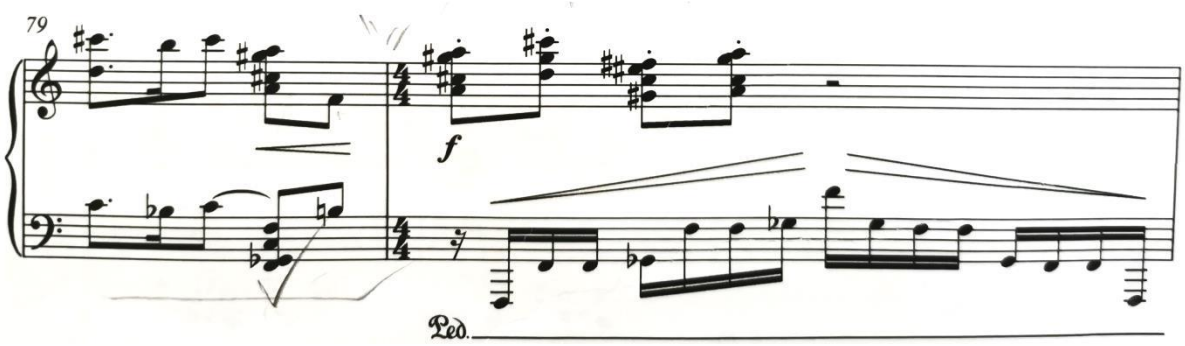


Figure 48a: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 79-80.

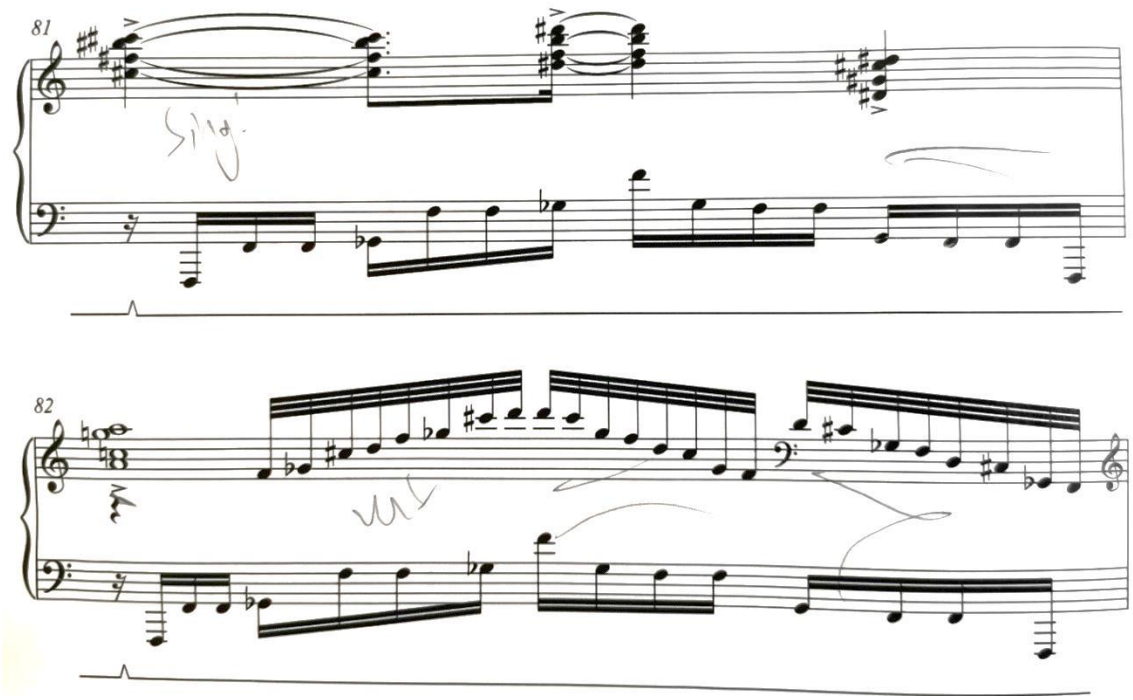


Figure 48b: Alexander Johnson *Incantation 2*, bars 81-82.

As the date of the concert approached my learning and preparation started to focus on different aspects. My attention shifted from smaller details such as dynamics, fingering, touch, pedaling and sound production within a particular movement, to the narrative thread required to convincingly hold the performance together. One effective way of working on this was to play through the work from beginning to end, which I was able to do in the performance venue. Part of this work involved finding the correct mood and character for each work in relation to the others that surrounded it. The first *Incantation*, for instance, needs to start in a plaintive, chant-like manner, without giving too much sound too soon and with control of the emotional intensity. This means that certain high points must be stronger than others. For example, the climax in bars 36 and 37 (2:34-2:43) must be louder than the similar place in bars 9 and 10 (0:36-0:45), which, if played too loudly, would leave no room for growth as the music continues. The narrative structure that has led to this point in bars 36 and 37 makes the later climax more emphatic than the first. Figurations like those in bars 13 and 17 discussed earlier also need to grow organically out of what preceded them, which involves carefully managing the volume at the start of each respective passage so that they match, or are 'under' the sound created in the previous bars.

The second *Incantation* is the only 'fast' one in the entire set. As such the aspects that distinguish it from the outer movements need to be enhanced to provide greater contrast and interest when performing the complete set. This involved choosing a tempo that was possibly too quick and just manageable for me; this is one case where in a second performance I would be sure to work longer

at the faster tempo to make sure I could better handle the technical challenges. I would also take even more 'breathing room' at certain cadence points to provide contrast to those passages which move forward relentlessly. This movement also requires careful structural planning, because passages marked with the same dynamic for long sections still need to have melodic shape and line, and some discretion is needed to determine where *crescendos* end or drop back down to a softer dynamic. I had to greatly reduce the level of sound in the section from bars 110 to 125 (7:18-7:44). Initially I played it all *forte* and vigorously and had to learn to temper the sound and leave room for the climactic statement in bars 124-125.

The final *Incantation* needed to provide respite in the overall narrative after the furious end of the previous movement. (The video editor cut the time taken between the movements; whereas hopefully my breaks in the concert allowed enough time for the dust to settle). The performer needs, at this point, to make a change from external, exuberant communication to a more peaceful, internally felt emotional setting. Psychologically, enough time has to pass between these movements so that those passages which 'recall' moments of the previous movement (through use of the same material) feel distant and remembered at first, before coming back into conscious reality. The indications *teneramente e cantabile* should assist in setting the appropriate atmosphere right from the outset.

Having provided a detailed account of my own learning process with the *Three Incantations* as well as presenting the findings from the other concert participants, several notable themes emerged. It seems that one of the most consistent and useful techniques, and perhaps especially so for pianists who don't specialise in performing contemporary music, is to find references to musical and technical approaches from the experience of preparing canonical repertoire. Not only does this provide a means of drawing on prior experience, it also provides some assurance that what is being performed will be convincing as it has worked in the past. However, there is also an inherent risk in using performance techniques that are designed for canonical repertoire on more contemporary music – for example, one could end up interpreting notation in a manner which is appropriate for canonical music but not suited to contemporary writing.[12] The process also provided a valuable contribution to the role of analysis and intuition in performance preparation. To some extent this is dependent on individual preference, and prior experience in performing a particular type of music. While analysis may perhaps be helpful when one is unfamiliar with a particular composer, after gaining some experience with that composer's music, the preparation would likely take on a more

[12] For further discussion of how a particular performance approach can influence how contemporary music is heard and understood see Ian Pace's 'Negotiating borrowing, genre and mediation in the piano music of Finnissy - Strategies and aesthetics' (2019).

intuitive approach. Additionally, I found that the process of finding technical approaches that served musical goals galvanised my attempts to clarify the artistic image: in trying to produce a particular sound or effect I had to be absolutely clear in what I was trying to achieve, and had to be able to describe this in concrete terms. While the participants likely encountered some of the artistic image techniques I presented to them for the first time, I had the benefit of having previously used them when learning the Schubert. Perhaps this meant that I was more willing to experiment with them than some of the participants, especially those that have had extensive performance experience and have settled on their musical and technical approaches. What follows are some personal reflections on the complete process.

Reflections

The processes involved in preparing the concert of contemporary South African piano music, and writing about it as a research event, raised several matters for consideration. I could have asked more pianists to participate under the reasonable assumption that some might withdraw for various reasons. This would have provided a wider data sample and possibly richer information. The information on artistic and technical preparation that I sent out to the participants before the concert was well presented and summarised; and any further reduction in content would, I feel, have sacrificed what I wanted to communicate to the participants about the research objectives. It seems self-evident to say that different pianists would have different reactions to being asked to experiment with methods of preparation. Most pianists tend to settle into comfortable ways of working that they know are reliable for them. As JP noted he works "in short, short spurts, very goal oriented short amounts of time" and Eugene says that for contemporary music "the learning process takes more time" reminding us of practical considerations of time pressure. To ask participants to try out new methods of working, especially when it culminated in a public performance, required of them a large time commitment and a certain amount of courage. I was nonetheless pleased with the participants' degree of involvement and the feedback I obtained from them, and received a spectrum of responses: some did not use any of the techniques of preparation I suggested, while others kept detailed notes on all aspects of their preparation. All the participants' responses are 'valid', useful for understanding how non-specialist performers of new music prepare it, and highlight areas which I may not have considered, including some of the dangers associated with what can be seen as a cerebral approach to an intuitive practice. Every pianist finds their own way of developing an interpretation and cultivating their musical understanding, much of which happens with experience and exposure to different music over many years.

In my own learning of the Johnson *Incantations*, for which I took myself rigorously through the process of preparation according to the methods I had assembled in my reading of the writings of pianist-pedagogues and pianist-researchers, I found that one of the most valuable resources was having an extra pair of trusted ears to guide me and point out aspects of the music that weren't being clearly communicated during the preparation phase. This was followed by a process of absorption and assimilation and then repeated, so that the level of the playing increased from week to week. Many of my own findings corresponded to the variety of artistic image techniques drawn from the literature, however in practice these tend to happen in an integrated, intuitive and often unarticulated manner inasmuch as the performer doesn't consciously think through them as they learn. Rather they happen 'naturally', simultaneously, sub-consciously, through instrument-specific embodied knowledge, and constantly, often in time spent away from the piano. I would venture so far as to say that they should only be separated out for the purposes of demonstration, for instance in a teaching or workshop environment (or in a research project such as this), or otherwise used if the performer is unsatisfied with a particular passage and needs to find a path which may enable them to unlock a deeper meaning or more satisfying approach. While it was an interesting exercise to work at different aspects of preparation in isolation, I have returned in my subsequent learning to a once more integrated approach, no doubt enriched by what I have learned through this research.

Da Capo al Fine

Throughout the process of completing the three recitals for this doctorate, documenting my own process of developing an artistic image for the works to be performed, and interpreting interview feedback from participants in the South African music concert, several findings emerged. Some of these concur with and extend the existing views of practitioners in artistic research, while others have revealed, perhaps, fresh insights into the performance preparation process. This concluding section summarises these findings, and explores how they relate to one another and contribute to the field of artistic research.

For both the Schubert and Johnson works I drew on my knowledge background of each composer before starting work on their respective compositions. For the Schubert Sonata this knowledge background was far more substantial than for the Johnson *Incantations*, and focused partially on the concept of lateness in Schubert's style. The idea of the Sonata being composed towards the end of Schubert's life didn't seem to have any direct bearing on my interpretation or the performance itself. It appeared to me more important to identify with the 'spirit' of the work in musical terms, rather than to try and find a particular set of characteristic associations with lateness as a concept. Similarly, my comparative lack of knowledge background in relation to the Johnson didn't prevent me from presenting a convincing performance.[13] As a performer, I try to set about immediately identifying with the mood and character of a work and finding ways to achieve this in practice: there isn't always time to complete an entire reading of all the possible influences on a specific work by a composer, and in such cases performers have to trust their musical instincts. Neuhaus highlights the importance of 'getting to the point' as soon as possible, using the metaphor of trying to boil a kettle on a stove, frequently removing the water from the heat, and getting frustrated with the lack of result. Eventually one has to wait the required amount of time – why not do so from the start (1973: 3)? Dwelling on one's lack of existing knowledge of a particular composer might in fact hamper the artistic process by creating an artificial boundary to the identification of the spirit of a work. It seems to me that knowledge background is better suited as a guide to a stylistically appropriate performance practice. This information could be useful in the following scenarios: in the intelligent use of dynamics – for instance tempering the sound of a *forte* chord in Schubert as opposed to Johnson's use of the same dynamic – or in understanding what is texturally required from Schubert's Alberti bass accompaniment as compared to Johnson's rumbling ostinato. While it is possible that

[13] I sent the recordings of the performance to the composer after the concert. He confirmed that he found the performance and interpretation, especially in the slower movements, to be convincing in terms of musical expression and general depth. From a personal point of view, I felt that the musical decisions arrived at prior to the concert were clearly communicated in the performance. These included choices made in regards to tempi, dynamics, contrast of sound, mood, character and the narrative thread.

different works by the same composer could explore similar musical and emotional themes, it can be dangerous to assume that similar stylistic writing implies similar emotional content. In this case Brendel's suggestion that a performer has to treat each work as unique holds true (2015a: 40), and the information gained from a substantial knowledge background with a particular composer should always be viewed through a performer's insight and intuition. Here, the role of performance experience in general holds more weight, and should prevent us from reaching dogmatic conclusions. The repeated experience of identifying with emotional and musical content and communicating this on stage, regardless of whether the composer is known or unknown, canonical or contemporary, provides greater benefit each time this process begins anew.

While the Schubert Sonata presented various challenges relating to the use of the score, and the selection of an edition, the Johnson exists in only one published form. It seems that contemporary composers are more aware of being consistent in marking their scores, but this didn't mean that there weren't queries that I had vis-à-vis the Johnson work. In both cases I found that the best solution was to rely on my intuition and to listen carefully to the result produced. For instance in the Johnson there were several passages marked with a long pedal through changing harmonies. I always tried first to do exactly what was written, but in the case of pedaling, notation has remained somewhat imprecise. In these cases I had to try first to follow the indications as written, and then to make slight adjustments to account for the instrument, venue and touch at the piano.

One of the main aims of my research was to try and develop an artistic image of select works, according to Hill's principle of understanding, in outline at least, so as to imagine what I as the performer wanted to do musically before starting work at the piano (2002: 131). This was done through the use of an array of methods drawn from two traditions of thinking and writing about performance, from the work of pianist-pedagogues and artistic researchers. The entire process was documented and narrative accounts were written up. While I tried to put into practice and apply the various techniques separately during the preparation phase for the sake of documenting their effects on my preparations for the research, in practice they tended to cross-influence one another, and it can be difficult to pinpoint exactly which technique had which effect on the performance, or further, whether a particular decision arose from one technique at all, or rather a combination of them with my own intuition, experience, and various outside influences such as recordings, masterclasses and lessons with my teachers.

In the case of the Schubert Sonata, which I learnt several months before the first performance, I was able to make significant progress on this image before work at the piano. However, with the Johnson, due to the pressure of the upcoming concert I had limited time to complete this work. The

issue of the time it takes to undertake a systematic application of the identified methods in preparing a work for performance was also raised by one of the research participants Sonja van Zyl who, when asked about her experience in implementing the provided artistic image techniques, said forthrightly: “I just don’t have the time; I just have to get through the notes and go as quick as I can and get it done”. This raises broader concerns of the feasibility of putting into practice many of the methods when preparing a work for performance. While a systematic application of these methods might represent an idealised way of working to develop an artistic image of a work before starting at the piano, in reality the process is more likely to be a dialectical one. Performers often need to make interpretative decisions quickly, especially when required to learn large volumes of music in a short space of time. Only in cases when I am not sure what to do musically, technically, and interpretively do I turn to other methods to try and make sense of the music. Performers should try to understand the role of each musical feature within the overall composition and search for the best way to bring out these features in performance. Of the various techniques I trialed in order to develop the image before work at the piano the bar-by-bar narrative was perhaps the most cohesive. In this format all the different types of information are drawn together, and their musical meaning is more easily identifiable than when dealing with disparate elements. Additionally, information in this format was only referred to when it has direct implications for performance or work at the piano; although the narrative was more easily completed for having gone through individual elements first. This narrative provides perhaps the most complete description of an artistic image, in as much as musical characteristics can ever be fully described in words as opposed to their realisation in sound.

The artist image I had developed was enhanced and realised in concrete form by playing through the works in my practice sessions and lessons, and also by taking notes and documenting any feedback from the lessons. Through the repetition of this process the image is refined from one moment to the next. It seems that the practical attempt to communicate something musical and emotional allows the image to be solidified, while making allowance for practical influences of the instrument and the performer’s capabilities. Furthermore, the technique of ‘conducting’ the music provided a bridge between the theoretical and practical work – I was able to test and refine my image of certain passages, while avoiding Hill’s pitfall of endless repetition at the instrument. Even though I had less time to prepare the Johnson, I felt that the performance was still of a high standard – perhaps the experience of having worked so thoroughly on the image for the Schubert allowed me to move faster through the following work by identifying sooner the relevant musical characteristics.

One finding that was particularly relevant for learning contemporary music, both for myself and for the participants of the concert of South African music for solo piano, was to find references to

composers that we were more familiar with. This could involve trying to find a particular kind of sound used for interpreting a canonical composer (I had to find a Brahms-like sound for a melodic line in the Johnson), or trying to convey a similar spirit as one would in the interpretation of a different composer (as Astrid tried to find for the Prelude No. 7: Homage to Bartók). This suggests a different kind of knowledge background to the type mentioned above; instead of drawing on an in-depth knowledge of one particular composer, we were able to find inspiration from similar sections of music by unrelated composers.

Even once an artistic image is formed, or partially formed, there is always the significant step of realising the image in practice. The musical knowledge which is understood from an intellectual perspective needs to be translated into embodied knowledge through work at the instrument. The embodied knowledge is then put to the test in a public performance, and it is only here that the performer is able to judge the extent to which they are successful in their preparation. Additionally, a host of other factors including nerves, peculiarities of the instrument, behavior of the audience and the performer's state of mind at the moment of performance can influence and change some of the decisions made before going on stage. Performers need to be able to adapt, and respond in real-time, even if that means contradicting or changing their original musical decisions. For instance, if the pianist starts a particular movement in a certain tempo only to realise that the presence of an audience has changed the acoustic and the tempo now feels too slow, they should be free to subtly increase the tempo at an appropriate moment so that the rest of the movement does not suffer. These kind of adjustments can make the difference between a lacklustre and a successful performance, and performers are not completely bound to the constricts of artistic decisions made prior to performance.

In the process of trialing the various methods of preparation and partly because of the cross-influences between the different methods that took place, a dialogue was created by the ways in which methods drawn from the pianist-pedagogue and artistic researcher traditions spoke to one another. These two fields have remained largely separate in their spheres of influence, despite a move towards inclusion of specific aspects of the former by some artistic researchers such as Doğantan-Dack. Throughout the course of this research, I had to work with the two traditions of literature in an integrated and cohesive manner, and this has revealed ways in which these two traditions can converge, and could continue to do so in future artistic research. Insights from the two areas are, I found, not mutually exclusive and there is no reason why the (older) work of pianist-pedagogues shouldn't be returned to, and take a more central place, in the (recent) academic field of artistic research. Indeed, it would seem that it is essential that the voices of pianist-pedagogues

are included in the more contemporary research space, especially given that artistic research, which was a late arrival particularly for music, has made a call for the inclusion of the voice of expert practitioners in the field, and for which the work of Rink, Doğantan-Dack and Hill has already made a case. Rather than being conceived of as offering different points of view as to how to approach music for performance, the two traditions could stand to benefit from their respective bodies of knowledge. The work of pianist-pedagogues could gain from structured and thorough research grounding – until now it has often gone untested in any formal research environment, which could further refine and clarify some of its suggestions. Equally, artistic research in music is in urgent need of contributions from experts in musical performance, a move which has admittedly been taking place over the last ten years, but which could be enhanced by hearing and learning from pianists and pedagogues who have either prepared for countless performances, or trained others to do so.

Attempting to describe a complete artistic image for a single piece of music was always going to be a challenging task. While a narrative account can detail a personal emotional connection to a work, and provide a programmatic description, it can only speculate on the connection to these features in sound until work at the piano begins. Discussions of knowledge background, prior experience, and influences from other composers could also never fully account for the complete and complex process that goes in to interpreting a particular musical work. To regard the artistic image itself as a fixed outcome or product is perhaps a somewhat naïve view. As Mitsuko Uchida says of her own recordings of Schubert sonatas:

> I can't decide how to play. There are many colleagues who know, and they play as they have played yesterday. Or they are so grand, they know the music and they go out to make a statement: 'Here we are, and I am right.' I am never right. I try to catch something that is true in that very moment. But with solo works, it's so bloody difficult. The great composers always change. And as you change, they change. Especially with the Schubert sonatas, I discovered that I truly have changed (Uchida in Barone 2019).

Perhaps thus it is best not to regard an artistic image as a fixed outcome, or a goal to be achieved. Rather the process of preparation is also one of learning, of gaining experience for future attempts. We should trust that thorough and sincere preparation can help the performer to give a convincing performance, with the understanding that the next time the pianist approaches a work they may have changed their minds about how to interpret it, and may attach new meaning to the work's features, and thus should have the freedom to reinterpret what they see as if for the first time:

> I don't want to peep into what I did in the past. If I like it, the danger is that I will imitate myself, which is the last thing I want to do. And If I don't like it, I will just be depressed. The score is there. Why do I need to listen to myself (Uchida in Barone 2019)?

Appendix One: Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

1. Dealing with Knowledge Background

1.1 Could you speak about your history with learning contemporary music?

1.2 Could you outline your performance history with the specific composer, have you played any of their music before, and any differences between your approach to contemporary music as opposed to more canonical repertoire.

1.3 Why did you choose this particular work for the concert?

1.4 Did you choose to use any of the provided materials in preparation for the concert? Please elaborate. If not, were their particular reasons, or did you use other methods instead?

2. Personal Approaches to Interpretation

2.1 What methods and steps do you normally follow when preparing works for a concert performance?

2.2 Do you make a distinction between the interpretation and technical work?

2.3 Do you have specific methods to develop an interpretation before tackling the work on a practical level?

2.4 Do you use practical approaches that enable you to realise your interpretation?

1.5 Do you use different methods based on the style or composer of the work to be performed?

3. Suggested Approaches to Interpretation

3.1 Did you try any of the suggested methods for developing an artistic understanding of the prepared South African piece before approaching it at the piano?

3.2 If so, which ones did you try, and why?

3.3 What were your experiences with these approaches, did they enable you to develop an idea of the interpretation before beginning the practical work, and did they highlight any important features of the music?

3.4 Was the technical approach easier having gone through an initial interpretation, and were you better able to direct the practice having followed this approach?

3.5 Did your initial interpretative ideas change once you began the practical work at the instrument?

Appendix Two: South African Music for Solo Piano Programme



Programme

Astrid Small

Prelude no. 7 — Thomas Rajna (b. 1928)

Hungarian-born pianist and composer, Thomas Rajna (born 1928), has been settled in Cape Town, South Africa since 1970. He has had a rich musical life thus far as an award winning concert pianist, a highly acclaimed recording artist, a pedagogue and versatile composer.

As a composer, Rajna has written operas, choral and orchestral works, violin and piano concerti and a host of other smaller pieces including these Preludes for solo piano.

Rajna has called his compositional style "Contemporary lyricism", a style wherein melody features prominently and each work requires emotional commitment. His style also clearly shows the influence of the twentieth-century composers that inspired him: Claude Debussy, Bela Bartók, Igor Stravinsky and Dmitry Shostakovich. This Prelude (No 7) for solo piano, composed in homage to fellow Hungarian Bela Bartók, is an atmospheric miniature that captures Rajna's characteristic emphasis on melody and emotion. It pairs the recurring lyrical theme together with colourful harmonies and eerie dissonances akin to Bartók's own "Night music" in a compact and emotive work.

Sonja van Zyl

Sonatina No. 6 (for John Antoniadis) — Peter Klatzow (b. 1945)

Moderato
Slow, but alert (Sounds outside, late at night)
Vivace

Peter Klatzow studied composition at the Royal College of Music in 1964 where he won several of the College composition prizes. He was appointed in 1973 at the University of Cape Town where he also received his DMus for a published composition in 1999. He is one of few South African composers to achieve International recognition.

In the first movement, marked Moderato, the introductory motive sets the mood of the compound rhythm in the first bar and provides much of the material for the first movement, contrasted with more staccato chords.

The slow movement imitates 'Sounds outside, late at night'. The irregular time signature, staccato and legato sounds of the cluster chords in the right hand are used to achieve this.

The third, exciting Vivace movement, fluctuates between quadruple, triple and duple time with changes of key signature that change the colour of the piece and provide contrast.

Jean-Pierre Calitz

2 Nocturnes — Adrian More (b. 1980)

Stroll in the Moonlight
Sunrise

Adrian More composed 6 Nocturnes. The 2 selections are excellent exhibits of More's compositional voice with its austere simplicity. More's work is based in a tonal tradition but with a very unique and honest expression. His interest in improvisation is evident in these nocturnes with their descriptive titles and daring harmonic language. Both Nocturnes are slow and introspective, perhaps resembling the peaceful restlessness of insomnia with descriptions of moonlight and eventual dawn.

Peter Cartwright

Three Incantations — Alexander Johnson (b. 1968)

Andante
Energetic
Lento

Alexander Johnson's 3 Incantations juxtaposes major cultural influences of the African continent. The first portrays the "quasi Arabian" musical language of North Africa, the second a tribal dance of central Africa. In the third, the composer combines ideas from the previous two, with Western influences to portray the multicultural South Africa. The first Incantation is prescribed for the Unisa grade 8 examinations, while number 2 and 3 are to be performed together for the Unisa Performance Licentiate. The second Incantation was composed first, and since its composition performed in South Africa the United Kingdom as well as United States.

Eugene Joubert

Ballata Africana — Hendrik Hofmeyr (b. 1957)

The *Ballata Africana* is an evocation of the mysterious and fantastical elements found in certain African legends. Cast in the free form of the ballade, it is based on four contrasted ideas, of which the first is introductory in character, while the second and third represent the protagonists of the tale and their interaction.

Hendrik Hofmeyr was born in Cape Town in 1957. His first major success as a composer came in 1988 with the performance at the State Theatre of The Fall of the House of Usher, which won the South African Opera Competition and was also awarded the Nederburg Opera Prize. In the same year, Hofmeyr, who was furthering his studies in Italy during ten years of self-imposed exile as a conscientious objector, obtained first prize in an international competition with music for a short film by Wim Wenders. In 1992 he accepted a post as lecturer at the University of Stellenbosch, and in 1997 won two further international competitions, the prestigious Queen Elisabeth Competition of Belgium (with Raptus for violin and orchestra) and the Dimitri Mitropoulos Competition in Athens (with Byzantium for high voice and orchestra). His Incantesimo for flute was chosen to represent South Africa at the Congress of the International Society of Contemporary Music in Croatia in 2005. In 2008 he was honoured with a Kanna Award by the Kleinkaroo National Arts Festival. Hofmeyr, whose oeuvre includes more than a hundred commissioned works,is currently Professor and Head of Composition and Music Theory at the University of Cape Town, where he obtained his Doctorate in 1999.

Astrid Small completed her BMus (Hons) in Piano Performance under Dr Erika Bothma at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth. She participated as a soloist in the Youth Concerto Festival with the Eastern Cape Philharmonic Orchestra and was a finalist in the UNISA Grade 8 scholarship competition. Since relocating to Johannesburg in 2016, Astrid has been taking lessons privately with Professor Malcom Nay. In 2018, she obtained her Fellowship diploma from the Associated Board of the Royal School of music. Astrid currently works as a part-time piano teacher in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Sonja van Zyl began her piano studies at the age of five with Ms Katie van der Merwe in Kroonstad. She passed the UNISA Gr 8 piano examination with distinction at the age of 15 and has been invited to take part in UNISA's final bursary contest in Pretoria. She obtained her Bachelor of Music (Performance) degree from University of Pretoria and studied with Philip Levy and Prof Joseph Stanford. During her studies she received the SAMRO bursary, as well as the Pretorium Trust Bursary in her 3rd and 4th years. She was a soloist with the Johannesburg Symphony Orchestra and broadcasted a piano recital for a "Young Artists program" for SABC Radio. She took part in the 1st International Piano competition which was held at UNISA in 1982. While preparing for her Performance Licentiate, she received master classes from Konstantin Soukhovetski. She also holds a Performer's Licentiate (UNISA), a Vocal Accompaniment Licentiate (UNISA) and an Ensemble Licentiate (UNISA) with distinction. She obtained her MMus (Performing Arts) at the University of the Witwatersrand under the supervision of Prof Malcolm Nay and Ms Pauline Nossel in 2015. She is currently in her 3rd year, studying towards her PhD Music Degree through the University of the North West under supervision of Prof Tinus Botha.

Jean-Pierre Calitz is an award winning South African pianist. An active soloist, collaborator, chamber musician, recording artist, repetiteur, pedagogue and researcher, he holds a Masters degree in Piano Performance from Western Michigan University in the United States. In 2014, Jean-Pierre graduated with a professional doctorate in piano performance from "Université de Montréal" in Canada. He was awarded Performers and Teachers Licentiate diplomas from UNISA as well as the performer's certificate from Trinity College in London, all with distinction. He has appeared for concerts in Africa, North America and Europe.

His most prominent musical mentors include Nettie Immelman, Ella Fourie, Albie van Schalkwyk, Silvia Roederer, Lori Sims and Paul Stewart. He has performed extensively in master classes, most notably for Niel Immelman (UK), Andrea Bonnata (Italy), Frank Glazer (a student of Artur Schnabel) and Andre Watts (USA).

In addition to his independent career, he has held positions at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, North West University and the Tshwane University of Technology Opera School. Calitz is an avid health enthusiast, aspiring food & wine aficionado, experienced retail therapist and prospective Francophone.

Peter Cartwright has performed at numerous venues around South Africa, as well as in the USA, Botswana and Zimbabwe. He appeared as soloist with the Johannesburg Festival and Youth Orchestras and the Gauteng Camerata, and has performed several concerts at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown. He has recorded works by leading South African composers Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph, Andile Khumalo and Carlo Mombelli. Peter has performed at various festivals including the Wakkerstroom Music Festival, and the 969 Festival at Wits, the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown where he won an ovation award with flautist Khanyisile Mthetwa. In 2015 Peter attended the Aspen Music Festival and School, studying with Anton Nel and Anne Epperson. Peter holds an MMus from the University of the Witwatersrand, where he is a piano lecturer, accompanist and concert organiser, and is currently a PhD candidate with Prof Malcolm Nay and Pauline Nossel.

South African pianist **Eugene Joubert** made his European debut in Switzerland in 2012, and has performed in Romania, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Serbia, the USA and Denmark. An avid performer of lieder and chamber music, he has appeared at the Wakkerstroom Music Festival annually since 2016, and has performed numerous opera productions for Sempre Opera and Big Wig Opera. Eugene holds a master's degree in collaborative piano from Rice University in Houston, Texas, and made his debut in 2007 at the Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts, Washington D.C. He is the Head of Piano Studies at St Mary's School, Waverley.

Appendix Three: Artistic Image Techniques and Examples

Possible methods of artistic interpretation

Presented here are various techniques drawn from research into the development of interpretation/ artistic image, and practicing with this in mind. They have been separated here for the sake of clarity, but in practice they can be combined and used in any order you see fit, or used in possible combinations.

Two guidelines from John Rink provide some clarity on how to approach these methods.

> Any analytical element that impinges on performance will ideally be incorporated within a larger synthesis influenced by considerations of style (broadly defined), genre, performance tradition, technique, instrument and so on, as well as the performer's individual artistic prerogatives. In other words, analytically determined decisions should not be systematically prioritised.
>
> 'Informed intuition' guides, or at least influences, the process of 'performer's analysis', although a more deliberate analytical approach can also be useful (Rink 2002: 39).

One of the aims of my research is to determine which of these elements, if any, have a direct influence on performance decisions. While using these techniques, please note if they have any effect on how you may interpret or perform the music. Do they influence your shaping, phrasing, rubati, dynamic shadings, articulation, pedaling, touch and timbre, or any other performative elements?

1. Knowledge background

Could you list briefly your existing knowledge of this composer, any works of theirs you have performed before, and any pre-existing ideas of interpretation and practicing this music that you may have? How were these ideas developed, or how might your knowledge of contemporary (South African) piano music in general influence your work?

2. Structure of the music

The following methods are designed to elucidate the structure of the music from broader construction to finer details.

What are the main formal sections and subsections, and what keys does the music progress through? This could be drawn up in a table as in Example 1.

How are transitions between sections achieved?

What are the harmonic progressions, and how is the harmony constructed?

What are the important themes, are they developed or combined in any way?

3. Finer structural details

Are there tempo changes marked in the score, or places where alterations of tempo feel natural in performance? For instance, Schnabel marked several tempo changes in his editions, see Beethoven in Example 2.

How are dynamic changes used?

Are the phrase lengths even and balanced; if so, are there places where they deviate from this pattern?

4. **Additional performance parameters**

What are the pianistic and musical textures?

What registers of the piano are used, and how do they change?

What are the shapes of the melody and how do the voices interact?

Use of silence/ rests.

5. **Interpreting the music**

The following ideas could contribute to forming an interpretation of the music.

Could you describe the music in terms of an emotional progression or using a programmatic narrative?

Are there any words or phrases you would use to supplement the musical language, such as describing the musical character of a particular section?

Examples 3 and 4. John Rink and Alfred Cortot.

6. **Additional considerations of interpretation**

Are there any passages in the music that have unusual timings, hemiolas, or cadenzas without a time signature? Would they benefit from being rebarred or notated with a possible underlying pulse.

Example 5 from Rink, Chopin Nocturne.

7. **Technical methods of working**

Two opposite approaches to technical challenges.

Are there passages that would be easier to play if they were reduced to their constituent parts and rehearsed individually before combining them once again? Would they be easier if practiced in various other combinations? Example 6, Alfred Cortot.

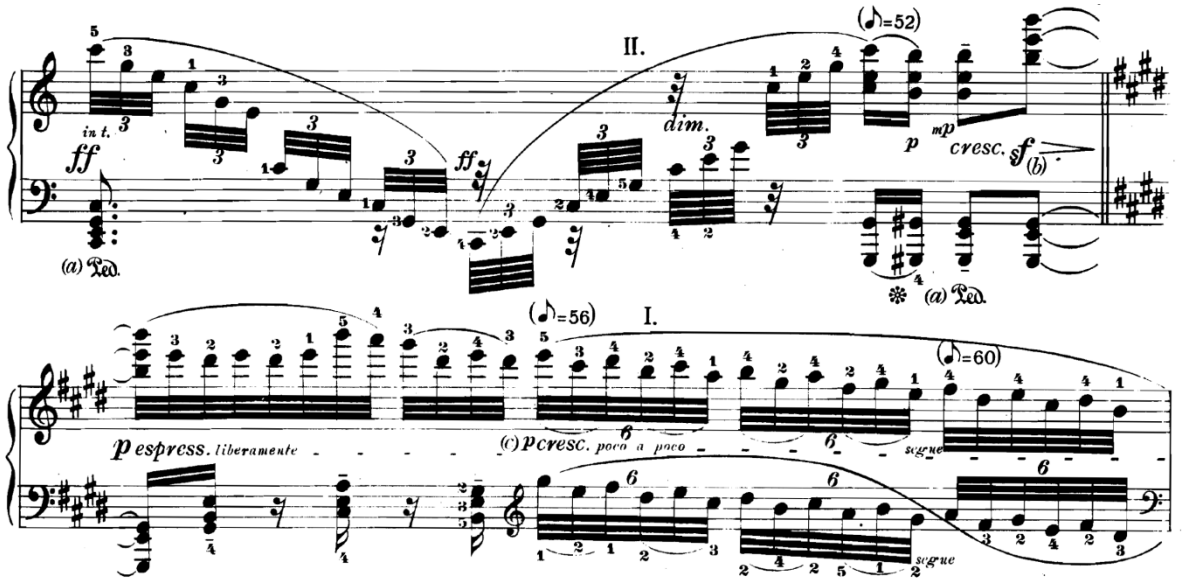
Are there passages that would seem easier if one were to increase the difficulty in a certain way, so that once mastered the original passage would feel easier in comparison? Example 7, Ferruccio Busoni.

Example 1. Rink 2002: 45

Bars	1–28				29–64	65–83		84–94	
Section	A				B			A'	
Subsection	intro	A_1	A_2	'coda'	B_1	B_2	cadenza	intro	A_2'
Bar	1	3	19	27	29	65	83	84	86
Tonality	C♯ minor				------- E – A♭	D♭ ------- G♯		C♯ minor	
	i				------- III – V	= I	V	i	

Figure 3.2 Chopin, Nocturne in C♯ minor Op. 27 No. 1: formal and tonal plan

Example 2. Beethoven Sonata No. 30, Opus 109, 1st movement, bars 64-65. Edition Schnabel. 1949: 195.



Example 3. Rink 2002: 42.

A performer's analysis of Chopin's C# minor Nocturne.

Chopin composed the Nocturnes Op. 27 in 1835. The first of the two opens bleakly, but eventually the music starts building until a powerful climax is reached, after which it falls back only to build again. A triumphant melody then enters, followed by an almost immediate retraction and a sudden breakdown, culminating in a cathartic cadenza that leads to the return of the futile opening melody. But the mood turns more hopeful in the C# major coda, which anticipates the lyrical Db major of the second nocturne.

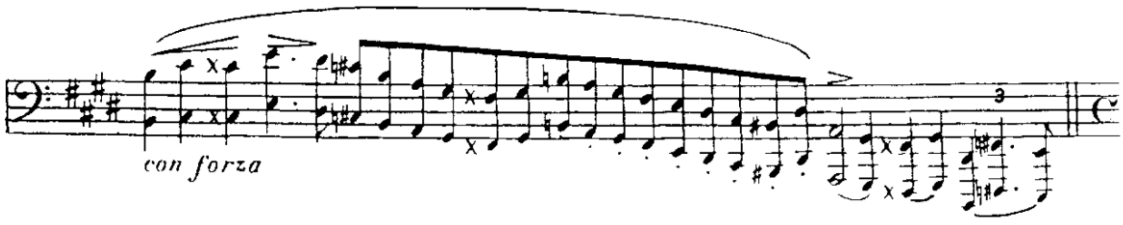
Example 4. From Chopin Prelude No. 1. Cortot Edition. 1926: 2.

The passion, the impatient ardour, with which this prelude sweeps along, can only be rendered by the accurate punctuation of the syncopated figure which from bar to bar, pantingly and feverishly carries the melodic line forward to the exaltation of measures 21, 22, 23 and 24. These form the culminating point of a curve afterwards modified by a brief diminuendo during which these is a weakening of the tone only, but not of the pressing and insistent rhythm now become like the beating of a heart exhausted by emotion.

To obtain the full significance of its pathos, this broken declamatory line demands that full value should be given to the silences preceeding the syncopated notes the beginning of each bar.

For this effect, we recommend the strict observance of the pedaling indicated in the musical text, the lowering and raising of the foot being effected with crispness and precision.

Example 5. Rink 2002: 50



Rink 2002: 54

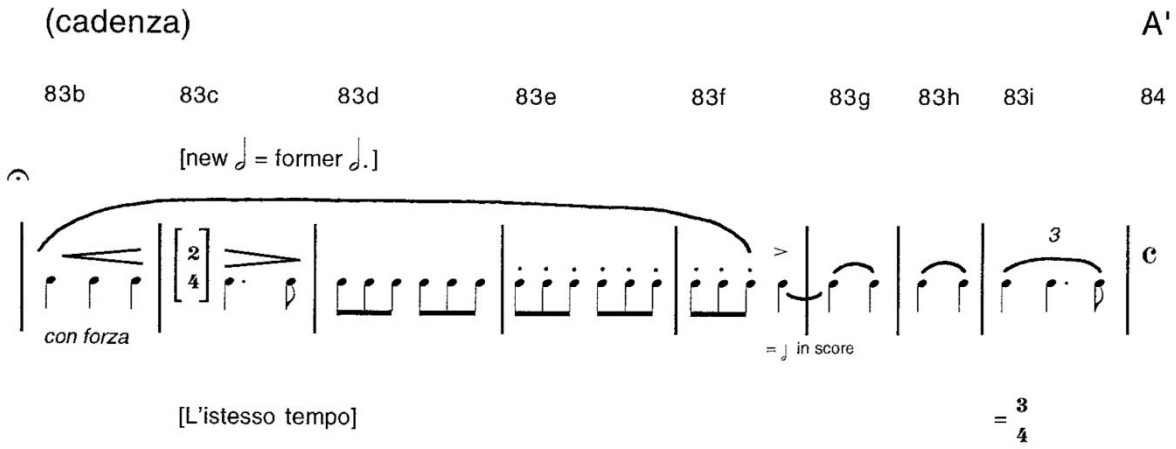
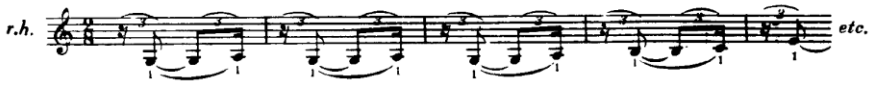


Figure 3.7 Chopin, Nocturne in C♯ minor Op. 27 No. 1: rescoring of bars 81–4 (with Chopin's dynamics and slurs)

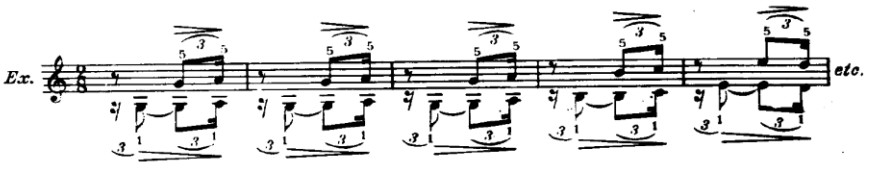
Example 6. From Chopin Prelude No. 1. Cortot Edition. 1926: 2.

Practise first, in the following manner, sliding the thumb from one note to another.



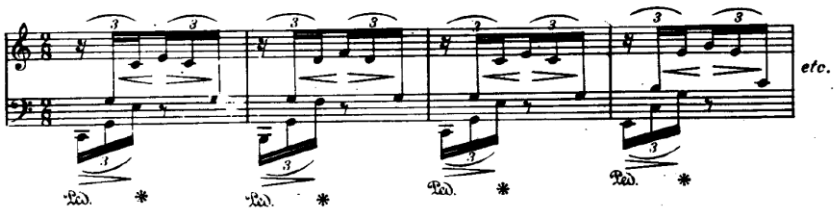
Continue the whole of the melodic part in this way, taking care to bring out its expressive character, paying strict attention to time and to the indications for the use of the pedal.

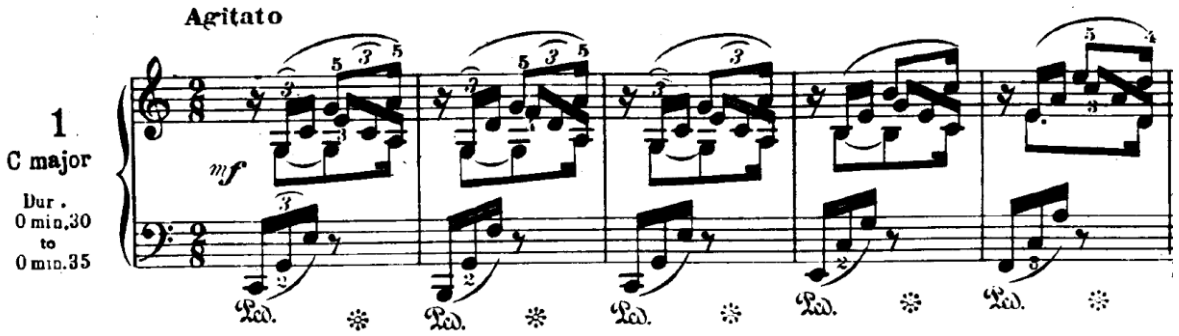
Then resume the same exercise, but this time add the answer of the upper fingers, which, although underlining the thumb's syncopated design an octave away, re-establishes the rhythmic balance by means of the support which it gains from the second beat of each bar.



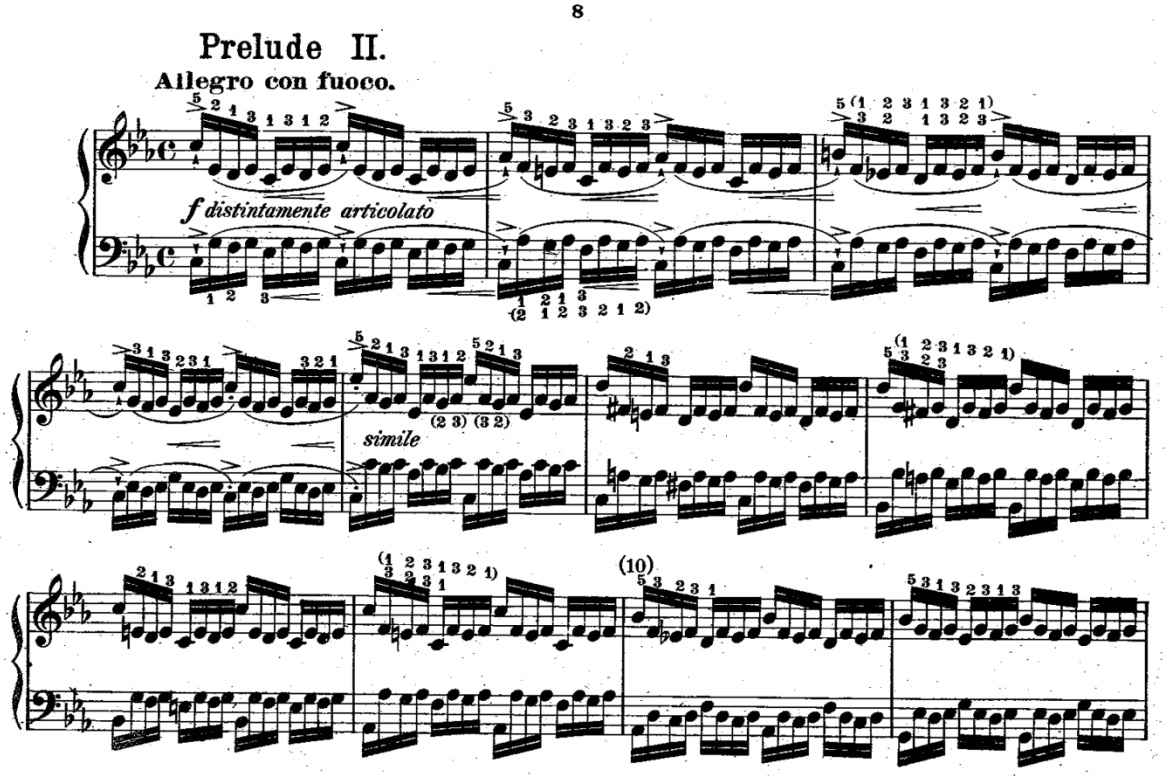
Play the two parts absolutely legato and give a slight predominance of tone to the thumb.

Now that the expressive elements of the prelude have been isolated, the precise, and at the same time, running execution of the accompanying figure shared by both hands, must be assured by working thus :

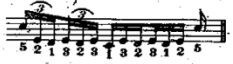


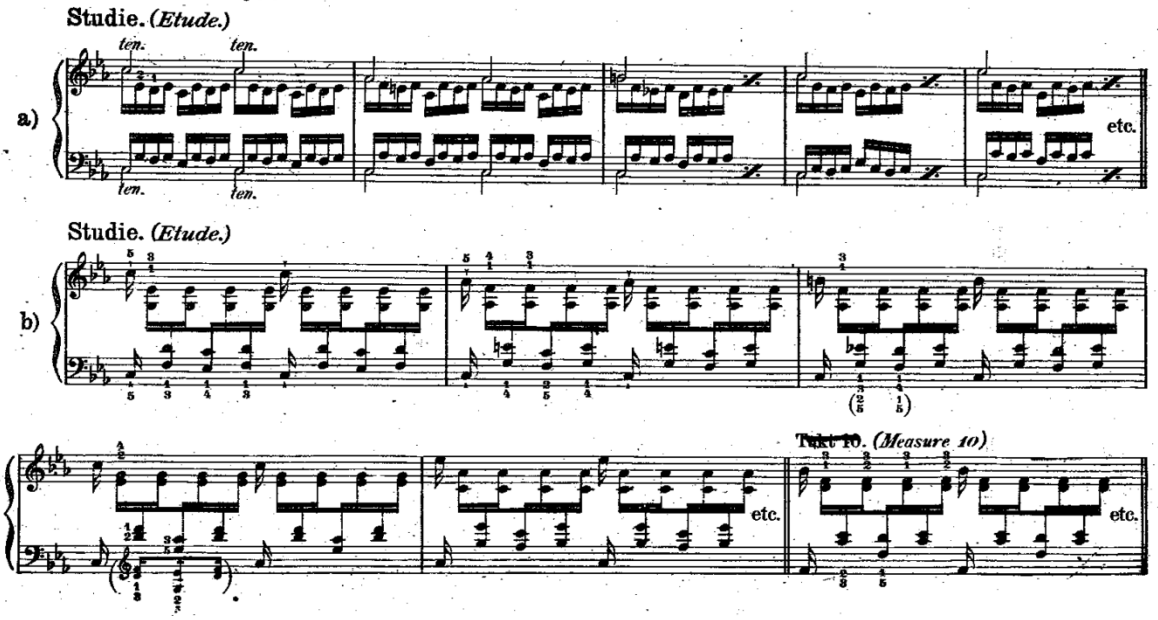


Example 7. Bach-Busoni. The First Twenty-Four Preludes and Fugues of The Well-Tempered Clavichord. 1894: 8.



NB. The technical utility of this Prelude – which is comparable to an agitated stream reflecting the flames of a conflagration – may be enhanced: a) by a strict holding of the notes with both little fingers; b) by a martellato variation of the principal figure with an "alternate striking of the hands in double notes" (Zweigriffen); or c) by added octaves, thus rendering the whole a study of sixths in "transcendent execution". This Prelude (as Bach wrote it) also makes an excellent preparation for the study of the trill with the 1st, 2d, and 3d fingers, e. g.





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