

CULTIVATING VIRTUOSITY: RESIDENT PIANISTS IN NEW YORK CITY  
AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN MUSICAL SCENE

By  
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## ABSTRACT

As performers, teachers, and composers, resident pianists were an integral part of the bustling musical scene in nineteenth-century New York City. The constant presence of such musicians was critical to America's artistic development, shaping our tastes and consumptions in a way that resonates well into the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. Through performances, New York's resident pianists introduced audiences in the United States to many standards of the piano repertoire from concertos to chamber music, from sonatas to various character pieces. Often giving local premieres, they populated concert programs with works by Ludwig van Beethoven, Johannes Brahms, Frédéric Chopin, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann, and others, which helped shape the country's artistic appetite and its enduring musical expectations. Throughout the nineteenth century, several of Europe's most celebrated virtuosos toured the United States; however, in many cases, it was resident pianists who gave primary and continuous exposure of their music to American audiences. Through performances of works by Franz Liszt (1811-1886), Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871), and other European superstars, resident pianists provided audiences with a taste of showmanship, which ultimately contributed to the early American perception of what it meant to be a piano virtuoso.

Many of New York's resident pianists were also teachers. Their pedagogical influence began locally, but soon expanded to include the entire country as their own students established themselves throughout the United States. By the twentieth century, New York and other American cities became important destinations for aspiring pianists the world over who sought the best teachers—a tradition of excellence established by New York's resident pianists.

Many resident musicians were also composers and New York's top keyboardists were no exception. Their works stand as material evidence, representing what was popular and appealing to audiences and consumers in America. Much of their music is forgotten today; however, it was composed by capable musicians who understood piano logistics and effects, and in many cases demonstrates a high level of competency and creativity. Although many resident pianists actively contributed to the artistic growth and musical development of nineteenth-century America, this dissertation focuses primarily on the broad-based careers of three—Richard Hoffman (1831-1909), Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898), and Rafael Joseffy (1852-1915)—while highlighting the activities of several others including Daniel Schlesinger (1799-1839), Henry Christian Timm (1811-1892), William A. King (1817?-1867), William Scharfenberg (1819-1895), and Alfred Humphreys Pease (1838-1882). The pianistic realm of nineteenth-century New York City was vibrant and exciting—resident pianists not only underscore that notion—they have a fascinating and important story tell.

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Nineteenth-Century New York City: the Musical Epicenter of America**

By 1845, the New York scene was already vibrant. Foreign opera companies had included the city on their performance circuits for years. Founded in 1842, the New York Philharmonic Society, the city's first professional orchestra, was about to start their fourth season, while several theater and amateur ensembles had been giving public concerts for decades. Singers, instrumentalists, and an impressive group of resident pianists were also an integral part of the city's bustling musical life. By the end of the nineteenth century many local musicians, coupled with numerous celebrated international stars, had contributed to the city's constant musical growth, and New York would become a center to rival any European destination.

New York City had long stood as the political, cultural, and economic leader in the Northeast. A point of interest since the early seventeenth century, when European explorers sought a northwestern passage to Asia, Manhattan had become by the eighteenth century a major hub of national trade and commerce. Shortly after the Revolutionary War, New York City briefly became the capital of the Union and the most populated city in America. The arts flourished in the form of theater productions and subscription concerts and similar to other cities such as Boston and Philadelphia, New York's musical activity was vibrant.

By the mid-nineteenth century, New York was the most prosperous city in the country. Thanks to trade routes available after 1819 through the Erie Canal (1825) and improved trans-Atlantic steamship crossings in the 1830s, New York capitalized on regional and international markets. Newly constructed railway systems in the 1850s further encouraged the mobilization of

goods and people throughout the eastern seaboard. Manhattan streets were teeming with “bankers, brokers, importers, exporters, manufacturers, insurance tycoons, blueblood professionals, real estate moguls, department-store lords, railroad barons, and publishing magnates.”<sup>1</sup> Prosperity, leisure time, and a desire for social entertainment encouraged New Yorkers to embrace the performing arts. Touring opera companies, newly founded orchestras, and a multitude of other musical productions became an almost constant diversion of the wealthy and a prosperous middle-class.

Rivaling cultural centers such as London and Paris, New York City became the artistic capital of the United States. Each season, venues such as the Academy of Music, Astor Place, the German Opera House, and the Broadway and Metropolitan Theatres provided nightly performances, with impresarios such as Bernard Ullman (1817?-1885), Maurice Strakosch (1825-1887), and Max Maretzek (1821-1897) competing to stage the best operas. Early in their inception, the New York Philharmonic Society and Brooklyn Philharmonic orchestras each gave four or five performances per season, a number that would increase throughout the century. Finally, Dodworth’s Hall, Irving Hall, Niblo’s Saloon, and a multitude of other theaters, churches, auditoriums, and pleasure gardens were the stages for singers and instrumentalists of all kinds.

In this context, the piano became central to American musical culture. As European immigrants established homes, the piano remained a traditional status symbol of the prosperous middle and upper classes, and across the United States, the instrument was considered, “an

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<sup>1</sup> Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 712.

essential of the cultured parlor.”<sup>2</sup> By 1860, the American population had exceeded 31,000,000 residents with about 21,000 pianos manufactured annually, averaging about one instrument per 1500 residents.<sup>3</sup> In 1864, the widely-traveled journalist, Dr. Thomas Low Nichols noted: “Music is more cultivated in America, up to a certain point than anywhere in the world, except Germany . . . I am sure there are ten pianofortes in every American town or village to one in England.”<sup>4</sup> Three years later, another writer claimed that by 1867 American piano manufacturers were producing 25,000 instruments annually.<sup>5</sup> Giving some perspective to this total, the same writer continued:

When we consider, that every hotel, steamboat, and public school above a certain very moderate grade, must have from one to four pianos, and that young ladies’ seminaries jingle with them from basement to garret, (one school in New York has thirty Chickerings,) and that almost every couple that sets up housekeeping on a respectable scale considers a piano only less indispensable than a kitchen range, we are rather inclined to wonder at the smallness than at the largeness of the number.<sup>6</sup>

Since the piano held such a prominent place in American society, leisure time was often spent in pursuit of musical education and making music at home, while patronizing public concerts became an integral part of developing culture in the United States.

Pianists, both resident and celebrated European virtuosos contributed to this artistic nucleus, and they appeared by the dozens. Leaving behind musically-saturated cities in England, France, and Germany and willing to risk the long and treacherous voyage across the Atlantic, the first group arrived by the 1830s. Pianists such as Daniel Schlesinger (1799-1839), Henry Christian Timm (1811-1892), William A. King (1817?-1867), William Scharfenberg (1819-

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<sup>2</sup> James M. Volo and Dorothy Denneen Volo, *The Antebellum Period* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2004), 260.

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Loesser. *Men, Women, and Pianos* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), 511.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Low Nichols, M.D. *Forty Years of American Life 1821-1861*(New York: Stackpole Sons, 1937), 190.

<sup>5</sup> *The Atlantic Monthly* 20/117 (July, 1867) :82-83.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* The writer further suggests that for every new piano purchased, another ten used instruments are also sold.

1895), and C. Kossowski, to name a few, became some of New York's first important resident musicians.

By the 1840s, as trans-Atlantic travel became quicker, the allure of rumored wealth and the prospect of success in the Americas induced several of Europe's leading virtuosos to follow. This group included Leopold de Meyer (1816-1883), Henri Herz (1803-1888), and Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871), who toured for a few seasons, each contributing to and leaving their undeniable mark on the American musical scene. By mid-century, the English-born pianists Richard Hoffman (1831-1909) and Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898) joined the ranks of resident artists, while Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869), William Mason (1829-1908), and Alfred Humphreys Pease (1838-1882), all native-born musicians, returned from Europe to active careers at home.

The last quarter of the century saw the landmark tours of Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894) and Hans von Bülow (1830-1894), and signaled the arrival of numerous other visiting virtuosos. By the final decades of the century, pianists flocked to America. Many notable students of Franz Liszt (1811-1886) such as Rafael Joseffy (1852-1915) and Moriz Rosenthal (1862-1946), and students of Theodor Leschetizky (1830-1915), like Ignace Jan Paderewski (1860-1941) to name a very select few, would dominate the scene and become the leading virtuosos for decades to come. By the turn of the twentieth century, this constant pianistic activity caused one writer to boldly predict for the 1904-05 season: "The visiting virtuosos will be legion."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> "More Music This Season Than New York Ever Has Had," *New York Times*, 30 October 1904, 4.

## **Methodology and State of Research**

Deeper insight into the cultural and musical life of New York and how pianists influenced its artistic development is a major goal for this dissertation. Nineteenth-century New York City was attractive, alluring musicians the world over as an important and prestigious center. A proving ground for aspiring young pianists, careers were often contingent upon success in the city. Reviews for local performances publicized throughout the country could either catapult pianists to the heights of stardom or plunge them to the depths of obscurity. As a result, the city developed into a critical center for performance, publication, and pedagogy, while encouraging national identity in music and setting a model for the rest of the country. Investigating the role of New York's pianists facilitates a deeper understanding of the American musical landscape as a whole.

Another aim of this dissertation involves deep exploration into the culture of pianism in the context of New York City. To achieve this, I confront the multi-faceted careers and contributions of significant, yet overlooked resident pianists. As performers, these musicians shaped the musical tastes and consumption of American audiences by introducing music that was already mainstream in Europe. As teachers, resident pianists cultivated a musically educated populace, able to appreciate and support the arts. Their involvement with organizations such as the New York Philharmonic and other societies also did much to encourage public interest. To suggest that the nineteenth-century New York piano scene revolved around the activity of visiting superstars and Gottschalk alone is a very limited perspective, yet this is the prevailing impression provided by the current state of research. The influence of European virtuosos undeniably enhanced the local scene; however, the day-to-day activities of other musicians were no less important. The efforts of resident artists constructed a solid musical foundation, which in

turn, also benefitted the touring European celebrities. Ultimately, resident pianists were critical in developing an enduring musical tradition in America, and investigation of their work is long overdue.

This study also restores several pianist-composers to the nineteenth-century American narrative. Present historiography on the subject generally begins with Alexander Reinagle (1756-1809), continues with Gottschalk, and terminates with the second New England School, with notable figures like Amy Marcy Cheney Beach (1867-1944) and Edward MacDowell (1860-1908).<sup>8</sup> Occasionally, sources mention William Mason and the American tours of several European virtuosos who visited and left, but these are outstanding cases.<sup>9</sup> Although boundaries are often necessary when discussing such broad-based subjects, the result is a very limited accounting of the vibrant pianistic world that existed in the United States, especially New York City. To understand the extensive role pianist-composer's occupied in nineteenth-century America, we must know the rest of the story.

Using a series of case studies that focus directly on the activities and contributions of resident pianists, I approach the task of illustrating New York's musical life and culture through a pianistic lens. Exploring the careers of specific pianists, this study encompasses performance practice, strategies toward programming, repertoire, composition, pedagogy, and various business aspects, all of which shaped the tastes and expectations of American audiences. By

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<sup>8</sup> See Richard Crawford, *An Introduction to America's Music* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2001); as well as Daniel Kingman, *American Music: A Panorama* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1990); See also J. Peter Burkholder, Donald J. Grout, Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music* Eighth Edition (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010); and see John Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music: A Historical Survey of Music for Harpsichord and Piano* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972).

<sup>9</sup> See R. Allen Lott, *From Paris to Peoria: How European Piano Virtuosos Brought Classical Music to the American Heartland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).



focusing specifically on pianists, we can learn much about the city's musical culture and artistic consumption as a whole.

This dissertation draws from a variety of primary and secondary sources. Periodicals and journals document the activities of resident pianists, from the repertoire they programmed to other aspects of their performances. Investigating contemporary criticism gives great insight into musical tastes and consumption, aesthetics, and attitudes toward these musicians and their place in the New York scene. Musical scores and copyright information also document the compositional output of many New York-based pianists. Often their works appeared in response to various current events and happenings, giving further insight into the contemporary socio-musical environment of the city. Exploring this information sheds new light on the multi-faceted professional activities of resident pianists. Other personal documents such as scrapbooks and papers also provide deeper understanding concerning the careers of many and the artistic environment of the time. Although studies in American music now occupy a significant place in academic research and discussions, the piano realm has received far less attention and is largely overshadowed by operatic and symphonic subjects. Regardless, specific sources have contributed to establishing a foundation, while illuminating certain sections of the nineteenth-century American musical landscape.

Several fundamental sources give inclusive accounts of concert performances, operatic productions, and other musical events. George Clinton Densmore Odell's 1931 publication, *Annals of the New York Stage*, is a multi-volume series documenting New York City for the entire nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Odell exhaustively accounts for most operatic and symphonic activity, and when pertinent, includes biographical information and critical reviews; however,

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<sup>10</sup> George Clinton Densmore Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931).

pianistic events receive less attention and were decidedly secondary in importance to the author. Vera Brodsky Lawrence's edition of the George Templeton Strong diaries, *Strong on Music* (1988-1999), is a remarkable source that documents New York City, 1836-1862.<sup>11</sup> The three-volume set includes Strong's sometimes daily recollections of public performances. In addition, Lawrence cites literary criticisms and reviews, and presents biographical sketches on several musicians. Recognizing the limitations of a single study, Lawrence calls for a new generation of scholars to use her prodigious efforts as a springboard into deeper research.<sup>12</sup> Another emerging source is the database currently under development by The Graduate Center at CUNY: "Music in Gotham; The New York Scene, 1863- 1875."<sup>13</sup> This project picks up where the Lawrence volumes terminate. *Strong on Music*, coupled with the CUNY database, represent a critical step forward, as both document the activities of New York's resident pianists, and in many ways are responsible for bringing their names once more into the discussion of American music. One other source belongs in this category, *Brainard's Biographies of American Musicians*, edited by E. Douglas Bomberger (1999), is a compilation of previously published articles that originally appeared in *Brainard's Musical World* (1873-1890).<sup>14</sup> The volume provides biographies and information regarding numerous nineteenth-century musicians active in the United States. Bomberger frequently fleshes out entries with commentary, corrections, and other pertinent information; however, the articles on New York-based pianists are far from complete, while *Brainard's* originals occasionally include inaccuracies.

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<sup>11</sup> Vera Brodsky Lawrence ed., *Strong on Music: The New York Music Scene in the Days of George Templeton Strong, 1836-1875* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988-99).

<sup>12</sup> See Lawrence, 2: xi-xii.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.musicingotham.org/> *Music in Gotham* was designed by the musicologists/Americanists Adrienne Fried Block and John Graziano. The current staff includes John Graziano, Director; Ruth Henderson, Associate Director; Danielle Bastone, Editor; Roberta Graziano, Editor; and Jennifer C. H. J. Wilson, Web Manager.

<sup>14</sup> Douglas E. Bomberger ed., *Brainard's Biographies of American Musicians* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999).

Two unique sources focus directly upon mid-century pianistic activity in New York City. Andrew C. Minor's prodigious 1947 master's thesis, "Piano Concerts in New York 1849-1865," is one of the most thorough resources on the subject.<sup>15</sup> This mammoth project is over 500 pages in length, accounting for hundreds of public concerts and events. While Minor's work effectively demonstrates the significance of piano performance as popular entertainment, it is mainly a compilation of critical data, providing an excellent platform to launch further research. In 1984, John and Anna Gillespie published *A Bibliography of Nineteenth-Century American Piano Music*. The authors include a wealth of information: biographies of many pianist-composers, representative works lists for each, and select references such as libraries and other collections.<sup>16</sup> A significant source, this book documents the vast world of nineteenth-century American piano literature and the artists associated with the music. The research is, however, far from complete, especially regarding biographies, works catalogues, and other contributions pianists made to the New York scene.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the burgeoning interest in nineteenth-century American musical life, recent research concerning pianist-composers active in New York City is limited. One notable exception, R. Allen Lott's *From Paris to Peoria* (2003), is a fascinating account of five European pianists—Leopold de Meyer, Henri Herz, Sigismund Thalberg, Anton Rubinstein, and Hans von Bülow—and their tours across the continental United States.<sup>18</sup> Lott acknowledges a "cadre of pianists" active in America, giving insight into visiting virtuosos but little information

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<sup>15</sup> Andrew C. Minor, "Piano Concerts in New York City 1849-1865" (Master's thesis, University of Michigan, 1947).

<sup>16</sup> John and Anna Gillespie, *A Bibliography of Nineteenth-Century American Piano Music* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984).

<sup>17</sup> The John and Anna Gillespie Collection preserves the extensive research comprised in the volume and is housed at the American Music Research Center, located at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

<sup>18</sup> R. Allen Lott, *From Paris to Peoria: How European Piano Virtuosos Brought Classical Music to the American Heartland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

about New York-based musicians. Richard Randall Hihn's 1984 dissertation, "Boston, Dwight, and Pianists of Nineteenth-Century America," addresses the New England scene as documented by John Sullivan Dwight (1813-1893).<sup>19</sup> Hihn does not, however, delve into the activities of New York City. Another dissertation from 1966, "Serious Art and Concert Music for the Piano in American in the 100 Years from Alexander Reinagle to Edward MacDowell" by Charles Allison Horton limits the discussion to those who toured and composed "serious" music; thus, several important New York-based pianists only appear in an appendix chart.<sup>20</sup> H. Earle Johnson's article, "Gustave Satter, Eccentric" (1963) approaches the New York scene by examining Satter's career. Johnson's article is significant because it is one of the only studies documenting a locally important pianist; however, this source naturally only focusses on the activity of Satter.<sup>21</sup>

One resident pianist in New York whose life and career has received significant attention is William Mason. Due to his close association with Liszt, his extensive career, and a family name closely linked to music, Mason has attracted scholarly interest. In 1976, Dr. Kenneth G. Graber published his dissertation, "The Life and Works of William Mason, (1829-1908)."<sup>22</sup> Following a decade of further research, Graber published his crowning achievement on the subject: *William Mason (1829-1908): An Annotated Bibliography and Catalog of Works*.<sup>23</sup> The

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<sup>19</sup> Richard Randall Hihn, "Boston, Dwight, and Pianists of Nineteenth-Century America: The European Connection" (DMA diss., University of Colorado, 1984).

<sup>20</sup> Charles A. Horton, "Serious Art and Concert Music for Piano in the 100 Years from Alexander Reinagle to Edward MacDowell" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 1965).

<sup>21</sup> H. Earl Johnson, "Gustave Satter: Eccentric," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 16/1 (Spring, 1963): 61-73.

<sup>22</sup> Kenneth G. Graber, "The Life and Works of William Mason (1829-1908)" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1976).

<sup>23</sup> Kenneth G. Graber, *William Mason (1829-1908) An Annotated Bibliography and Catalog of Works* (Warren, Michigan: Harmonie Parks Press, 1989).

combination of these two volumes thoroughly documents Mason's biography, performances, compositions, teaching, and publications, while referencing a multitude of other sources.

To date, Louis Moreau Gottschalk is the only pianist from mid-nineteenth century America who has received more attention, with a number of sources focused on his high-profile career. A significant addition to the body of research came in 1995, when Oxford University Press published S. Frederick Starr's *Bamboula! The Life and Times of Louis Moreau Gottschalk*. According to the preface, Starr's mission was to "rescue him from the clichéd formulas that have obscured him from view and distorted our appreciation of his music."<sup>24</sup> Starr gives a vivid depiction of the mid-nineteenth-century American musical scene by documenting the pianist's extensive travels, performances, compositions, and Gottschalk's interactions with the current musical establishment. Two other sources—*Louis Moreau Gottschalk 1829-1869: A Bibliographic Study and Catalog of Works* by John G. Doyle (1983) and James E. Perone's *Louis Moreau Gottschalk: A Bio-Bibliography* (2002)—round out the basic knowledge of Gottschalk.<sup>25</sup> An important recent contribution is Laura Moore Pruett's 2007 dissertation, "Louis Moreau Gottschalk, John Sullivan Dwight, and the Development of Musical Culture in the United States, 1853-1865." Pruett delves into the careers of Gottschalk and Dwight, their differences and similarities of thought and philosophy. Pruett also explores aspects of exoticism, nationalism, and the cult of virtuosity in Gottschalk's works, filling a gap on these subjects as they pertain to nineteenth-century American piano composition.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> S. Frederick Starr, *Bamboula! The Life and Times of Louis Moreau Gottschalk* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), vi.

<sup>25</sup> John G. Doyle, *Louis Moreau Gottschalk, 1829-1869: a Bibliographic Study and Catalog of Works* (Detroit: College Music Society by Information Coordinators, 1982); and James E. Parone, *Louis Moreau Gottschalk: a Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002).

<sup>26</sup> Laura Moore Pruett, "Louis Moreau Gottschalk, John Sullivan Dwight, and the Development of Musical Culture in the United States, 1853-1865" (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2007).

Recent research also centers on the American reception of Liszt's compositions and Thalberg's tours of the United States. These sources provide insight into performance activity, reception, and concert programming; however, they give little information about the resident pianists who presented these works. For example, Rena Charnin Mueller's 2006 article, "Liszt (and Wagner) in New York, 1840-1890" showcases Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898) as an important early proponent of Liszt's music in America; however, her research focuses on aspects of Liszt reception rather than Mills specifically.<sup>27</sup> Leslie Jane Finer's 2006 dissertation, "The Dissemination and Reception of Liszt's Piano Music in New York, 1835-1875" accounts for America's fascination with the legendary virtuoso. Although Finer documents several pianists who were responsible for early performances of Liszt in the United States, she nonetheless does not delve into their careers.<sup>28</sup> Dissertations by Ian Glenn Hominick (1991) and E. Keith Chambers (2004) investigate Thalberg's American tours, his compositions, and the famous three-handed technique. These are good sources for general information about this virtuoso but give little insight into his place on the New York City scene.<sup>29</sup> One other important source is Francisco Javier Albo's 2012 dissertation, "Images of Chopin in the New World: Performances of Chopin's Music in New York City, 1839-1876." Beyond documenting the earliest performances of Chopin's music in the United States, Albo references several of New York's

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<sup>27</sup> Rena Charnin Mueller, "Liszt (and Wagner) in New York, 1840-1890." *European Music and Musicians in New York City, 1840-1900* (New York: University of Rochester, 2006), 50-70.

<sup>28</sup> Leslie Jane Finer, "The Dissemination and Reception of Liszt's Piano Music in New York, 1835-1875" (PhD., diss., University of Iowa, 2006).

<sup>29</sup> Ian Glenn Hominick, "Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871), Forgotten Piano Virtuoso: His Career and Musical Contributions." DMA diss., Ohio State University, 1991. See also E. Keith Chambers, "Sigismund Thalberg: The Three-handed Method and Piano Techniques of his Operatic Paraphrases." DMA diss., University of Houston, 2004.

resident pianists; thus, his dissertation is one of the few modern sources to provide some insight into their biographies and careers.<sup>30</sup>

Many New York City-based pianists were also prolific composers. Studies dedicated to their output are few and represent a large gap in nineteenth-century American musical scholarship. Graber's research on Mason and the accounts of Gottschalk's works by Doyle and Perone are exceptional cases. The compositions by other New York-based pianists remain uncatalogued, unstudied, and out-of-print. Much of this music is accessible via the Library of Congress and other special collections, but on the whole, has not been available to the general public for decades.<sup>31</sup>

## **Overview of Chapters**

Chapter 1 functions as a prelude, documenting several of New York's first pianists and how their presence contributed to the city's musical development years before the arrival of celebrated European virtuosos. Through their professional activities, William A. King, Daniel Schlesinger, William Scharfenberg, Henry Christian Timm, and others, demonstrate how various aspects of performance practice, such as arranging and playing technically demanding versions of patriotic airs, improvisation, and performing piano concertos, coupled with introducing specific repertoire by European superstars, set them apart and created the early American perception of a virtuoso pianist. Furthermore, this group gives perspective to the discussion of visiting virtuosos and

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<sup>30</sup> Francisco Javier Albo, "Images of Chopin in the New World: Performances of Chopin's Music in New York City, 1839-1876" (PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2012).

<sup>31</sup> See John and Anna Gillespie, *A Bibliography of Nineteenth-Century American Piano Music* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984). This book gives works lists for several pianist/composers active in America, however, none are complete.

their landmark tours, while providing a truer landscape in which to place these and the other pianists showcased in this dissertation.

Chapter 2 documents the English-born resident pianist Richard Hoffman (1831-1909), from his prodigy years in Manchester, England to his career in America. Hoffman occupies a special position, as he arrived in New York immediately after Herz and before Gottschalk. If this pianist is remembered today, it is through his association with the famously-successful American tours of Jenny Lind (1820-1887) and perhaps, through performances with Gottschalk for which he was a supporting artist. Beyond this landmark series, history has generally forgotten Hoffman and his story is long overdue. His contributions to the New York musical scene provide insight into the multi-faceted endeavors of many resident pianists, from performing, to teaching, and composition. Hoffman's career offers perspective on several aspects of contemporary pianism, such as popular repertoire of the time, performance approach and strategies employed in programming, and the pianist's place in the American concert realm.

Another pianist whose story needs to be told is Sebastian Bach Mills, the subject of Chapter 3. According to Lawrence: "As a matter of historical record, Sebastian Bach Mills, over a long and lustrous career was one of the highest ranking, if least remembered, pianists of the American musical nineteenth century."<sup>32</sup> Between 1859 and the 1870s, Mills was one of the most active pianists on the New York scene. From this perspective, his career occupies a similar place as Hoffman's; however, his association with regard to the early American reception of Franz Liszt's piano music gives Mills a unique narrative. Following immediately on the heels of Thalberg's landmark tours and before the arrival of Rubinstein and von Bülow, Mills burst onto the scene, championing the works of Liszt. Although he was not the first pianist in America to

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<sup>32</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3:288.



program pieces by the famous Hungarian virtuoso, Mills was the first to play them extensively, thereby setting a new virtuosic standard for those who followed. Like Hoffman, he was active not only as a performer, but as a teacher and composer; however, the primary focus of this chapter illustrates how Mills skillfully constructed a career, while illuminating the early American reception of Liszt's music.

Following Joseffy's New York debut, one critic exclaimed: "Whenever he pressed the keyboard he dropped jewels from his fingers."<sup>33</sup> Chapter 4 illustrates the illustrious career of Rafael Joseffy (1852-1915), another resident pianist, and one of the most important musical figures in nineteenth-century America. Joseffy also occupies a singular place, being the next pianistic sensation following the tours of Rubinstein and von Bülow, while dominating the local scene before the arrival of the many students of Liszt and Leschetizky later in the century. I document Joseffy's extensive concert activity, from his landmark debut season to his final appearances at the turn of the twentieth century, discussing his repertoire and approach to programming. Joseffy played concertos extensively and his partnership with America's leading conductors, especially Theodore Thomas (1835-1905), sheds light on specific approaches to concert presentation, while illustrating certain aspects of performance practice during the latter part of the nineteenth century. I conclude with an investigation of Joseffy's teaching and music editing and how these final efforts brought his career to a close.

During the nineteenth century many performing pianists were, to a greater or lesser extent, active composers. Beyond the works of Gottschalk and Mason, little is known concerning the compositional efforts of their contemporaries. Although New York's resident pianists crafted music of various kinds, Chapter 5 investigates some of their more elaborate, and

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<sup>33</sup> "The Debut of Mr. Joseffy," *New York Tribune*, 14 October 1879, 4-5.

at times, virtuosic arrangements based on popular originals such as patriotic tunes, songs, and operatic themes. Gottschalk is not central to my research; however, this discussion begins with his ever-popular *L' Union, Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48. Using this piece as a point of reference, I introduce two other patriotic showpieces: *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8, by Mills and *The Star Spangled Banner* by the Ohio-born pianist Alfred Humphreys Pease (1838-1882). Next, I examine three arrangements of popular songs by Mills and Hoffman: Henry Bishop's "Home, Sweet Home," Dan Decatur Emmett's "I Wish I Was in Dixie's Land," and Stephen Collins Foster's "Old Folks at Home." Two tour de force operatic fantasies, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, by Mills and *Faust Paraphrase de Concert* by Pease, both based on Charles Gounod's opera, conclude this chapter and demonstrate the virtuosic capabilities of certain resident pianists. This discussion not only speaks to the appetite and consumption of concertgoers in nineteenth-century New York, it also alludes to their expectations and what they wanted to hear from the concert platform. This chapter brings some lesser-known examples back into the discussion of music in nineteenth-century America.

## Chapter One

### PRELUDE: PIANO VIRTUOSOS IN NEW YORK CITY, 1829-45.

On 15 October 1845 the Imperial and Royal Pianist to the Emperors of Austria and Russia came to New York. Some called him the “Lion Pianist,” some labeled him the “Paganini of the Piano,” while others claimed he was the “Greatest Pianist of Modern Times.”<sup>1</sup> The virtuoso was Leopold de Meyer (1816-1883) and his arrival signaled that the parade of celebrated European superstar pianists to the United States had begun. The famed Austrian keyboardist may not have been the first virtuoso-caliber pianist to appear before New York audiences, but he was the first to embark upon a large-scale tour that stretched from Montréal to New Orleans, from Charleston to St. Louis and including many larger cities and towns in between. De Meyer’s showmanship coupled with the extensive nature of his tours was remarkable, and for the time, unequaled in the United States.<sup>2</sup>

Following close on de Meyer’s heels, the Viennese-born Parisian superstar Henri Herz (1803-1888) gave his American debut a year later at New York’s Tabernacle on 29 October 1846. Unlike de Meyer, who dominated audiences with bombastic chordal structures, rapid octave runs, and relentless energy, Herz’s style was to woo listeners with his scintillating brilliance, elegance, polish, and refinement. A review that appeared in the *Alabama Planter* illustrates their differences in succinct fashion: “De Meyer may break a piano, but Herz can

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<sup>1</sup> R. Allen Lott, *From Paris to Peoria: How European Piano Virtuosos Brought Classical Music to the American Heartland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 13.

<sup>2</sup> Three years earlier, at least two New York-based pianists, Ludwig (Louis) Rakeman and William Vincent Wallace toured and found themselves as far west as St. Louis and south to New Orleans. The two pianists did not achieve the same acclaim, nor did they cause the sensation of de Meyer.

break a heart.”<sup>3</sup> Another writer made a more colorful comparison: “De Meyer bestrides the piano with boots and spurs, and digs it [*sic*] rowel deep in the poor creature’s sides, Herz pats it gently upon the neck and strokes it softly into the most charming moods.”<sup>4</sup> The Parisian pianist’s performance activity and popularity with American audiences was similar to de Meyer’s. He toured between 1846 and 1850, giving over twice as many concerts, including several more venues. Wrapping up with an excursion to California, Herz became the first internationally-acclaimed pianist to perform on the west coast.

The landmark tours of de Meyer and Herz were the earliest examples of high-profile pianistic activity in the United States. For audiences in many smaller towns and even some larger cities of the heartland such as Cincinnati, Cleveland, and St. Louis, the perception that these virtuosos represented the highest level of piano performance in America likely held true. In some instances, it would be years before their activities were duplicated or even fully appreciated; however, this was not the case in New York City, where several top-rated pianists had been active for years.

The New York scene was already vibrant. Foreign opera companies had included the city on their performance circuits for years. Founded in 1842, the city’s first professional orchestra, the New York Philharmonic Society, was about to start their fourth season, while several theater and amateur ensembles had been giving public concerts for decades. Singers, instrumentalists, and an impressive group of resident pianists were also an integral part of the city’s bustling musical life. By the end of the nineteenth century many local musicians, coupled

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<sup>3</sup> *Alabama Planter*, 15 February 1847. See Lott, *From Paris to Peoria*, 59.

<sup>4</sup> *The Times-Picayune*, 24 November 1846, 2.

with numerous celebrated international stars, had contributed to the city's constant musical growth, and New York would become a center that rivaled any European destination.

In his book *From Paris to Peoria: How European Piano Virtuosos Brought Classical Music to the American Heartland* (2003), R. Allen Lott documents the American tours of five renowned European virtuosos. His discussion begins in 1845 with de Meyer (toured 1845-47), followed by Herz (1846-50), Sigismund Thalberg (1856-58), Anton Rubinstein (1872-73), and concludes with Hans von Bülow's first visit (1875-1876). Lott's contribution is groundbreaking. His wide-ranging research illuminates several aspects of concert activity in nineteenth-century America, while effectively documenting the country's changing musical aesthetics. Through a pianistic lens, Lott's research touches on aspects of repertoire, programming, and performance practice, with each virtuoso illustrating a different facet of the discussion.

Lott's invaluable research offers a thorough and informative study, while taking large steps towards fleshing out the knowledge base of piano performance in nineteenth-century America. As stated in his preface, Lott limits his presentation to the "pianists who made the most dramatic impact on American audiences because of their well-established European reputations and their extensive travels throughout the United States."<sup>5</sup> By setting the boundaries of his research primarily on the activities of five renowned visiting virtuosos, Lott brings the subject of piano performance in nineteenth-century America directly into focus, while the nature of his presentation opens the door to further questions: What happened prior to 1845? Who were the other pianists on the scene and how did they shape America's initial perception of what a

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<sup>5</sup> Lott, *From Paris to Peoria*, x.

piano virtuoso is? How did resident pianists contribute and prepare audiences for the arrival of the visiting superstars?

After introducing de Meyer, Herz, and Thalberg, and before delving into the tours of Rubinstein and von Bülow, Lott makes a bold statement, which demands attention and ultimately encouraged the research that resulted in this dissertation:

A cadre of pianists resident in America had also been attempting to introduce a more extensive repertoire for years, though they rarely received as much attention as the visiting superstar. Richard Hoffman, William Mason, and Sebastian Bach Mills in New York; Otto Dresel and Ernst Perabo in Boston, and Carl Wolfsohn in Philadelphia (later in Chicago) were among the pianists who had neither the reputation nor the charisma of Rubinstein or Bülow but almost as much talent.<sup>6</sup>

The impact of the celebrated European virtuosos on the musical scene was enormous; however, Lott's statement seems to downplay the contributions made by America's resident pianists. Since these musicians lacked international reputations, and apparently had less "charisma" and "talent" (which is difficult to determine), Lott makes a questionable distinction. Indeed, the visiting virtuosos did receive more attention because they were not the "cadre" of resident pianists. They were foreign and likely considered more authentic, with the backing and at times, enormous publicity efforts of influential impresarios. By contrast, resident pianists operated without substantial marketing campaigns, international reputations, or high-profile tours, yet their musical activities were similar and their contributions were significant.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify some of the most prominent resident pianists in New York prior to 1845, document the musical activities that set them apart, and demonstrate how they influenced the scene and the pianists who followed. New information found in local newspapers, periodicals, and other sources, demonstrates how their musical endeavors

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 165.

established the early American perception of what it meant to be a virtuoso. Although the press seldom, if ever, labeled these musicians as such, they were recognized as top-rated pianists, and therefore indicate what virtuosity meant to audiences in the United States. As with European artistic centers like Paris, where performers such as Liszt and Thalberg shaped the image and perception of a piano virtuoso, the position held by New York's resident pianists functions similarly in America.

### **Musical Activities and the Qualities of a Virtuoso Pianist**

Since the current state of research centers primarily on the first visiting virtuosos and Gottschalk, the piano virtuoso as a musical figure in New York City during the first four and one-half decades of the nineteenth century requires discussion. Borrowing terminology from the British press, American writers often labeled resident pianists who were born and trained in Europe, but now active in New York, as the "new school," the "modern school," or the "marvellous school," and when applicable, called them proponents of the "Thalberg" or "Liszt" schools.<sup>7</sup> Attempting, however, to compare the abilities of New York's resident pianists to those of their renowned European counterparts would be a fruitless endeavor. As artists like de Meyer, Herz, Liszt, and Thalberg, were in a sense, still creating the model and definition of virtuosity through their own current performances (which few Americans had experienced), a direct comparison of relative

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<sup>7</sup> See "Review," *The Musical Magazine*, 20 July 1839, 232. The article references a previous publication in *The London and Westminster Review* (April-July, 1839) that discusses the various schools of piano playing. Thalberg is called the "first" pianist of the "marvellous" or "hyper-romantic" school. See also "The Concerts of the Past Winter," *The Dial*, July 1840, 124. In reviewing the 1839-40 concert season in Boston, the writer discusses concerts given by Ludwig Rakeman and C. Kossowski: "They have introduced us to the new school of Piano Forte playing, and have let us hear some of the wonderful feats of Thalberg, Dohler [*sic*], Chopin, Henselt, and Listz [*sic*]." See also "Music in Boston. Winter Season of 1839-1840," *The Musical Magazine*, 20 June 1840, 193: "Mr Rakemann and Mr. Kossowsky [*sic*], as exhibiting entirely new features to us. They both introduced the wonderful modern school of pianoforte playing, wonderful in its power of execution and in its new use of all the resources of the instrument for effects hitherto not looked for in it."

abilities was not always appropriate or even possible. The scenario is further complicated by the fact that all of these pianists lived before the era of sound recording. Regardless, it is imperative that criteria be in place to discuss piano virtuosos in America.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the New York press recognized certain local pianists who were involved in musical activities long-established in Europe. Most were identified by the repertoire they performed, from technically challenging arrangements of national airs to *tour de force* showpieces composed by celebrated superstars. Some were recognized for their ability to improvise, while others gave local premieres of concertos with the city's first orchestras. Resident pianists also appeared frequently together in the time-honored European tradition of performing four and eight-handed piano versions of symphonic literature. Although such arrangements seldom embodied virtuosic showmanship, performances were popular with audiences and were often presented by New York's top keyboardists. Some participated in all of these activities, while others focused on a select few. Ultimately, such musical displays became defining characteristics of these artists, and key to establishing the high-ranking status some pianists held with the American public.

Beyond their specialized abilities, one characteristic was shared by all: each was born and musically trained in Europe. During the first half of the nineteenth century, New York concert venues were almost exclusively supplied with European opera troupes, singers, and instrumentalists; pianists were no exception. Prior to the 1850s, when the New Orleans-born Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-69) and William Mason (1829-1910) of Boston returned from studies abroad, the United States had not produced a native-born virtuoso. Thus, America's earliest and most prominent pianists were immigrants. This group includes the English-born William A. King (1817?-1867) and a woman, simply called "Miss Sterling" (dates unknown);



Germans, including Daniel Schlesinger (1799-1839), Henry Christian Timm (1811-92), William Scharfenberg (1819-1895), the brothers Ludwig (1816-?) and Frederick Rakemann (1821-1884); and the Polish pianist, C. Kossowski.<sup>8</sup> Since these pianists did not tour extensively, they lacked the exotic appeal associated with the visiting virtuosos who followed. In 1842, Ludwig Rakemann did embark upon a tour, taking the pianist as far west as St. Louis and south to New Orleans, but this was an exceptional case, and did not cause the same sensation as de Meyer three years later. Beyond occasional performances in Boston, Philadelphia, and other regional locales, these pianists generally remained in the city as contributors to the artistic growth of their new home.

### **“Miss Sterling”**

One of the first pianists recognized in the New York press as a noted performer was a woman simply referred to as Miss Sterling. The pianist hailed from London where she purportedly studied with Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1785-1849) and Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870), and had recently given her debut.<sup>9</sup> On 28 February 1829, *The New-York Mirror* excitedly announced her arrival and intent to stay in New York. Referencing a review that originally appeared in the *London Times*, the article discussed Sterling’s successful debut at the Covent Garden Theatre the

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<sup>8</sup> Louis Rakeman occasionally appears in the press, while alternate spellings of the pianist’s last name such as “Rakeman” or “Rackeman” or “Rackemann” were also used and refer to the same person. The press consistently called the younger pianist “Frederick Rakemann” when referring to Ludwig’s brother, while Kossowski is occasionally spelled “Cossowski.”

<sup>9</sup> See *The Evening Post* (New York), 21 April 1829, 2. Announcing her New York debut, the article calls Miss Sterling “a pupil of Kalkbrenner.” See also “Concert of the Musical Fund Society,” *The Euterpiad*, 1 June 1830, 27. The periodical states that Sterling was a student of Moscheles.

previous year: “a brilliancy of execution, and elegance of expression, which had not been surpassed by any of the most eminent professors of that instrument.”<sup>10</sup>

The pianist’s New York debut took place on 21 April 1829 at the City Hall for the benefit of the Musical Fund Society. The press does not confirm her choice of repertoire, only stating that she played a fantasia by Moscheles; however, she may have played the composer’s *Fantaisie et variations sur Au clair de la lune*, for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 51, which Sterling performed for her London debut. The following week, *The Albion* dedicated a three-section entry to the pianist that included previously published reviews from the British press. The article was very positive with the writer for the *Morning Post* (London) stating: “Of this lady it is impossible to speak in too high terms of commendation; the taste she displayed throughout, and the wonderful rapidity of her execution, we have never heard surpassed.”<sup>11</sup>

Sterling appeared two weeks later at Niblo’s Gardens as part a “Musical Festival,” an event publicized as “the first of the kind ever attempted in this country.”<sup>12</sup> For this performance, she played Moscheles’s *Alexander Variations*, Op. 32, for Piano with Orchestral Accompaniment, more commonly known at the time as *Grand Variations on the Fall of Paris*. Reviewing the Musical Festival, the *Albion* proclaimed: “Miss Sterling very justly brought down the rapturous approbation of the audience, by her superior Concerto on the Piano-forte.”<sup>13</sup>

For the next two seasons, Miss Sterling remained active on the local scene. In 1830, she gave two more notable performances. The first was on 11 May, with the Musical Fund Society at the City Hall. For this concert, Sterling gave the American premiere of *Variations Brillantes*

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<sup>10</sup> *The New-York Mirror*, 28 February 1829, 271. See “Miss Sterling,” *The Albion*, 2 May 1829, 375.

<sup>11</sup> *The Albion*, 2 May 1829, 375.

<sup>12</sup> *The Ladies’ Literary Portfolio*, 27 May 1829, 192.

<sup>13</sup> *The Albion*, 23 May 1829, 399.

*sur l'air* “Ma Fanchette est charmante,” Op. 10 by Herz. On 22 June, she performed at the Masonic Hall, playing both the “Fall of Paris” variations and the “Ma Fanchette.” Following this concert, *The Euterpiad* gave a glowing review:

With regard to the talent of execution on the piano forte, displayed by Miss Sterling, it is beyond all description; the finish and equality, inconceivable. . . The marvelous precision of her execution, and particularly the power of her left hand, caused equal pleasure and surprise. No wonder her performances received, as they certainly merited, the most lively transports of applause.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the next decade, mention of the pianist appeared occasionally in the local press, and she seems to have consistently received positive reviews. After giving two performances in Philadelphia in October 1830 and April 1831, Sterling relocated to that city, where she temporarily established herself as a performer and teacher.<sup>15</sup> By 1833, the pianist published announcements in New York periodicals that suggest she had returned and was again accepting students locally. One of the last advertisements for her teaching appeared in *The New-York Mirror* on 21 September 1839, and by 1840, Sterling is no longer mentioned in the local press.

By all accounts, Miss Sterling was an accomplished pianist and sustained a successful career. Although reviews give no indication that she was a composer or arranger of her own showpieces, the press spoke very highly of Sterling’s abilities and considered the pianist a top-rated performer. It is noteworthy that the above-mentioned reviews discuss Sterling’s playing in terms of “elegance of expression” and “taste,” which suggest she conformed to current expectations concerning how a woman should appear and perform, while the *Euterpiad* (1 July

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<sup>14</sup> “Miss Sterling’s Concert,” *The Euterpiad*, 1 July 1830, 43.

<sup>15</sup> See *Christian Index*, 1 June 1831, 14. The Philadelphia-based periodical ran a short advertisement stating that Mrs. Sterling (the pianist’s mother?) and Miss Sterling were offering lessons in both singing and piano.

1830) expressed “pleasure and surprise” at the “power of her left hand,” a trait generally associated with masculinity and male pianists.<sup>16</sup> Frequent advertisements for musical instruction suggest that Sterling’s main activity was teaching; however, it is also noteworthy, that Sterling—a woman—attracted considerable attention in New York at a time when the local press was only beginning to recognize virtuosos.

### **William A. King: Arranger of Patriotic Showpieces**

One skill some immigrant pianists brought to America that set them apart and distinguished them as virtuosos was the ability to arrange and perform impressive piano showpieces using themes from pre-existing popular sources. Such demonstrations of technical prowess were already part of the pianist’s arsenal in Europe and quickly became so for keyboardists in the United States. Throughout the nineteenth century, most pianists relied to a certain extent on such crowd pleasers; however, two pianists in particular seem to be among the earliest in America to gain recognition performing these works.

In 1834, William A. King arrived in New York City. He quickly became an active contributor to the local musical scene and was among the earliest pianists identified by the press as possessing superior performance skills. Recognized for precision and brilliance, one critic called King, “the first male pianist now living in this country.”<sup>17</sup> King initially gained critical attention with his variations on “Hail Columbia,” which the *New-York Mirror* noticed “having

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<sup>16</sup> See Alicia Cannon Levin, “Seducing Paris: Virtuosos and Artistic Identity, 1820-48.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2009. In Chapter 6: “One Piano and One Pianist”: Gender, Exceptionality, and Strategy in Marie Pleyel’s Triumph of 1845, Levin discusses gender bias and expectations of the Parisian press toward Pleyel and how such perspectives applied to other female virtuosos at the time.

<sup>17</sup> “New Music,” *The New-York Mirror*, 19 July 1834, 23. In this context the word “first” signifies “best” and is likely stated as such with the notion that Miss Sterling was the other main performer on the scene.

science and difficulties of great abundance” and was “complicated enough to try the hand of a first-rate pianist.”<sup>18</sup> King performed *Hail Columbia, Brilliant Fantasia* regularly throughout the 1830s, and thus, the arrangement became his signature showpiece.

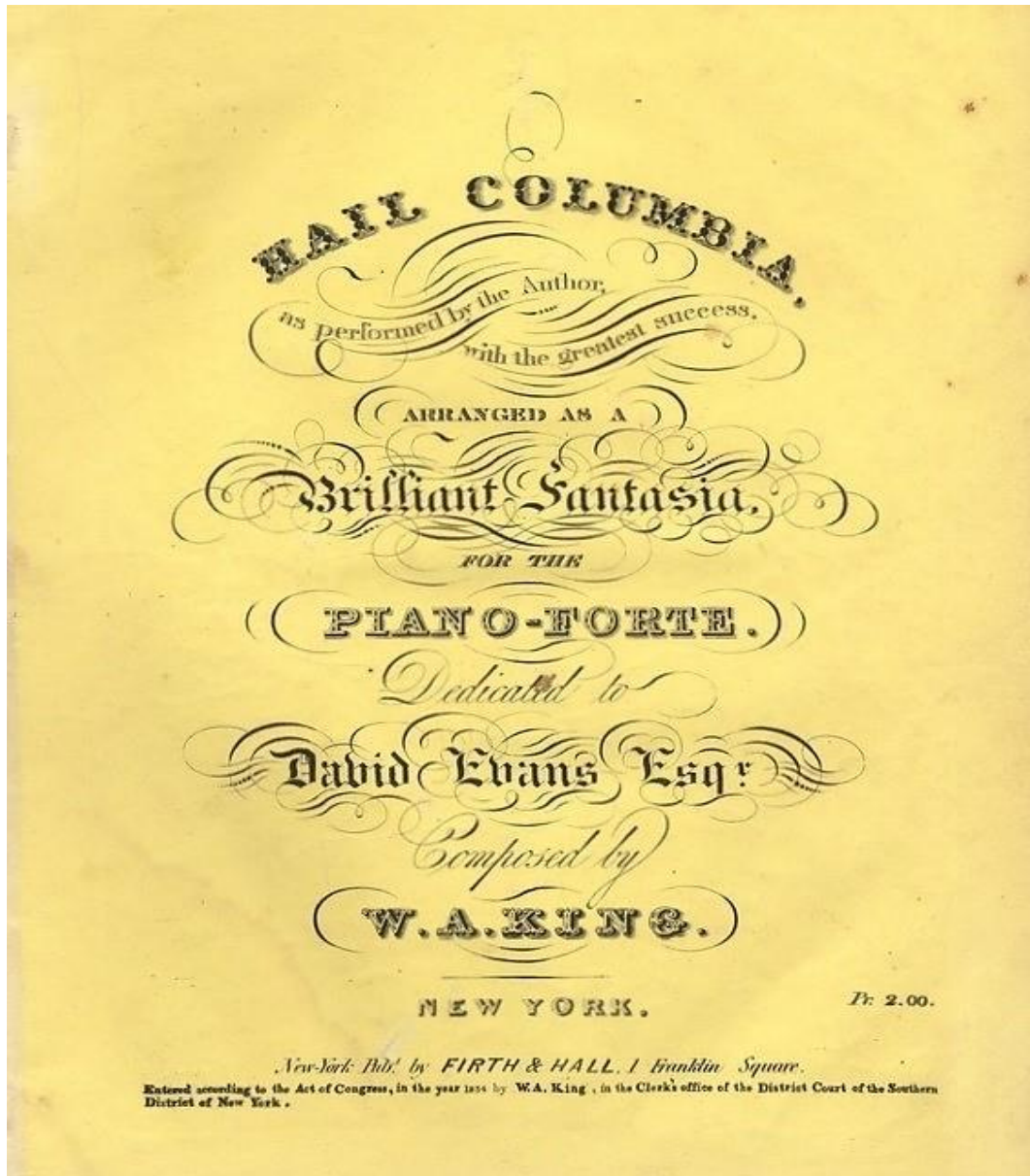


Figure 1.1: W. A. King, *Hail Columbia, Brilliant Fantasia*, title page

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. See also Vera Brodsky Lawrence, *Strong on Music: The New York Music Scene in the Days of George Templeton Strong* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 1:74. Lawrence also mentions King's *Grand National Fantasy* on "The Star Spangled Banner," with *Finale à la Valse*.

Example 1.1: W. A. King, *Hail Columbia, Brilliant Fantasia*: final variation and coda, mm. 218-233

The image shows a page of musical notation, numbered 14 in the top left corner. It contains five systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system is marked 'a tempo.' and features a '8va' (octave) marking above the treble staff. The second system also has an '8va' marking. The third system is marked 'scherzo' and 'sempre p' (piano). The fourth system has a 'cres.' (crescendo) marking. The fifth system has a 'do' marking above the treble staff and an '8va' marking above the bass staff. The notation is dense, with many chords and rapid passages.

King's fantasy was published in 1834 by New York's Firth & Hall. According to the Americanist Vera Brodsky Lawrence (1909-1996), this "pre-Lisztian" concert paraphrase is "a splashy set of variations compounded of glissandos, cadenzas, and thundering chords and octave

passages.”<sup>19</sup> The example above demonstrates that although King’s harmonic approach remains largely diatonic, the filigree cadenzas and broken octaves in chromatics, coupled with thickly-voiced chords and thirty-second note runs found throughout, must have provided an exciting display for American audiences at the time. Not surprisingly, King’s music resembles the post-classical brilliant style associated with Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1785-1849), Ignaz Moscheles, Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837), and other European pianists of the previous generation. Nonetheless, this work stands out as one of the earliest technically-demanding piano showpieces written and published in the United States.

Another performance of note took place on 15 January 1835, when King introduced his next patriotic arrangement. The keyboardist appeared with the New York Sacred Music Society, one of the city’s earliest amateur ensembles, who was giving their monthly concert. For this event, King played *Grand National Fantasia* on the “Star Spangled Banner” with Finale “a la Valse.” *The American Musical Journal* review suggests: “The pianoforte concerto was highly credible to Mr. King’s talents, both as a pianist and musician.”<sup>20</sup> On 8 June the Sacred Music Society gave another concert. By default, King performed again; apparently, a different scheduled performer was absent. So, King took the concert platform and immediately performed an unspecified concerto, “without any music before him.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:71-72.

<sup>20</sup> *The American Music Journal*, February 1835, 68. The review states that King performed a “concerto.” In this case, and in other instances, writers tend to use terminology loosely. The article is, in fact, discussing King’s solo performance of a fantasia, rather than an actual piano concerto.

<sup>21</sup> “New-York Sacred Music Society,” *The American Musical Journal*, July 1835, 190. The piece was not a “concerto” but was King’s fantasia on “Hail Columbia.”

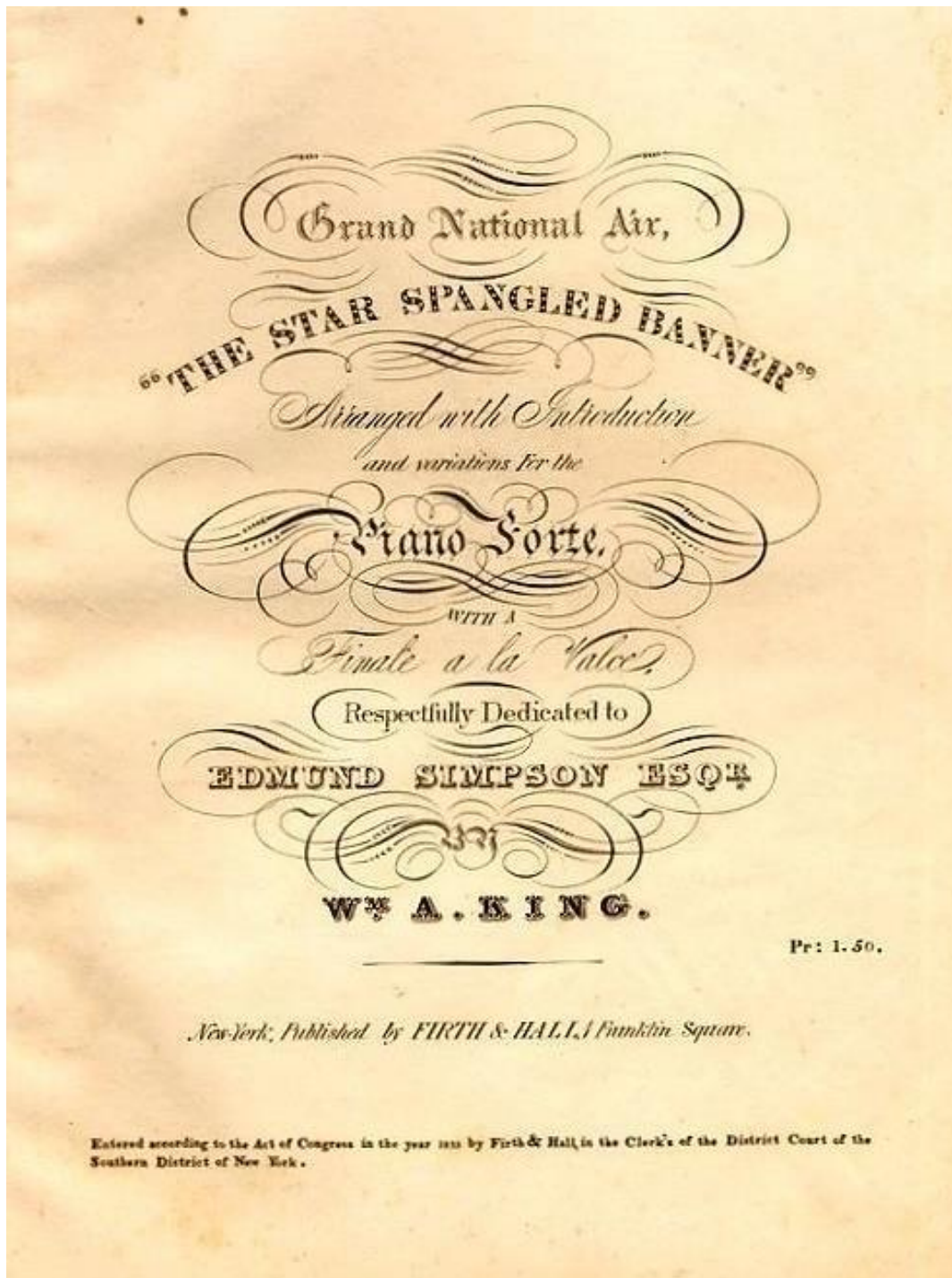


Figure 1.2: W. A. King, *Grand National Air*, “The Star Spangled Banner”: title page



For thirty years, King actively contributed to the early development of New York's music establishment, making frequent appearances as soloist and collaborative artist for numerous singers and other instrumentalists. He was not only recognized for his ability as a pianist, but he was also a virtuoso organist. King held posts at St. Peter's Church, 22 Barclay Street; Grace Church, 802 Broadway Street; St. Stephen's; and Calvary Church, where his reputation was just as impressive.

As organist, King's concert arrangements of the overtures to Carl Maria von Weber's *Oberon* and Daniel Auber's *Masaiello*, among others, were his specialties. He was also regularly called upon by the Manhattan-based organ-builder Henry Erben (1800-1884) as exhibitor on newly built and renovated instruments. The musician's personal friend, lawyer/diarist George Templeton Strong (1820-1875), frequently cites King's organ performances in his memoirs. For example, on 24 April 1840, Strong recalled hearing the organist upon arrival at Erben's for an update on the instrument being constructed for Strong's home:

King was there, and I enjoyed a rich treat hearing him try that Utica organ. He played a beautiful voluntary upon it, running from key to key with an ease of modulation that I should think years of practice could hardly give, and whisking the stops in and out like lightening. It was the richest voluntary I ever heard.<sup>22</sup>

On 20 June 1840 Strong wrote: "Went with Post and King to Grace Church to hear the latter show off their organ [an Erben], which he did *con amore*."<sup>23</sup> On 7 November, Strong documents another excursion to Grace Church to hear King. The virtuoso ran through several

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<sup>22</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:73.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

Overtures including, “*The Bronze Horse, Der Freischütz*, etc.” in what Strong called, “magnificent style.”<sup>24</sup>

As the next generation of pianists arrived in New York, King’s status as a top-rated keyboardist seems to have gradually waned. He continued to perform for various benefits and often appeared with his wife, Henriette, who was a capable singer and sister of the music critic Henry C. Watson (1818?-1875). In the decade preceding his death on 11 May 1867, King is frequently listed on concert programs in terms of an accompanist: “Mr. King will preside at the piano.”<sup>25</sup>

### **Daniel Schlesinger: Arranger, Improviser, and Virtuoso**

On 6 October 1836 the Hamburg-born Daniel Schlesinger arrived in New York; he was the next musician to shape the local perception of a piano virtuoso.<sup>26</sup> Like King, he was also recognized for elaborate settings of national airs and perhaps, even more so, for his ability to improvise. Schlesinger was a student of Ferdinand Ries (a student of Beethoven) and Moscheles, and had already captured the attention of musicians in Europe. For the next three years Schlesinger performed regularly, delighting the comparatively small percentage of New York’s audiences who were willing to embrace instrumental performances along with the already popular operas, pastiches, and other vocal entertainments. A select few also witnessed the young artist give the

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 86-87.

<sup>25</sup> See “Death of an Organist,” *New York Times*, 12 May 1867, 8. According to the *Times*, King was found “lying dead on the sidewalk, near the corner of Thirty-first-street and Fourth Avenue . . . Deceased was 50 years of age, and is supposed to have died of exhaustion and exposure.”

<sup>26</sup> Logic would suggest that the pianist was in some way related to the Schlesinger family of publishing fame in both Berlin and Paris; however, documents do not discuss or confirm a connection.

first American performances of Thalberg's tour de force fantasies and Schlesinger's own Variations on the March from Rossini's *Tancredi*.<sup>27</sup>

Beyond possessing a technical prowess that allowed him to execute the most cutting-edge compositions of the day, Schlesinger's ability to improvise was reportedly nothing short of phenomenal. According to Lawrence, Schlesinger's performances showcased extemporizations upon themes suggested by members of the audience, leaving them astonished.<sup>28</sup> Another writer recalled the pianist composing, on the spot, a waltz, "in which the left hand played an air one beat behind the right, so that on whichever side of the piano you stood, the melody was distinctly audible."<sup>29</sup> The same source mentions Schlesinger's improvisations on Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with "two and at times three of the airs of that inimitable opera simultaneously wooing the ear." On another occasion, the pianist cleverly combined "Yankee Doodle" and "God Save the King," which quickly became one of Schlesinger's trademark showpieces.<sup>30</sup> Along with King's fantasies, this work (apparently unpublished) stands among the earliest documented examples of pianists in America carrying on the European tradition of combining popular themes and arranging them for virtuosic display.

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<sup>27</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong On Music*, 1:42. Schlesinger debuted on 12 April 1837 at the National Theatre. His *Tancredi* Variations were heard at this performance. On 24 November 1837 Schlesinger gave the first documented public performance of Thalberg's music in America, performing *Grande Fantaisie et Variation Brillante sur 'I Montecchi e Capuletti'*, Op. 10. On 21 March 1838 he performed Thalberg's *Grande Fantaisie et Variations sur 'Don Juan'*, Op. 14.

<sup>28</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:50.

<sup>29</sup> "Daniel Schlesinger, The Pianist," *The New-York Mirror* 17/11 (7 September 1837): 82.

<sup>30</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:43. Brodsky Lawrence states that Schlesinger performed a set of Variations on an American Air on 6 June 1837. The performance also included Piano Concerto No. 2 in A Minor, Op. 85 by Johann Nepomuk Hummel. See also *The New-York Mirror*, 10 August through 7 September 1837. For these issues, the periodical printed a posthumous biography: "Daniel Schlesinger, The Pianist" in multiple installments. The series confirms the performance of Hummel's concerto on 24 November 1837, perhaps a repeat performance, and the pianist's other musical achievements cited in this paragraph.

By spring of 1838, Schlesinger enjoyed a solid reputation and was recognized for encouraging greater local appreciation for instrumental music.<sup>31</sup> He was also the leader of a new society called the Concordia, whose goals were, “the practical cultivation of German music and the improvement in vocal and instrumental music generally.”<sup>32</sup> After a short illness, Schlesinger died on 8 June 1839, cutting short a promising career and arguably depriving New York of their most talented pianist.<sup>33</sup> In his honor, local musicians organized a “Grand Musical Solemnity,” where many of the city’s notable singers and instrumentalists performed. The event took place on 25 June 1839 at the Broadway Tabernacle, which was originally constructed as a free Congregational church, but by this time had become one of the city’s largest and important concert venues. The initial purpose of the Solemnity was to raise support for the pianist’s widow and two surviving children; however, the gathering of so many local performers and the success of the concert itself was significant. Although the fourth New York Philharmonic Society was established three years later, some recognize the Schlesinger memorial concert as an early event that provided impetus and prompted the New York establishment to once again consider organizing a professional orchestra for the city.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *The New-York Mirror* 17/11 (7 September 1837): 82.

<sup>32</sup> *Musical Review*, 9 May 1838. See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:15.

<sup>33</sup> See *The Musical Magazine*, 6 July 1839. The article discusses the forthcoming biography that appeared in *The New-York Mirror*. The periodical also printed a notice penned by the pianist’s brother, F. Schlesinger, regarding the upcoming auction of Schlesinger’s two Stoddard grand pianos and his music library. The auction took place at the Apollo Saloon on 10 July 1839.

<sup>34</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:14. The New York Philharmonic Society (founded in 1842) is actually the fourth incarnation of so named ensembles in New York. The first group was organized in 1799 and led by James Hewitt (1770-1827), a high-profile local musician. The Society was largely a social organization that met regularly and gave monthly semi-private concerts and an annual public concert and ball. Following Hewitt’s return from a brief tenure in Boston, a second Society was established in 1816. According to Brodsky Lawrence, the second Philharmonic “made so fleeting an appearance that it was scarcely noticed before it vanished.” In 1819, Hewitt left New York permanently and the local scene went through significant changes. The third Philharmonic Society was established in 1824 with the multi-talented French pianist/ composer/ conductor/ teacher/ French hornist Denis-Germain Étienne (1781-1859) as conductor. The new Society held weekly rehearsals and monthly members’ concerts. On 14 December 1824 the Society gave their first concert at the City Hotel. By 1827, with a lack of support and under financial strain, the third Society ceased to exist. (See: Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:xxx-liii).

With notable improvisational skills, flashy settings of national airs, and by all accounts, impressive performances, King and Schlesinger gave New York audiences primary exposure to what may be called virtuoso playing. Beyond their own compositions, however, the choice of other repertoire also contributed to the initial impression New Yorkers likely held as emblematic of a piano virtuoso.

### **Thalberg's Early Supremacy**

Beginning in 1837 and throughout the next two decades, most top-rated pianists in New York relied to a large extent on the pyrotechnical works of Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871) as vehicles for demonstrating virtuosic keyboard ability. Although the famous pianist's music held a place of prominence in American concert halls, his current activity on the European musical scene received limited coverage in the United States prior to 1840. Unlike the colorful prose documenting the accolades of Franz Liszt (1811-1886) that began appearing in American periodicals by 1839 (described in Chapter 3), earlier references regarding Thalberg are comparatively few and far less sensational. On 18 July 1836, the *Spirit of the Times* mentioned the pianist's London debut, but said nothing concerning his performance. The same periodical printed another correspondence from the *London Times* on 28 October 1837. This article documents a private performance given by Thalberg before the newly-crowned Queen Victoria, but says little about his playing. Another early reference concerning a concert in London was brief, giving a better account of the pianist's English reception, yet gives no mention of Thalberg's playing: "He was followed to his seat by the straining eyes of his ardent admirers,

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The Fourth New York Philharmonic Society was founded in April 1842 and remains the oldest symphony orchestra in America.

whose ears were eager to devour his delicious harmonies; and the first touch of his finger on the keys was the magical signal for the most profound silence. God bless us!”<sup>35</sup>

By 1839 certain members of the American press began discussing Thalberg in more informative terms. A short article entitled, “Thalberg” appeared in *The Corsair* and gives some indication of the pianist’s performance style, while providing readers in the United States something to spark their curiosity:

By this allusion to the newest of the new school of pianists, we have been led away from him to whom precedence, according to chronological order, should have been given. But the peculiarities of Thalberg’s manner as a performer—his soundness and richness of touch, whereby, and by a most judicious employment of the pedal, tone is diffused of a consistence, and to an extent never attained by any previous player—the deliberate and expressive delivery of his melodies, in which his performance, though less dramatic and passionate than Pasta’s singing, possesses the same incomparable features of breadth and dignity—the amazing brilliancy of his execution never broken by an angular or an incomplete note—have been too frequently heard in English ears to require deliberate recapitulation. And Thalbergh’s [*sic*] characteristics be it remembered, are as yet principally those of an executive artist.

He will be always heard with wonder and delight; there is something, too, most engaging in his youthful and gracious presence—in the total absence of everything like stage effect and quackery in his intercourse with the public—in his leaving all airs and graces to meaner and older men. But it must be confessed that there exists a wonder yet rarer, and a delight yet more exalted—those, namely, which owe themselves to the master-mind—than any that have been hitherto awakened even by his fascinating performances.<sup>36</sup>

The author’s opening remarks seem to establish that, to this point, the English press had not focused enough on Thalberg. As a result, readers in the United States naturally heard little of the celebrated pianist. In fact, mention of Thalberg in the American press is more frequently in conjunction with local performances of his music rather than direct reports of his European achievements. More importantly, however, the writer discusses many attributes associated with

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<sup>35</sup> “London Table-Talk,” *Spirit of the Times*, 31 March 1838, 51.

<sup>36</sup> “Thalberg,” *The Corsair*, 22 June 1839, 229.

the pianist's style. The article alludes to skillful use of the sustaining pedal, which was imperative for Thalberg to accomplish his famous three-handed effects. Comparison with the singing of Giuditta Pasta (1797-1865) is also significant with respect to Thalberg's vocal quality of touch, which distinguished the pianist from the more orchestral approach of Liszt. The author also suggests a level of musical presentation and an ability to communicate with audiences that was above any form of gimmick or trickery. On the one hand, this imagery of consummate artistry may have appealed to the musically informed, while on the other likely caused less impact on the imagination of the average American reader.

As pianists in New York actively programmed his music, Thalberg's compositional approach eventually received attention in the press. In 1845 an article, "The Virtuoso Age in Music" appeared in *The Harbinger*, which discussed the different virtuosic approaches of Thalberg, Liszt, and Chopin. The writer gives a poetic explanation of Thalberg's style:

It is common with Thalberg and those of his school, to choose some favorite air for a theme, and unfold it into brilliant variations, or build under and around it the most massive and gorgeous accompaniments, till the jewel, in the splendor of its setting, becomes like a light shining in the depths of a vast subterranean grotto, many-arched, all glittering with spars [*sic*]. In the variations upon the "prayer" from "Moses in Egypt" there are passages where two hands do the work of three; the left darting alternately to the sub-Bass, and then back to the middle of the keyboard, to rekindle the Air there and keep it alive, while the right is at the liberty to wander up and down in fluid aurora-borealis streams of light, investing with its flickering gauze of fire the stable, majestic columns of the central melody.<sup>37</sup>

The writer cites *Fantaisie sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini*, Op. 33 (1839), which by that time, was the most popular, most frequently performed, and most representative Thalberg composition heard in the United States. The article brings attention to the virtuoso's trademark

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<sup>37</sup> "The Virtuoso Age in Music. The New School of Pianists and Violinists," *The Harbinger*, 22 November 1845, 378.

technique of sustaining a melody with the pedal, while both hands surround the theme with arpeggios, octaves, filigree passages, and other elaborate figurations. The overall effect is that of three or four hands as they roam the entire keyboard, playing a multitude of notes and creating waves of sound, while giving the impression of both singer and accompanist simultaneously. The following example demonstrates Thalberg's famous three-hand compositional technique:

**Example 1.2:** Thalberg, *Fantaisie sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini*, Op. 33: mm. 260-265<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Sigismund Thalberg, *Fantaisie sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini*, Op. 33 (Paris: E. Troupenas & Co., 1840).



Beyond colorful accounts in the press, Thalberg's initial reputation in America relied upon performances of his compositions by other pianists. Since he did not visit the United States until 1856, the vocal quality of touch, his grace, elegance, and perfection of finish in detail as reported by Mason, Richard Hoffman (1831-1909), and others, were not experienced by most Americans, as they had not yet heard him play.<sup>39</sup> Rather, the numerous pianists who had been programming Thalberg's operatic fantasies since the 1830s played an important role in placing his music before American audiences, while associating this repertoire with the local image of a piano virtuoso. Select Performances of Thalberg's Operatic Fantasies in New York City between the years 1837-1853 are listed in Appendix One.

Beginning in 1837 and culminating with the arrival of the virtuoso himself, almost every prominent pianist in New York programmed Thalberg's operatic fantasies. The first documented performance in America occurred on 24 November 1837 at New York's City Hotel, when Schlesinger performed *Grande Fantaisie et Variations sur un Motif de l'Opéra de V. Bellini I Montecchi et Capuleti*, Op. 10 (1834). Four months later, on 21 March 1838, Schlesinger included *Grande Fantaisie et Variations sur des motifs de l'Opéra Don Juan de Mozart*, Op. 14 (1835) in a performance at the Stuyvesant Institute. Reviews of these early performances are difficult to locate; however, one discussing Schlesinger's rendition of the Don Juan fantasy on 21 March originally appeared in the *New-York American* on 25 March and was cited in *The New-York Mirror*:

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<sup>39</sup> See William Mason, *Memories of a Musical Life* (New York: The Century Co., 1901), 210; Richard Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections of Fifty Years* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 128-130.

The Grand Fantasia of Sigismund Thalberg, the Viennese upon motifs from Don Giovanni was the wonder and the glory of the evening. It was executed by Mr. S with more than his usual masterly skill, and afforded him a rare opportunity of contrasting the force and precision of his touch with the infinite grace and delicacy of which it is susceptible. His performance left you in wonderment, such a complication of mingled measures and harmonies! Such striking ornaments to the original theme—the fingers playing it, *La ci darem*, in its noble simplicity, on the mild tones of the keyboard, while as each note left them, they flew off amidst a thousand intricate arpeggios, and returned, or the interval was elapsed to the succeeding one—such fugues! *Where each finger seemed independent of its fellows* and endowed with a will and power of its own, you never heard before. His success was most brilliant, and his performance elicited the rapturous bravo it merited.<sup>40</sup>

Through these performances, we know Schlesinger was among the first to present what the press referred to as the “new school” of piano playing to American audiences, and that Thalberg’s music was played from concert platforms in the United States almost two years prior to the first documented hearings of Liszt’s works. Lawrence called Schlesinger, “a musician of a caliber until then rarely known in America.”<sup>41</sup> His performances of this repertoire established a certain standard, which continued with the arrival of other pianists.

The next pianist to appear on the New York musical scene, actively programming Thalberg was the German-born Wilhelm (William) Scharfenberg (1819-1895). In 1835, the American violinist Ureli Corelli Hill (1802-75) became one of the first American musicians to travel abroad in search of a master teacher. Hill spent the next two years studying with the renowned violinist and composer Ludwig Spohr (1784-1859). During his time in Kassel, Hill met Scharfenberg, a fellow student of Spohr who had also studied with Hummel. In 1838, Hill returned to New York and persuaded the nineteen-year-old German pianist to follow. As a supporting artist for Hill, Scharfenberg gave his formal debut on 15 November 1838 at the Apollo Saloon. His solo piece for the occasion was Thalberg’s *Fantaisie sur des motifs de*

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<sup>40</sup> *The New-York Mirror* 17/11 (7 September 1837): 82.

<sup>41</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:14.

*l'Opéra Les Huguenots*, Op. 20 (1836). Three weeks later, the pianist gave his own concert on 5 December. For this performance, Scharfenberg chose the *Grande Fantaisie et Variations sur des motifs de l'Opéra Norma de Bellini*, Op. 12 (1834). The pianist quickly established himself as one of the most active and respected musicians in the city, contributing as a soloist, chamber pianist, and collaborative artist.<sup>42</sup> By virtue of his performance repertoire, Scharfenberg also supports the early notion that America's top pianists played Thalberg and that this music represented piano virtuosity.

Several others who contributed to the initial impression of a piano virtuoso in America also programmed Thalberg's music. Ludwig Rakemann, who was student of Hummel and Thalberg, relied heavily on the operatic fantasies of his former teacher. Rakemann, however, is more noted for his debut on 16 October 1839, when he gave the first documented performance of Chopin's music in the United States.<sup>43</sup> The Polish pianist C. Kossowski, who seems to have vanished into obscurity by the 1840s, is often cited for his performance of the *Grand Galop Chromatique*, S. 219 on 4 November 1839, which was likely the first public hearing of Liszt's piano music in America. While this performance is noteworthy, it has all but overshadowed the fact that Kossowski also gave what was likely the American premiere of Thalberg's *Fantaisie*

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<sup>42</sup> In addition to his abilities as a pianist, Scharfenberg quickly became one of the city's most visible and important musical figures. As a founding member of the New York Philharmonic Society (1842), he acted as the organization's secretary for its third season, became vice-president by the ninth season, and was treasurer from the eleventh to the sixteenth seasons, ultimately holding the office of president between 1863 and 1866. Upon retirement, the Society made him an honorary member in 1866. In 1845, Scharfenberg became a partner in the long-lived music publishing and retail store Scharfenberg & Luis (361 Broadway), which was the headquarters of the New York Philharmonic Society for years. Scharfenberg & Luis was ultimately purchased by one of its former employees, Gustave Schirmer who later became one of America's leading music publishing houses. Scharfenberg was later hired by Schirmer as the primary editor for the once standard *Schirmer Library of Classics*. His activity in music retail became a practical venue for the publication of numerous piano music editions that were edited, revised, and fingered by Scharfenberg.

<sup>43</sup> See *The New-York Mirror*, 12 October 1839, 127. Rakemann was heralded as "a pupil of the great Thalberg" and referencing the recent death of Schlesinger, "to succeed the artist we have just lost." Rakemann was, in fact, elected to replace Schlesinger as the new director of the Concordia.

*sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini* at his debut at the City Hotel on 28 October 1839.

Reliance upon Thalberg's operatic fantasies remained fairly consistent throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, which effectively culminated in 1856 with the virtuoso's own American tours. As the midpoint in the century approached, however, the sterling appeal of Thalberg's fantasies began to tarnish, especially with critics. Following a performance in 1847 by King, *The Anglo-American* review declared: "Mr. King played on the pianoforte the celebrated Prayer of Moses, of which Thalberg has done so much towards the immortality, and which almost all other pianists have ridden to death, till the public are tired of it; we wish he had chosen something else."<sup>44</sup> Throughout the 1840s and 50s, Liszt's compositions would also become a popular addition to American concert programs; however, his piano music did not occupy a place of great prominence until 1859 with the arrival of Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898) (see Chapter 3). At that point, the popularity of Thalberg's operatic fantasies quickly diminished as Liszt's music eventually became more representative repertoire of virtuosos in the United States.

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<sup>44</sup> "Concert of Mrs. Ed. Loder and Mr. W. A. King," *The Anglo American*, 27 March 1847, 549.



**Figure 1.3: Portrait of Sigismund Thalberg (unknown photographer). Collection of the author.**

### **Henry Christian Timm and the Piano Concerto**

Appearances with New York's first orchestras eventually came to represent another facet of a performer's abilities and likely contributed to America's initial conception of a virtuoso pianist. Throughout the first three decades of the nineteenth century, piano concertos were not frequently programmed but did turn up occasionally. At the City Hotel on 6 June 1837 under the direction of U. C. Hill, Schlesinger performed Hummel's Concerto in A Minor, Op. 85, while

Scharfenberg programmed a concertina *Trois Clochettes* by Johann Peter Pixis (1788-1874) on 15 November 1838 for his local debut. Although amateur ensembles such as the Euterpean Society (1799) and previous incarnations of the Philharmonic existed, and pianists such as King, Schlesinger, and Scharfenberg were capable of playing them, regular inclusion of piano concertos on concert programs did not occur until the organization of a professional resident orchestra.

With the establishment of the New York Philharmonic Society in 1842, works for piano and orchestra quickly became a standard feature of each concert season. For their first five seasons, the Society programmed one such work each year. This changed with the sixth season when concertgoers witnessed a sharp increase in scheduled piano concertos. For 1847-48, a piano concerto was performed at three of the Society's four concerts, at which time multiple hearings of such works became generally standard. Before 1847, however, the Society's annually scheduled work for piano and orchestra was repeatedly entrusted to the same keyboardist. Through this regular activity Henry Christian Timm (1811-1892) became one of the first pianists in America to distinguish himself in the concerto realm, while giving the genre a prominent place on New York concert stages.

Timm was born in Hamburg in 1811. He arrived in New York in 1835 and quickly became involved in the numerous professional activities so common to working musicians. After a promising formal debut at the Park Theater, the pianist embarked upon a reportedly unsuccessful concert tour of New England.<sup>45</sup> When he returned to New York, Timm took the

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<sup>45</sup> For his debut, Timm performed Hummel's "Rondo Brilliant." The press is unclear whether Timm played Rondo Brilliant in A Major, Op. 56; Rondo Brilliant in B-Flat Major, Op. 98; or Rondo Brilliant in B Minor, Op. 109. See John Tasker Howard, *Our American Music: Three Hundred Years of It* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1930), 161. See also Henry Edward Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society of New York; A Memorial* (New York: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1892), 52. Both authors suggest that Timm's tour of New England did not achieve success.

position of second horn in the Park Theater orchestra. The restless young musician soon found himself touring with an opera company, and taking various other orchestral positions. Timm then settled into a post as organist at St. Thomas Church, followed by a tenure of eighteen years on the bench at the Unitarian Church on Broadway, and finally as organist at All Souls' Church on Fourth Avenue and 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Ultimately, Timm became one of the foremost collaborative musicians in New York throughout much of the nineteenth century.

Timm's record as a concert performer, however, is more demonstrative of his contributions as a virtuoso, while his place as a pianist helps illustrate another aspect of the New York musical scene. Between 1843 and 1848, Timm appeared each consecutive season and until 1847 was the only piano soloist with the New York Philharmonic Society. On 19 April 1845 the Society gave its final concert of the season. The annual work for piano and orchestra was Hummel's Grand Fantasia on "Oberon's *Zauberhorn*," Op. 116 with Timm as the soloist. A review in the *Broadway Journal* claimed this was the worst concert of the season, but praised Timm's performance, calling it the "gem of the evening." The critic continued:

Mr. Timm's performance was distinguished by a fine appreciation of his author, discriminating taste, delicacy, precision, and exquisite finish. We always feel a pure and unalloyed enjoyment in listening to this gentleman's playing; we have certainly met many who can do more to astonish us, but Mr. Timm satisfies our judgement, and fills our mind with a perfect embodiment of beautiful conceptions of the composer.<sup>46</sup>

The writer alludes to other pianists who may have possessed more virtuosic flair; however, the writer also suggests that Timm's playing demonstrated a competency and technique that was both intelligent and well-schooled.

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<sup>46</sup> "Concert of the New York Philharmonic Society," *Broadway Journal*, 26 April 1845, 269.

On 7 February 1847, Timm gave a concert at the Apollo Rooms that included two piano concertos; Ludwig Spohr's Symphony No. 4 in F Major, Op. 86, conducted by George Loder; the cavatina, "Il soave e bel content" from Giovanni Pacini's *La Niobe*, sung by Mrs. Loder; an arrangement of "O Pescator del 'onde" for three voices and instrumental obbligato by Carl Czerny (1791-1857); and various other vocal and instrumental selections. The first piano concerto, by Herz, was immediately recognized as the same work the celebrated pianist performed for his American debut a year earlier. Critical remarks concerning Timm's presentation of the concerto gives insight to the pianist's abilities:

It is not our practice to institute comparisons between two living candidates for public fame, but we may make this remark of Timm, that no facility in playing a rapid and easy passage can induce him to scramble it and no difficulty in reading or in executing a passage ever causes him to lag.<sup>47</sup>

The critic seems hesitant to make an overt comparison between the resident pianist and a visiting virtuoso. The writer's positive tone, however, gives some indication to Timm's artistry and the precision of his playing. The concert concluded with the last two movements of Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25, which became a local favorite and was one of Timm's specialties. Critical response demonstrates the reputation Timm held with the New York musical establishment:

Mr. Timm is that steady musician that the manner he plays is well understood by the hearer, and conveys a pleasant remembrance afterwards; were it not that a De Meyer, a Herz, a Wallace; are very good in their way, have different schools of piano, and that the public ought to hear different styles, there is no occasion for them, with regard to positive merit, so long as Mr. Timm is among us; and he very forcibly must

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<sup>47</sup> "Mr. Timm's Concert," *The Anglo American*, 13 February 1847, 405.



remind all who have had the advantage of knowing and hearing the styles of Clementi and of Hummel of the glorious performances of those celebrated men.<sup>48</sup>

That the critic also felt compelled to include a reference regarding two representative pianists of the old school (Clementi and Hummel) suggests a refinement and discipline that was apparently present in Timm's performances. The final statement may also indicate Timm's ability to successfully perform the concerto with stylistic traits reminiscent of the pianistic school of playing with which Mendelssohn himself was associated.

By 1858 Timm had appeared eleven times with the New York Philharmonic Society. With regard to frequency of performance, only Scharfenberg approaches Timm with six different appearances between 1848 and 1852. This activity is eventually surpassed much later in the century, but for the time, was noteworthy and indicative of Timm's ability and reputation. While King, Schlesinger, and Scharfenberg contributed to the concept of a piano virtuoso with their solo repertoire, Timm's early concerto performances also shaped this notion, while establishing another genre to the American virtuosic sphere.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Timm also served as one of the New York Philharmonic Society's first conductors, sharing the role with U. C. Hill and Denis-Germain Étienne at the Society's first concert (7 December 1842). Beyond his performance activities, Timm was also a founding member of the New York Philharmonic Society. Between 1844 and 1846 he served as assistant director for the Society. Timm became vice-president in 1846 and by 1848 was the Society's president, a position he held for fifteen consecutive seasons. Timm became an honorary member of the Society in 1863.

**Table 1.1: Timm’s Concerto Appearances with the New York Philharmonic Society<sup>50</sup>**

Date	Composition	Composer
18 February 1843	Piano Concerto in A-Flat, Op. 113, “Romanza” and “Rondo all Spagnolio.”	Johann Nepomuk Hummel
16 March 1844	Piano Concerto in B Minor, Op. 89 (first movement)	Johann Nepomuk Hummel
19 April 1845	Grand Fantasia for Piano and Orchestra on “Oberon’s <i>Zauberhorn</i> ,” Op. 116.	Johann Nepomuk Hummel
17 January 1846	Piano Concerto in No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25.	Felix Mendelssohn
21 November 1846	Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11.	Frederic Chopin
15 January 1848	Concerto for Two Pianos, Op. 63 (with Scharfenberg)	Jan Ladislav Dussek
20 April 1850	Grand Fantasia for Piano and Orchestra on “Oberon’s <i>Zauberhorn</i> ,” Op. 116.	Johann Nepomuk Hummel
23 November 1850	Concertino for Two Pianos and Orchestra, Op. 29 (with Jules Benedict)	Julius Benedict
17 April 1852	Duo Concertant on the Bohemian March from Weber’s <i>Preciosa</i> , Op. 87b for two pianos and orchestra. (with Scharfenberg)	Felix Mendelssohn and Ignaz Moscheles
13 November 1852	Piano Concerto in B minor, Op. 89 (first movement)	Johann Nepomuck Hummel
25 April 1857	<i>Introduction and Allegro Appassionata</i> , Op. 92.	Robert Schumann

Beyond Timm’s activity as a concerto soloist, which demonstrates another aspect of virtuosity, he was also noted for the well-rounded nature of his other musical talents. Although not necessarily associated with the characteristics of a performing virtuoso, Timm’s sight-reading ability was apparently nothing less than phenomenal. Several sources document the pianist as being able to read anything at sight; either piano music or orchestral scores, which also

<sup>50</sup> See Henry E. Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society of New York: A Memorial* (New York: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1889). The table is reproduced based on Krehbiel’s accounts of the New York Philharmonic’s record of annual performances.

contributed to Timm's reputation.<sup>51</sup> His name shows up frequently on programs and concert advertisements from the period, either credited as the accompanist or simply cited: "Mr. Timm will preside at the piano." Following a performance on 24 October 1848 *The Albion* made an informative statement concerning the pianist's stellar reputation: "Mr. H. C. Timm presided at the piano upon this occasion; we are very glad to see him in the concert-room again, for there is no one in New York who can accompany so admirably, or can be so entirely relied upon."<sup>52</sup> As a supporting artist, Timm might have appeared on concert stages more frequently than any other pianist in New York throughout the nineteenth century. Years later, Timm recalled his central role: "I seem to have been for over twenty-five years a kind of *sine qua non* at all concerts given during that time, playing accompaniments to all soloists, both vocal and instrumental. I modestly may claim that this was my forte rather than anything else."<sup>53</sup>

Timm set a high benchmark for all resident pianists who followed. Upon the death of Scharfenberg in 1895, a personal letter written by Hoffman appeared in the *Tribune* that further illustrates the reputation these two artists held throughout the century: "At the time of my arrival in New York in 1847 Scharfenberg and Timm stood at the head of their profession, and their good work did more to place New York on its solid musical foundation than the efforts of a dozen other musicians combined."<sup>54</sup> With this simple and direct statement, Hoffman acknowledged the contributions both pianists made on the development of the city's musical establishment, while demonstrating his own respect for two outstanding members of the local musical scene.

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<sup>51</sup> Another charming anecdote concerning Timm appears in John Tasker Howard's *Our American Music* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1930), 162: "One legend has it that he could play scales with a full glass of wine on the back of his hand without spilling a drop."

<sup>52</sup> "Concert of Mr. and Madame Leati," *The Albion*, 28 October 1848, 524.

<sup>53</sup> Henry Edward Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society of New York: A Memorial* (New York: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1892), 52.

<sup>54</sup> *New York Tribune*, 8 September 1895, 22.

## Multiple Pianists Share the Concert Stage

Following a long-established performance tradition in Europe, programming music for multiple pianists seems to have entered the New York concert realm fairly early. Schlesinger's concert at the City Hotel on 4 February 1839 is one of the first such events to receive critical attention. Joined by Scharfenberg, Denis-Germain Étienne (1781-1859), and Charles Thibault (d. c. 1853), the four pianists presented an eight-handed arrangement on two pianos of the overture from Cherubini's *Anacréon*. The same program also included Schlesinger and Scharfenberg in a transcription of Beethoven's *Egmont Overture*, Op. 84. Critics were not always impressed, with some demanding that overtures only be played "as they should be, by an orchestra."<sup>55</sup> These performances allowed concertgoers to hear two or more pianists simultaneously, and provided a means of presenting popular symphonic works without requiring the task of assembling an orchestra. These performances seldom embodied the heights of virtuosic display; however, the spectacle of multiple pianists and at times multiple pianos on one concert platform was exceedingly popular with audiences and performances continued long after such orchestras were in place.

Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, arrangements for multiple pianists continually turned up on concert programs. Transcriptions of *Anacréon* and *Egmont* remained popular, while the overtures to Auber's *Cheval de Bronze*, Weber's *Oberon*, and Spohr's *Jesonda* to name a few, also entered the multiple-piano repertoire. On 27 March 1847, *The Anglo American* reviewed a recent concert given by King. With Timm at a second keyboard, the two pianists performed the overture to *Oberon*. Critical response was likely expected, as the reviewer complained: "The

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<sup>55</sup> "Schlesinger's Concert," *Musical Review*, 16 February 1839, 375-76.

notion of arranging such music as the overture ‘Oberon’ for two pianos is almost an insult to the genius and memory of Weber . . . though the playing was excellent as we hardly say more, than, the pianos were under the hands of W. A. King and Timm.”<sup>56</sup> On 7 June 1849 the Grand Art-Union Concert opened with Hoffman, Timm, George Loder, and an amateur pianist, Miss Coudon, performing an arrangement of the overture to Friedrich von Flotow’s *Alessandro Stradella* (1843-44). Critical response was again negative, as the writer for the *Albion* opined the work was “very ineffective as a piano arrangement.”<sup>57</sup> Although the entire coloristic palette of an orchestra may have been more desirable to the critic, the fact remains that transcriptions of symphonic music were very popular.

Although orchestral favorites arranged for multiple pianos were decidedly frowned upon by critics, pianists continued programming them. The press documents many instances where pianists appeared in various combinations. Sometimes it was King and Timm. Frequently Scharfenberg and Timm shared the platform, while on other occasions Scharfenberg and Frederick Rakemann joined forces. When Hoffman arrived, he was frequently included in ensembles. The arrangements spanned the gamut of possibilities, from duets by Bertini, Herz, and other unspecified composers, to more elaborate setting of overtures for three or four performers. Occasionally, collaborations drew from perhaps more legitimate and hopefully more acceptable repertoire. For example, on 15 January 1848, Timm and Scharfenberg performed the Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra in B-Flat Major, Op. 63 by Jan Ladislav Dussek (1760-1812) with the New York Philharmonic Society.

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<sup>56</sup> “Concert of Mrs. Ed. Loder and Mr. W. A. King,” *The Anglo American*, 27 March 1847, 549.

<sup>57</sup> “Grand Art-Union Concert,” *The Albion*, 9 June 1849, 272.

As the century wore on, orchestral works arranged for multiple pianists became a less prominent part of concert programs, but what was presented could reach the highest levels of virtuosity. Perhaps the most famous example occurred on 26 December 1856 at Niblo's Saloon when Thalberg and Gottschalk shared the stage. The pair had recently joined forces in the former's two-piano fantasy on *Norma*, but for this occasion, an arrangement by the latter of Verdi's *Il Trovatore* was the highlight of the evening. According to Hoffman, the piece "created the most tremendous furore and excitement. A remarkable shake with Thalberg played in the middle of the piano, while Gottschalk was flying all over the keyboard in the 'Anvil Chorus,' produced the most prodigious volume of tone I have ever heard from the piano."<sup>58</sup> The review in the *New York Times* the following day proclaimed: "Mr. Gottschalk's duet is an extraordinary production. The audience was electrified with it, and notwithstanding its length and difficulty, demanded an *encore*."<sup>59</sup> In all fairness, Gottschalk's arrangement (now lost) was likely a virtuosic fantasy rather than a straight orchestral transcription, and was apparently more palatable to the critics.

## Conclusions

Pianistic activity in New York throughout the 1830s and 1840s was vibrant and perhaps more developed than modern audiences might suspect. Although the appearance of European virtuosos like de Meyer, Herz, and Thalberg was important, they did not arrive at a stagnant backwater of musical infancy, at least in New York. As celebrated virtuosos like Liszt and Thalberg went about conquering Europe, resident pianists in New York simultaneously had their

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<sup>58</sup> Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 130-31.

<sup>59</sup> "Gottschalk's Farewell Concert," *New York Times*, 27 December 1856, 4.

hands to the plough, and in Hoffman's words, they were, "placing New York on a solid musical foundation."<sup>60</sup>

The contributions of New York's resident pianists were no less valuable than the highly publicized tours of the visiting virtuosos. They were critical to the development of the local musical scene, while providing the initial impression of the piano virtuoso for American concertgoers. King, Schlesinger, Scharfenberg, and Timm were active in the same sorts of musical endeavors as many of the Europe's superstars. They crafted and played tour de force showpieces, improvised, and performed concertos. Whether they had "charisma" or "talent" enough to sustain touring careers is impossible to know. Participating in the musical activities of a quickly developing nineteenth-century New York City was enough, and an endeavor that seemed to fulfill their professional aspirations.

Investigating pianists like King, Schlesinger, Scharfenberg, and Timm has multiple benefits. Documenting their careers gives further understanding and appreciation for the musical environment of New York City throughout the first half of the 1800s, while their work provides perspective for the remainder of the century. That pianists presented virtuosic music on a regular basis sheds light on the state of musical development already in America before the European superstars arrived.

Making a case for New York's resident pianists also creates a truer landscape by which we may contextualize virtuosos like de Meyer, Herz, and Thalberg, thus, giving their activities proper perspective. Finally, the careers of New York's pianists during the 1830s and 1840s established a certain prototype and expectation as other artists arrived and further contributed to

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<sup>60</sup> *New York Tribune*, 8 September 1895, 22.

the New York scene. Many resident pianists followed such as Hoffman, Mills, and later, Rafael Joseffy (1852-1915). Several can trace the trajectory of their own careers back to the foundation and tradition established by the artists who preceded them, leaving their own undeniable mark on America's musical legacy.



## Chapter Two

### FROM MANCHESTER TO NEW YORK CITY: THE CASE OF RICHARD HOFFMAN

On 1 December 1897, New Yorkers gathered at Chickering Hall to commemorate Richard Hoffman (1831-1909), one of the city's most accomplished and beloved musical patriarchs. The *New York Times* review flowed with sentiment and praise:

The auditorium was almost filled, and there were very few in the assembly who had not at some time profited by the instruction of Mr. Hoffman. It was his big musical family that the pianist faced, and as he looked out over his artistic progeny, he must have realized that the years of his labor had not been idle, but fruitful, not only in artistic accomplishment, but also in love and even veneration.<sup>1</sup>

The testimonial concert showcased Hoffman in the performance capacities for which he had won admiration throughout his long career.<sup>2</sup> In addition to being a resident pianist, he was also a respected teacher and an active composer. As a prominent member of the New York musical establishment, Hoffman's story is compelling. His professional activities serve as an effective model by which several aspects of the New York scene can be studied, while offering further insight into the nineteenth-century American scene.

In this chapter, I investigate Hoffman's career and explore his contributions to nineteenth-century New York City's vibrant musical scene. My discussion begins with a

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<sup>1</sup> "Fifty Years in Music. Testimonial Concert to Mr. Richard Hoffman, the Pianists," *New York Times*, 2 December 1897, 7.

<sup>2</sup> The "Golden Jubilee" event commemorated Hoffman's fifty-year career in New York City (1847-97). The program included: Mozart's Piano Quartet No. 1 in G Minor, K. 478; Bach's Concerto for Two Pianos in C Major, BWV 1061; Chopin's Nocturne in D-Flat Major, Op. 27, No. 2 and Ballade No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 23; and the Septet in D Minor, Op. 74 by Johann Nepomuk Hummel. Hoffman's student, Mrs. Charles B. Foote organized the event. She was an accomplished amateur pianist and played the second piano part for the Bach concerto. Her husband, Charles B. Foote was a well-known banker, broker, and member of the New York Stock Exchange.

detailed account of Hoffman as a prodigy in Manchester, England. I document his early record of performances, youthful compositions, and other decisive steps he took toward becoming a pianist. Next, I examine Hoffman's years in America. The pianist's tours and performances, coupled with his repertoire and approach to concert programming, offer deep insights into contemporary performance practice, conditions, and expectations in the United States. Furthermore, Hoffman's activities as a concerto soloist and his involvement in chamber music helped shape these facets of the American musical landscape. I also examine several of Hoffman's pieces and compile the first comprehensive catalogue of his published works (see Appendix Two). Investigating the circumstances that may have influenced Hoffman's compositional efforts provides insight into musical tastes of the time. Finally, a brief look into his activity as a teacher further illustrates the multi-faceted careers of many contemporary pianists. While Hoffman might be considered typical in some ways and unusual in others, he nonetheless offers perspective on several aspects of contemporary pianism, such as popular repertoire of the time, performance approach and tactics employed in programming, and the pianist's place in the American concert realm.

## **The Prodigy Years**

Richard Hoffman was born on 24 May 1831, in Manchester, England. His father, Richard Hoffman-Andrews (1803-1891) was an accomplished pianist, prolific composer, arranger, and highly regarded teacher.<sup>3</sup> Richard was one of nine children. By virtue of their father's

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<sup>3</sup> Richard Hoffman-Andrews (the elder) was a student of Hummel and Kalkbrenner. He was also an organist and violinist. See Richard Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections of Fifty Years* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 8. According to Richard Hoffman's wife, his grandfather became a popular actor in London. Association with performing classes in society was not supported by the family. Thus, the actor assumed the last name

occupation and the conviction that his children should all be musically trained, Hoffman and his siblings received thorough instruction from an early age. According to his wife, the pianist's brother Edward (1836-?) and sister, Helen, also displayed great talent. The other siblings did not embrace their training on the same level. Nonetheless, the musical activities of the Hoffman home seem to have presented a healthy environment for the young musician to develop his natural gifts.<sup>4</sup>

According to his recollection, Hoffman first appeared before the public at age six. Although minimal documentation survives concerning his earliest musical activities (1837-40), the British press confirms this event. News of the prodigy's debut appeared on 12 May 1837 in the *Manchester Courier*. His father advertised the event as a "Juvenile Birthday Concert" scheduled for 26 May just two days after the pianist's sixth birthday. The article showcased Hoffman, stating that he would, "execute several Airs on the violin and sing." The centerpiece for his portion of the program was *The Battle of Prague* (unknown arrangement) on the piano, from memory.<sup>5</sup> Hoffman also played a duet by Henri Herz (1803-1888) with his sister, Helen (age seven), and a trio for two violins and cello by Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713), while

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"Andrews." Hoffman's father retained the title Hoffman-Andrews, while Richard also began his youthful career using the same name. After arriving in America, he dropped the hyphenated name and was called Richard Hoffman.<sup>4</sup> See Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections of Fifty Years*, 3-4. Edward Hoffman (1836-?) was eight years old when he joined Richard, two sisters, and his father in public performances. Edward was initially a violinist; however, he later followed Richard to America (1854) and became a successful pianist and teacher. He married the America soprano Charlotte Varian (1825-1884). The couple toured together, with Edward as her accompanist. The British press also mentions several concerts, which include performances of the two sisters. Miss Elizabeth Andrews is mentioned by name, while the other was only called Miss Andrews. According to Hoffman's wife, the sister named Helen Andrews was a promising alto. She appeared with Jenny Lind before her departure for America and was initially approached by P. T. Barnum's agent to accompany the Swedish Nightingale in her U.S. tours, but these plans never materialized. Immediately before Lind left for America, Helen married, thus ending her performing career.

<sup>5</sup> The work in question may have been the programmatic sonata written by the Bohemian composer, František Koczwara (c. 1750-1791). In 1775, the composer settled in London and spent much of his musical career in the United Kingdom. Composed in 1788, the *Battle of Prague* was a longtime favorite in England.

performances by his father and other local musicians fleshed out the program.<sup>6</sup> Although Hoffman's later reputation would rest on his skills as a pianist, this debut concert demonstrates the well-rounded nature of Hoffman's early training and the multiple musical disciplines in which he was already proficient.

By 1841, news of the prodigy frequently appeared in the local press. Hoffman gained initial attention, however, not as a pianist, but for his performances on the unusual accordion-like Wheatstone's Patented Concertina. From 1841 to 1843, the young musician frequently contributed to benefit concerts, musical lectures, and other events organized by his father. For these performances, he almost exclusively played the concertina, to great acclaim: "Master Richard Hoffman Andrews accompanied his sisters' songs upon Wheatstone's Concertina, and was highly applauded; the tone of this instrument is exceedingly beautiful, and the youth played with great taste and expression."<sup>7</sup> Hoffman also frequently performed fantasies and variations for concertina on various operatic themes. The instrument played a critical role in his early development as the young musician graciously acknowledged by including the concertina in his New York debut almost a decade later.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Manchester Courier*, 12 May 1837. Mrs. Hoffman also states that Richard played three instruments at the time of his debut: the violin, piano, and concertina; however, the *Courier* does not mention the concertina at his debut. The British press makes no further mention of Hoffman giving subsequent performances on the violin. Furthermore, the press only mentions the piano again in reviews from 1843 onward.

<sup>7</sup> *Manchester Courier*, 26 November 1842. See other reviews from 1841-44. Regular mentions of Hoffman's performances on the concertina survive and attest to public appeal of his playing. The guitarist, Giulio Regondi (1822-1872), was the most celebrated concertina virtuoso of the day; he was also a close friend of the Hoffman family and taught young Richard how to play the instrument. Furthermore, Regondi resided in London and provided for Hoffman in later years when he visited the British capital.

<sup>8</sup> One of Hoffman's earliest published compositions was Three Favorite Airs from W. Vincent Wallace's Opera *Maritana*, Arranged for the Concertina & Dedicated to Giulio Regondi, by R. Hoffman Andrews, Junr. (London: Wheatstone & Co., ca. 1845).

Although Hoffman's concertina playing captured initial attention of the press, by 1844, the Hoffman family events focused on the prodigy's abilities at the piano.<sup>9</sup> On 15 June the *Manchester Courier* announced a "Master Richard Hoffman Andrews Concert" that took place two days later. The whole family performed: two sisters sang, Edward played the violin, and all took part in eight-hand piano arrangements. Richard's solo selections for the evening were Liszt's *Hexaméron*, S. 392, followed by a fantasy from Rossini's *Mosè in Egitto* by Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871).<sup>10</sup> A "Concerto (Grand Piano-Forte)" by Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) also appeared earlier in the program. It is unclear who performed it; however, it was likely Hoffman, with his father taking up the orchestral part on a second piano. At this time, Liszt and Thalberg were still actively touring, their compositions representing the pinnacle of virtuosity, while the works of Weber held a prominent position in the concerto realm.<sup>11</sup> By including this music, Hoffman demonstrated unusual ability and potential, and by virtue of his repertoire, was associated with what the press frequently called the "new school of pianoforte playing."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> During these early years, Hoffman most frequently performed alongside his father and siblings. Organized by his father, we might suppose these Hoffman family musical events were among the most popular entertainments in Manchester during the first half of the nineteenth century. On 17 February 1844 the *Manchester Courier* and the *Manchester Times* advertised a "Master Richard Hoffman Andrews Concert," which took place three days later at the Athenæum Concert rooms. Hoffman performed a fantasy on Beethoven's "Serenade" on concertina, a Grand Concert Duet on Herz's "O dolce concerto" with one of his sisters at the second piano, a self-composed Fantasia for piano (unknown title), and he also accompanied a Hebrew Song, "Jephtha's Daughter," sung by one of his sisters. The song was accompanied with Erat's double-acted harp.

<sup>10</sup> Regarding this final work, the *Courier* simply printed the title: "Prayer Mosè in Egitto." The composition was undoubtedly Thalberg's *Fantaisie sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini*, Op. 33 (1839). By virtue of its history as the main piece Thalberg brought to the pianistic duel with Franz Liszt in 1837, the work is commonly cited as emblematic of the pianist's "three-handed" approach to piano virtuosity.

<sup>11</sup> The concerto was likely Weber's *Concertstück* in F Minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 79, which Hoffman performed frequently in later years.

<sup>12</sup> The British and American press often referred to pianists such as Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871), Adolf Henselt (1814-1889), Franz Liszt (1811-1886), and Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849) as the "new school," in an effort to set apart these virtuosos from earlier keyboardists such as Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1785-1849), Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837), and Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870).

Hoffman already demonstrated impressive performance ability; however, several other factors could have been vital to establishing a successful career. By this point, the pianist's credentials did not include an association or the direct endorsement of a celebrated teacher or virtuoso, which if procured, would provide valuable publicity. Evidence of compositional talent could also add to Hoffman's reputation, since during the first half of the nineteenth century, most top-rated pianists such as Liszt, Thalberg, Herz, and others, were also composers. Beyond local recognition in Manchester, performing on a national level would also seem a logical step towards expanding public knowledge of the pianist. For the next three years, Hoffman worked diligently in these areas.

Beyond the instruction of his father, the young pianist lacked the finishing touches of a world-class teacher or association with an internationally recognized superstar. Initially, Andrews intended to send his son to Leipzig, where Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) could put the final polish on his son's skills. When these plans did not materialize, Hoffman investigated possibilities closer to home. In 1844, the celebrated Austrian pianist, Leopold de Meyer (1816-1883) briefly settled in London, at which time Hoffman took lessons with the esteemed virtuoso. This period of study, however, was short, since de Meyer sailed for America on 27 September 1845. Regardless of the brevity of instruction and the impact these lessons actually had, association with the famed pianist provided invaluable publicity when the New York press extensively advertised this pedigree upon Hoffman's arrival two years later.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> See Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 75. Hoffman took several lessons with de Meyer, which were far from ideal: "I went to his rooms for instruction, and during the lessons he was generally occupied in being shaved, having his hair cut, or perhaps being measured by his tailor or shirt maker. I studied only his own compositions during these precious hours, which I divided with many of the London tradesmen, and I thought nothing of spending whole days in the achievement of the 'March d'Isly,' the 'Lucrezia Fantasia,' or the 'Marche Marocaine.'"

By 1844, advertisements for Andrews's New Musical Circulating Library appeared in the local press, suggesting that Hoffman's father had entered the retail music business.<sup>14</sup> Andrews bought, sold, rented and repaired pianos, and became a local retailer of sheet music, which proved convenient for his aspiring son. On 8 June the *Courier* (and on 22 June in the *Manchester Times*) announced the publication of Schubert's "Erl-King" arranged as a piano solo by Master Richard Hoffman Andrews.<sup>15</sup> Within two years, titles for a dozen other pieces appeared in local periodicals and in the front-matter of various other compositions. These adolescent works are perhaps of little significant; however, they nonetheless demonstrate his early compositional potential, while immediately contributing to Hoffman's prodigious reputation.

By age thirteen, Hoffman was an acclaimed local talent, but his abilities had yet to be recognized beyond Manchester. In May of 1845, two weeks prior to his fourteenth birthday, the press mentioned Hoffman's first and apparently only appearance before a London audience. This must have been his most important performance to date. Announcements in both the *Courier* and the *Times* followed reviews for a previous concert, which took place on 15 May. The *Times* advertised this concert would be: "His last public performance in Manchester, prior to his playing in London, at the Concert Rooms of the Society of British Musicians."<sup>16</sup> In reviewing the 15 May concert, the *Courier* stated: "Master Richard Hoffman Andrews' fantasies on the grand piano-forte were admirably given and loudly applauded," followed by a similar

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<sup>14</sup> Eventually, the business took on the name: "R. Andrews' London Piano Forte & Harp Bazaar."

<sup>15</sup> Almost fifty years later (1893) Hoffman published *Der Erlkönig Lied von Franz Schubert*, Op. 107. Since the transcription is a sparse amateur setting, one wonders if this later publication and Hoffman's youthful work are one in the same.

<sup>16</sup> *Manchester Times*, 10 May 1845.

endorsement for the upcoming London concert.<sup>17</sup> Since this performance was for the Society of British Musicians, it may have been a private event and thus, not reviewed. The London press apparently did not mention Hoffman's concert; however, the performance did take place, giving the pianist exposure in the capital city.

During the two and one-half years before Hoffman traveled to America, the press documents minimal activity. The *Courier* mentions only one concert of note, which took place on 11 July 1846. Hoffman was heard at the piano and with concertina, and Edward played violin, while their father also performed at the piano. Hoffman's selections for this event are significant, as they show a shift in emphasis, placing further attention on his abilities at the keyboard. The advertisement states the pianist was now programming works by de Meyer, Thalberg, and Liszt.<sup>18</sup> This suggests that his skills were developing to a level consistent with performance standards of the time, while an absence of other concert appearances also suggests that Hoffman may have spent these final years practicing and acquiring the repertoire he would need to make an impact in the United States.<sup>19</sup>

### **Destination: America**

When Hoffman arrived in New York, the impression left by two internationally-acclaimed pianists, de Meyer and Henri Herz (1803-1888) was significant and still reverberated throughout

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<sup>17</sup> *Manchester Courier*, 17 May 1845. In his memoirs, Hoffman briefly recalls this performance; however, he states that the performance took place at the Erard Rooms.

<sup>18</sup> *Manchester Courier*, 11 July 1846.

<sup>19</sup> During Hoffman's first year in America (1847-48), he performed two piano concertos: Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25 and the *Konzertstück* by Weber. His solo repertoire included Thalberg's *Grand Caprice sur des motifs de l'Opéra la Sonnambula*, Op. 46; Liszt's *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor*, S. 397; Émile Prudent's *Grand Fantaisie sur des motifs des Huguenots de Meyerbeer*, Op. 18; a caprice on national airs; and a fantasy on Rossini's *Semiramide* by Leopold de Meyer. The British press makes no mention of Hoffman performing with an orchestra while significant mention of larger piano repertoire only appeared by 1844. Hoffman may have spent these last two years (1845-47) learning much of this repertoire.



the city. These two keyboard wizards caused a sensation giving American audiences their first exposure to world-class virtuosity, while they established a benchmark by which other pianists, including Hoffman, would be measured. De Meyer arrived first, making his debut at the Park Theatre on 20 October 1845. The pianist immediately performed eight more times before expanding his tour to include multiple cities in New England and the South. De Meyer returned to New York the following season, giving a final concert on 3 November 1846 before engagements once again took him almost exclusively into the Southern states. Although his touring activities concluded in April 1847, the famous Austrian virtuoso's farewell concert took place on 29 May with the Philharmonic Society of Philadelphia, just over six months before Hoffman's debut.<sup>20</sup> De Meyer's success on the American scene also had significance with regard to Hoffman's appearance later that year. The press would quickly associate the young English pianist with the Austrian virtuoso by virtue of the few lessons in London, creating immediate and impressive publicity. Hoffman also took advantage of his timely arrival by strategically programming several of de Meyer's compositions.

A week before de Meyer's final New York performance, Herz arrived, giving the first of four concerts on 29 October 1846. Riding the wave of excitement generated by de Meyer, the Austrian-born Parisian virtuoso spent the next three and one-half years performing up and down the East Coast, New England, and the South, while making occasional returns to New York stages.<sup>21</sup> His final local concert during the 1847 season took place on 4 November, twelve days before Hoffman began his first series of performances. Herz resumed touring and was absent for over a year, only returning to New York briefly in late 1848. Whether strategically planned or,

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<sup>20</sup> De Meyer did return to the United States in 1867; however, by that time, numerous other virtuosos had come and gone, while other high-ranking pianists now resided in New York. This time his impact was less than significant.

<sup>21</sup> Herz ultimately made his way to California, becoming the first virtuoso pianist to perform in the west. His final concert in America took place in San Francisco on 20 April 1850.

more likely, a simple stroke of good fortune, Hoffman's arrival was well-timed. Now, the two most celebrated virtuosos ever heard in the city were gone, whetting audience's appetites for more and leaving the concert stage open to the new English pianist.

In the summer of 1847, Hoffman sailed from Liverpool to Boston on the Cunard steamship *Cambria*. Sometime in August, the sixteen-year-old pianist arrived in New England. The next day, Hoffman set out for New York, where he was expected by his uncle, George Andrews. Shortly thereafter, he made the acquaintance of the young Irish-born violinist Joseph Burke (1817-1902), who had recently concluded a tour with de Meyer and already established himself as an important talent.<sup>22</sup> The duo first appeared on 16 November 1847, at New York's Tabernacle for Burke's first concert of the season. The esteemed violinist drew public attention, while the young pupil of de Meyer, in his first American performance was the "great feature of the evening."<sup>23</sup>

To our mind he combines, to a great extent, in his playing, the delicate and beautiful fingering of Herz, with the energy and skill of his preceptor [de Meyer], while he is free from the gymnastic display which attends the performance of the latter. He was enthusiastically received, and is, we doubt not, destined to attain the highest rank in his profession.<sup>24</sup>

Richard Grant White, critic for the *Courier & Enquirer* was also impressed with the pianist: "but ere he was halfway through his first piece, Thalberg's *Sonnambula* [Variations], he had fully vindicated his right to appear before any audience in the world as a solo player, and the

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<sup>22</sup> See R. Allen Lott, *From Paris to Peoria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 48-51. According to Lott, the young violinist and de Meyer appeared together in New York (1845) and in Philadelphia during the spring of 1846. The duo was a success and Burke joined the virtuoso pianist for the remainder of his concerts in America, which concluded on 30 April 1847 in Cincinnati.

<sup>23</sup> *Spirit of the Times*, 20 November 1847, 464.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* See also "Mr. Burke's Concert," *The Harbinger*, 20 November 1847, 22: "To say that he now equals Herz or De Meyer, when physical power is a pre-requisite to compete with them, were absurd [*sic*], with his slight and apparently fragile person. But he already plays with astonishing execution, and, for one of his years, with an admirable conception of his subject."

astonishment was transferred from his youth to his accomplishments.”<sup>25</sup> Confirmed by unanimous critical praise, Hoffman’s first performance was a success. With admittance to a “swelled head” and “considerable self-conceit,” the pianist scheduled his own Grand Concert nine days later, at which he would be the headline performer.<sup>26</sup>

On Thanksgiving night, 25 November 1847, Hoffman’s Grand Concert marked his official New York debut. According to the pianist, an error in judgment regarding his choice of venue, led to only a mild success. Rather than performing at the Apollo Rooms, which was a smaller yet more ideal location, an ambitious Hoffman returned to the Tabernacle. The venue could easily accommodate two thousand people, but on that evening only a few hundred attended.<sup>27</sup> He again programmed the *Sonnambula* fantasy by Thalberg and de Meyer’s *Semiramide*, but also included *Grand Fantaisie sur des motifs des Huguenots de Meyerbeer*, Op. 18 by Émile Prudent (1817-1863) and *Grand Fantaisie et Variations sur La Cracovienne* by William Vincent Wallace (1812-1865). Hoffman also introduced Wheatstone’s Patent Concertina to New York audiences with a fantasy on themes from Bellini’s *Norma*. This time, critics were friendly but did not hesitate in citing the pianist’s adolescent flaws. Richard Grant White focused on the weakness of Hoffman’s third and fourth fingers and the overall unevenness of his technique.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, White, however delicately, could not avoid comparing the young pianist to de Meyer and Herz, who had recently performed in the city. The critic

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<sup>25</sup> *Courier & Enquirer*, 20 November 1847, cited in Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:453.

<sup>26</sup> Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 96.

<sup>27</sup> See *Ibid.*, 95, 99. According to the pianist, the lack of ticket sales for such a large (and likely more expensive) venue would have drained him financially; however, two wealthy patrons, Mr. Ogden Haggerty and Mr. Arthur T. Jones covered all his expenses. According to his memoirs, Hoffman referred to this concert as a “rather disastrous enterprise.”

<sup>28</sup> The critic was likely referring to the undeveloped outer part of Hoffman’s hands, which would have affected his ability to make melodic figurations in the treble stand out against thicker sonorities underneath.

concluded on a positive note: “There is every expectation that [he] will be among the best-if not the best-of all living pianists.”<sup>29</sup>

Hoffman’s eventful first weeks before American audiences culminated with a concerto performance only two days later. On 27 November 1847, the New York Philharmonic Society invited the pianist to play Mendelssohn’s Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25 on the first concert of their sixth season. Critics all seem to agree upon the brilliance of this performance, while the pianist declared it was “great encouragement at a time when I stood in need of it.”<sup>30</sup>

Henry Cood Watson, writer for the *Albion* (11 December 1847), praised the pianist’s spirit and power in the fast sections but was particularly impressed with his display of delicacy, refinement, and passion in the second movement. An observer for the *New York Express* warmly concluded his review with: “We were glad to see him there on this occasion, as it gave him an opportunity of stamping on the minds of some of our most discriminating judges an idea of his genius and talent.”<sup>31</sup> Critical remarks signaled initial success, which opened the door to an active career.

## **Pianist on the Road**

Hoffman spent the next two years touring with Burke. The duo performed throughout the East, up into Canada, down to Washington D. C., and as far west as Chicago, stopping in numerous

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<sup>29</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:453. See also the review by Charles A. Dana, music critic for the *New York Tribune* (26 November 1847), recounted by Hoffman, 97-99. Again, the review is very gracious, yet concludes: “America is good for the accomplished master, who seeks a substantial harvest for the early years of labor and preparation; but it is not so good for the forming student who needs the severe influence of great models, and a truly cultivated public.”

<sup>30</sup> Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 99.

<sup>31</sup> Watson’s review appears in Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:453. See also Hoffman, 99-100 for the complete review from the *New York Express*.

smaller towns in between.<sup>32</sup> The tour was not managed by a high-powered and influential impresario like Bernard Ullman (1817-1885) or Max Maretzek (1821-1897), who brought international superstars such as de Meyer, Herz, and Thalberg to America. Rather, the young musicians arranged and self-promoted their own concerts. Sometimes they would write in advance to friends, who then placed advertisements in the local newspapers. Often the duo arrived a day or two early to stir-up public attention. Touring was rigorous and profits were slim, especially in the smaller locales where they were, in Hoffman's words, "among the pioneers of art."<sup>33</sup>

Upon returning to New York, an opportunity presented itself, which according to Hoffman, "gave his career a start, which many years of ordinary concert-playing could never have done."<sup>34</sup> By February 1850, the American showman and businessman Phineas Taylor Barnum (1810-1891) had begun assembling and promoting the American concert tour of Jenny Lind (1820-1887), which became one of the most celebrated musical events of the century. For almost seven months the Barnum machine successfully marketed Lind's vocal virtuosity, saintly generosity, grace, and elegance in hopes of appealing to every segment of the American populace. Through Barnum's careful publicity, New York City was charged with anticipation for the singer. In preparation for an extensive tour, Burke was contracted as concertmaster, while the impresario's failure to secure the well-known Herz led to Hoffman being hired as

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<sup>32</sup> It is said that Hoffman was the first pianist of note heard in Chicago when he and Burke performed at the courthouse during their 1848 tour. See Josiah Seymour Currey, *Chicago: Its History and Its Builders, a Century of Marvelous Growth*, (Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1912), 3:246; and John Tasker Howard, *Our American Music*, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1930), 282.

<sup>33</sup>Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 102-04. Hoffman recalled a performance in Newburyport, Massachusetts, where after expenses, his share of the profits was less than a dollar. The pianist also discusses how difficult it could be to locate an instrument for performances in smaller towns. An account of their performance in Hamilton, Canada is charming as Hoffman explains how he and Burke had to roll a borrowed square-grand back to its owner's house immediately following the concert.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 110-11.

second member of a supporting keyboard duo.<sup>35</sup> Joining the German pianist, Julius Benedict (1804-1885), who would also serve as music director and conductor for the tour, Hoffman appeared frequently. His performances with the Lind troupe began with the singer's debut (11 September 1850) and concluded almost a year later on 4 June 1851.<sup>36</sup>

Although Hoffman was contracted for the upcoming tour, the extent of his actual involvement is unclear. Following September performances in New York, Boston and Philadelphia, the Lind troupe regrouped in late October. As preparations for the southern phase of the tour materialized, Barnum made a last-minute decision, cancelling Hoffman's engagement. *Saroni's Musical Times* brought the situation before the public with an article, "Trouble in the Barnum Camp." With litigation pending, the periodical cited Barnum's release of Hoffman as an attempt to cut cost in the most unprofessional way.<sup>37</sup> The heated situation was ultimately diffused when the pianist published a card in the *New York Herald* on 7 December, stating that Barnum had agreed to comply with the original terms of his contract. Apparently, the impresario also made clear to Hoffman that his services would likely be needed again in

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<sup>35</sup> English connections likely contributed to making this arrangement possible. According to Hoffman, his father was instrumental in convincing Sir George Smart (a vocal teacher in London who taught Hoffman's sister and at one point, gave Lind some lessons) to write a letter of introduction to Barnum's agent in London. This gesture, according to Hoffman, was sufficient in persuading Lind into negotiations. Shortly before Lind's departure for America, she sang in Manchester alongside Hoffman's sister, Helen Andrews. At the time of Hoffman's contract with Barnum, it was assumed that Helen would also sing with Lind throughout the American tour. This plan was cancelled. Burke, unlike Hoffman, remained with the Lind troupe, performing at every concert.

<sup>36</sup> It is likely that Hoffman was only a regular performer with the Lind troupe during its initial east-coast performances and when they returned to New York in 1851. The pianist appeared with Lind in New York, Boston, and likely in all other east-coast engagements until the group embarked upon the southern leg of their tour. The Lind troupe traveled throughout the South, down to Havana, up to New Orleans, and west to St. Louis. From Missouri, they returned to New York via Kentucky, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. For these engagements a group of ten orchestral regulars was hired with all other instrumental needs filled by local musicians from the cities in which concerts were scheduled.

<sup>37</sup> *Saroni's Musical Times*, 30 November 1850, 99.

February, as the troupe made its way to New Orleans; however, the citation makes no mention of the pianist's involvement throughout the rest of the tour.<sup>38</sup>

For almost a year, Hoffman was associated with the famously popular and successful Lind concerts, but this engagement was about to end. On 2 June 1851, two days before Hoffman's final appearance, the singer brought in another German pianist, Otto Goldschmidt (1829-1907). The new keyboardist was purportedly hired to replace Benedict, who soon departed for England.<sup>39</sup> Ultimately, Goldschmidt performed again on 6 June and henceforth was the only pianist for the remainder of the Swedish Nightingale's American concerts.<sup>40</sup> It is unclear why Hoffman initially left the Lind troupe. He may have only been contracted for the first year of touring. Likely, Hoffman's departure was in some way connected to the termination of the original performance agreement between Lind and Barnum, which the latter made know in the press on 3 June 1851.<sup>41</sup>

Regardless of the circumstances, Hoffman's touring activity with Lind ceased on 4 June 1851 and he quickly took other opportunities in New York City. Following a successful debut

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<sup>38</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 2:129-30; *New York Herald*, 7 December 1850; and W. Porter Ware and Thaddeus C. Lockhard Jr., *P. T. Barnum Presents Jenny Lind* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980). The authors reproduce several programs from the first leg of Lind's tour; Hoffman's name is not included. It is difficult to ascertain whether the pianist even joined the tour again before they returned to New York, where Hoffman did perform with Lind several more times.

<sup>39</sup> Ultimately, Benedict accepted a position as conductor at Her Majesty's Theater in London. Burke then took over as orchestral director for the remainder of Lind's tour.

<sup>40</sup> On 5 February 1852 Jenny Lind and Otto Goldschmidt were married. Much speculation surrounds her choice to include the new German pianist. Lawrence suggests the likelihood of long-standing romantic feelings between the two and the possibility that Lind was simply waiting for the right moment to "summon" the pianist from Germany (Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 2:154). Nonetheless, the presence of Goldschmidt marginalized the necessity of keeping Hoffman on board. Goldschmidt was not a celebrated virtuoso; however, he was capable of covering all pianistic tasks the tour demanded. Lind's concerts were restructured to accommodate one pianist instead of two, which also carried the financial benefit of employing one less musician.

<sup>41</sup> The terms of the original agreement between Lind and Barnum called for 150 concerts. The contract also included certain conditions that allowed for early termination at sixty or one hundred concerts. They agreed upon the latter, with the final New York concert given on 6 June 1851. Hoffman's last concert, two days earlier suggests that the terms of his employment coincided with the original agreement and final arrangements between Lind and Barnum.

season in 1847, his active schedule with Burke, and having occupied a high profile position with Lind, the pianist established a solid reputation. Recognized as an artist of merit, Hoffman was now in high demand for the contributions he could bring to other concert programs.

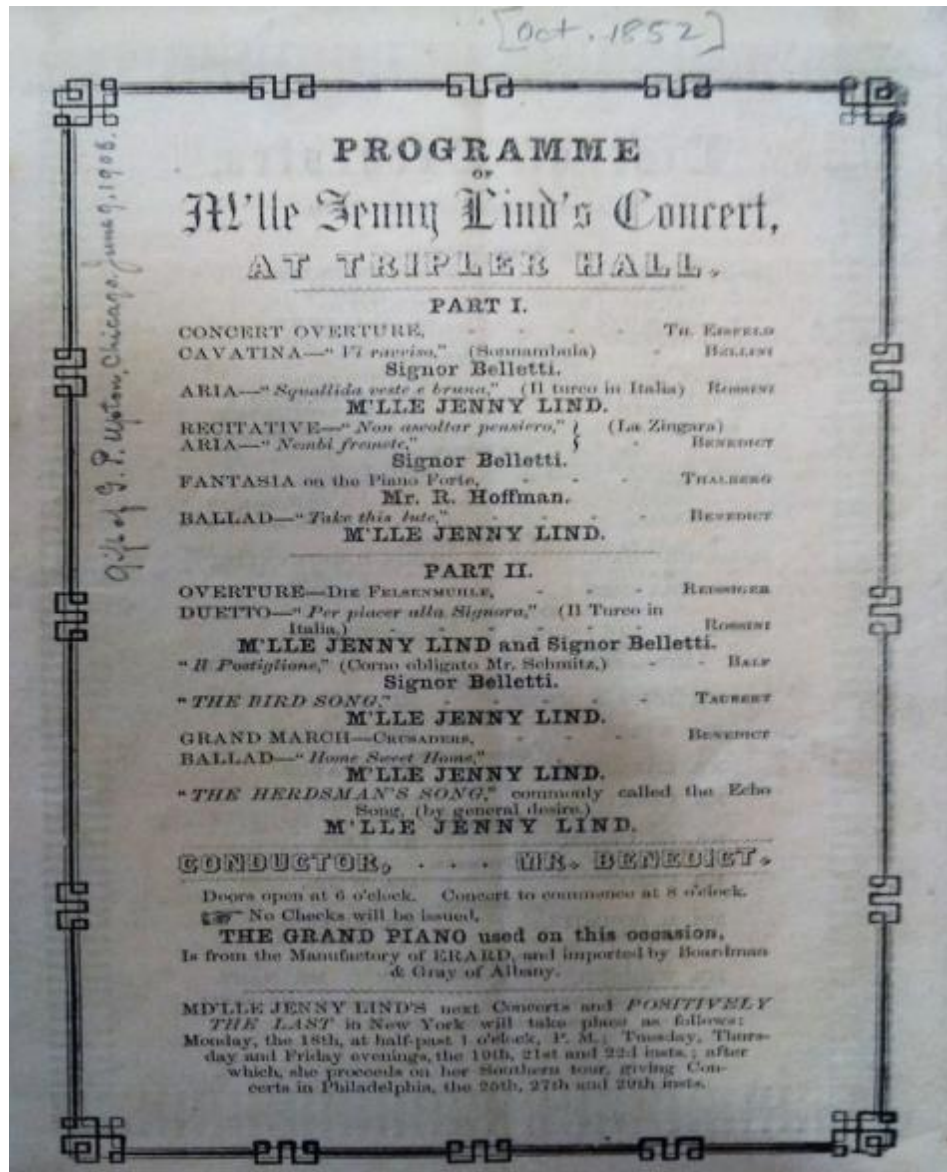


Figure 2.1: Jenny Lind Concert Program Tripler Hall, 1850  
(Courtesy Newberry Library, Chicago. Call # MMS Thomas)



## Resident Pianist in New York City

When Hoffman permanently settled into the New York scene, the most prominent pianists in the city were Henry Christian Timm (1811-1892), William A. King (1817?-1867), William Scharfenberg (1819-95), Ludwig Rakemann (1816-?), and Frederick Rakemann (1821-1884).<sup>42</sup>

This early wave of talent not only shaped America's initial impression of what a pianist should be; they also established a model that Hoffman followed. Since the notion of a solo recital was not yet part of the American musical landscape, most of the above pianists took on a more utilitarian role. During the first half of the nineteenth century, concerts in America resembled the long-established "miscellaneous" approach to programming, which was already giving way to more specialized performances in Europe.<sup>43</sup> Almost without exception, as an attempt to appeal to a vast audience, concerts in New York normally included pianists, singers, other instrumentalists, and often various chamber or ensemble scenarios for each event. Orchestral overtures and other works arranged for multiple keyboardists were also very popular and frequently performed. Thus, having two or more pianists involved within a single performance was not uncommon.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Louis Rakeman occasionally appears in the press; alternate spellings of the pianist's last name, such as "Rakeman" or "Rackeman" or "Rackemann" refer to the same person. The press consistently called the younger pianist "Frederick Rakemann" when referring to Ludwig's brother. Three other keyboardists should be mentioned. The French pianist, Denis-Germain Étienne (1781-1859), was one of the earliest established pianists in New York. By the time Hoffman arrived, Étienne was occasionally still active as a collaborative artist but was entering the final stages of his career. Daniel Schlesinger (1799-1839) was perhaps the first pianist to demonstrate serious virtuosity; however, early death in 1839 diminished his impact. The Polish pianist Kossowski was also important as the first documented performer of Liszt's music in America (1839), but seems to have left the city by the early 1840s.

<sup>43</sup> See William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>44</sup> One performance of note that illustrates the popularity of works for multiple pianists and underscores the necessity of employing multiple keyboardists occurred on 22 May 1850. The event showcased James Pirsson's "American Mammoth." The unusual instrument was a double grand piano constructed with opposing keyboards, which facilitated duo performance. Hoffman, Scharfenberg, Timm, and William King performed eight-hand arrangements from Spohr's *Jessonda*, Auber's *Le Cheval de bronze*, and Beethoven's *Prometheus* and *Egmont Overtures*.

A typical concert generally included a pianist who performed a solo work or two, and then the keyboardist might collaborate with other singers or instrumentalists on the same program. Often, one pianist appeared as a featured artist, playing only solo repertoire, while another keyboardist was on hand for other performance duties. When a pianist was the headliner, more places for solo selections normally fleshed out programs.

Knowing that Hoffman functioned within this variety-concert dynamic sheds light on his own performance strategy. During his most active years, the pianist normally filled the position of featured artist on concert programs. Although Hoffman did present a Grand Concert for his debut season and co-headlined during the tours with Burke, he never established himself as the main attraction, in the way Gottschalk would and the Rakemann brothers briefly did before him. Hoffman also did not take on the regular role of supporting pianist or collaborative artist like Timm and Scharfenberg. Rather, his position as featured soloist meant he typically appeared once or was heard twice during a concert—once in each half of the program in support of the headliner.

Hoffman's most active years were between 1850 and 1866. His performances included featured appearances with numerous headliners, including violinists, Eduard Reményi (1830-1898), Henry Appy (1826-1903), and Paul Jullien (1841-60?); vocalists included Emma G. Bostwick (1813-1894) and Mme. Biscaccianti (1824-96), among others. Often these musicians were making debuts or return performances and, likely, desired the assistance of a reputable pianist to attract audiences and command positive reviews in the press.<sup>45</sup> The pianist's tours with

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<sup>45</sup> Eduard Reményi arrived in New York in 1850, a political exile from Hungary. His first New York performance was on 9 January 1850. For this event, Hoffman played the *Sonnambula* fantasia by Thalberg. *Saroni's Musical Times* (12 January 1850, 181) suggests that Hoffman played the Thalberg better than ever before. Eduard Reményi quickly received critical attention as a violinist of rare ability. The violinist made a small tour of the east coast and

Burke may have appealed to instrumentalists, while his association with Lind likely enticed singers. He also played the big repertoire of de Meyer and Thalberg, which could easily raise levels of excitement with any audience. Finally, appearing with Lind in the most high-profile concerts the city had ever experienced, allowed the pianist a certain cachet that few locals in his position could boast. Frequent performances with numerous singers and other soloists probably contributed favorably to his reputation and sustained Hoffman financially; however, forthcoming engagements with fellow pianists were more impressive affairs.

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appeared in New York several more times, choosing other pianists for the rest of these performances (Timm and Scharfenberg). The Dutch violinist, Henry Appy gave his official New York debut on 23 October 1851 (the program was apparently repeated six days later) and Hoffman was the showcased pianist. Appy seems to have also toured with Jenny Lind. Paul Jullien, the French violin prodigy, gave his debut in New York on 2 July 1852 with Hoffman engaged as an assisting artist. Jullien stayed in America for six years, from age 12 to 18, giving his final farewell concert in March 1858. Hoffman appeared at least four times with the violinist, but did not tour with the prodigy. Jullien performed the east coast circuit and also toured Cuba and South America. The Boston-born soprano Else Biscaccianti, started a career early and was last heard in New York in 1849 before going to England where she reportedly enjoyed great success. She returned to New York, heralded as an American *prima donna*. Hoffman was apparently the pianist for her two performances in New York. Shortly thereafter, the singer left to seek fortune in the West (San Francisco). She was the first great musical star to visit San Francisco (1852) and never returned to New York. The American singer, Mrs. Emma Bostwick, was born in Philadelphia and began her professional career at the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston in 1828. She performed regularly in New York City until 1857 when she moved to Chicago where she became active in church music. She returned to New York in 1866 and stayed until 1870, when she moved to Morristown, New Jersey, where she died on 31 December 1894. The most visible American musician to appear in 1851, Bostwick was at the time the music director at the Church of the Ascension, at Fifth Avenue and Tenth Street. She made her return to the concert stage on 20 January 1851. After this very successful performance, Bostwick was encouraged to establish a series of *soirées musicales*. Many of New York's best musicians were brought in to flesh out her programs. Hoffman performed on at least three of the events, including the premiere performance. Throughout the next few years, Bostwick continued her regular *soirées*, making use of various other pianists. Hoffman does not seem to have performed with the singer during these later efforts; however, during *c.* August-October 1852, Hoffman seems to have toured with Bostwick.

Association with celebrated artists like Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869) had a positive influence on Hoffman's reputation and further underscored his significant position in New York. On 10 January 1853, the New Orleans-born pianist returned, fresh from studies and very successful European tours. Gottschalk quickly arranged his debut, which took place on 11 February followed by a second performance eight days later. His supporting cast included several other performers: the soprano Madame Rosa de Vries (1828-1889), the tenor John Frazer, and the American flutist John A. Kyle (ca. 1810-1870), who was accompanied by George Frederick Bristow (1825-1898) at the piano. Along with solo selections, Gottschalk programmed two works that required the assistance of another keyboardist. Hoffman joined forces in the performance of Gottschalk's *Grand Fantaisie Triomphale* on Verdi's *Jérusalem*, Op. 84 and a "Waltz di Bravura" (now lost). These performances signaled the start of an enduring friendship and collaborative relationship, which helped keep Hoffman in the spotlight.

Almost a decade later, after returning from Cuba, Gottschalk again called upon Hoffman and the two gave five more performances in February 1862. For these concerts, they performed *Ojos Criollos*, Op. 37 for four hands and Gottschalk's *Overture de Guillaume Tell Grande Morceau de Concert* for two pianos. It is likely a testament to Hoffman's abilities that Gottschalk immediately secured the pianist for his homecoming concerts, furthermore calling Hoffman, "one of the rare brotherhood of the piano, who has always given me proofs of good fellowship."<sup>46</sup> The two pianists shared the stage at least thirteen times between 1853 and 1862.

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<sup>46</sup> Louis Moreau Gottschalk, *Notes of a Pianist*, ed. Jeanne Behred (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), 44. The remainder of Gottschalk's quotation on Hoffman is noteworthy: "Of all the pianists who have visited the United States, there is not one whose talent merits more esteem than that of Richard Hoffman. A conscientious artist, a perfect musician, a distinguished and modest man, he has arrived legitimately and without effort at the high position that he occupies. His taste and the moderation of his judgment have preserved him from coteries. He is neither the chief nor the instrument of any clique. He admires and understands the great dead (I mean the classics), but he does not conclude from this that he must kill the living who possess talent. He does not believe that in admiring

Another example demonstrates Hoffman's abilities and his relationship with fellow pianists. In 1865, the English virtuoso James M. Wehli (1831-1887) arrived in America. His local concerts provided Hoffman another high-profile opportunity as a featured performer.<sup>47</sup> Largely unknown to American audiences, Wehli was a long-time established performer in Europe. Critics immediately heralded the virtuoso as the greatest technician the United States had ever seen. Reviews after his New York debut describe Wehli's unusual abilities: "He is a master of the instrument . . . His wrist passages are tremendous. He plays octaves, sixths and thirds with a facility which has never been known here. His left hand (and he played two pieces for the left hand alone) is something that must astonish the most experienced concert-goers."<sup>48</sup> Critics suggested Wehli's technique was so impressive that he was immediately dubbed, "the pianist with two right hands."<sup>49</sup> For a year, the virtuoso caused a sensation in America until 1866, when he returned to England.<sup>50</sup> In January, Wehli announced a series of "farewell" concerts for which, he called upon Hoffman to assist. The two pianists performed together three times, commanding very impressive reviews:

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Schumann he is compelled to believe that Rossini is a fool. He comprehends Bach but does not shrug his shoulders on hearing the name Bellini. In conclusion, he is an artist and a *gentleman*." Gottschalk also demonstrated his appreciation of Hoffman in the dedication of one of his most popular pieces, *Le Banjo, Grotesque Fantaisie, Esquisse Américaine*, Op. 15. Also of interest, Hoffman was a pall-bearer at Gottschalk's funeral on 3 October 1870.

<sup>47</sup> In 1875, Hoffman did appear again with another visiting pianist of note. On 27 December (with a repetition on 30 December), he joined Hans von Bülow for the performance of concertos for two, three, and four keyboards by J. S. Bach. The concertos for three and four performers also included one of Hoffman's students, Mrs. C. B. Foote, and one of Bülow's former America students, Miss Marion Brown.

<sup>48</sup> *New York Times*, 14 February 1865. The critic's use of the phrase "wrist passages are tremendous" likely refers to Wehli's ability to execute rapidly-repeated notes in various combinations.

<sup>49</sup> See *New-York Daily Tribune*, 14 February 1865: "We speak of him now as an executant, as one who has a very beautiful and perfect *mechanique*, as one whose fingers have been educated so faithfully and so admirably that he is said to have two right hands – although in his case, if we wish to compliment him, we should say he has two left hands, so perfect is his left hand mechanism. His style is essentially that of the Thalberg School, not only his playing but his composition."

<sup>50</sup> Wehli made two more American tours in 1870 and in 1872.

Thalberg's *Norma* duet for two pianos, by Richard Hoffman and Wehli, was as perfect an example of piano-forte playing as the world can offer at this day. Their fingers seemed guided by one mind; in tone and expression, in delicacy, accuracy and brilliancy, and in all the fine artistic shadings which give the crowning finish to a performance, they left no perfection to be desired or imagined.<sup>51</sup>

This review demonstrates the typical praise showered upon Wehli but also gives insight into Hoffman's abilities. Hoffman is not mentioned as a subordinate or supporting player, rather the tone of the article suggests an artist on par with the one of the greatest technicians of the time.

### **Hoffman's Repertoire**

The solo piano works Hoffman chose to perform are typical of the period and effectively demonstrate the kind of music that was popular in America during the central decades of the nineteenth century. From his debut concert in 1847 until 1863, Hoffman's performance repertoire included roughly thirteen operatic fantasies or arrangements by composers such as Auguste Bertini (1780-1856), Liszt, Prudent, Alfred Jaëll (1832-1882), and himself, with works by Thalberg and de Meyer representing a majority. He also programmed a similar number of character pieces by Chopin, Gottschalk, Stephen Heller (1813-1888), Henry Litolff (1818-1891), and Wallace, while occasionally performing his own compositions. This list does not include, however, the fantasies arranged for two pianos performed with Benedict during the Lind tours and pieces programmed by Gottschalk and Wehli (compositions by Gottschalk and Thalberg). At the time, piano music by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and others, that in later decades would be

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<sup>51</sup> "Wehli's Matinee at Wallack's Theater," *Tribune*, 27 April 1866, 4.

considered canonic, were seldom heard from American concert stages; solo pieces by these composers are completely absent from Hoffman's early concert programs.<sup>52</sup>

In total, Hoffman seems to have performed approximately thirty different solo works in public over a fifteen-year period. A small handful, mainly the operatic fantasies, seemed to be the core of his repertoire.<sup>53</sup> The frequency with which Hoffman repeated select pieces sheds light on current performance practice and illustrates a common strategy toward concertizing in general. Not only did pianists repeat the same compositions in various performances throughout an entire season, they often presented the same pieces over and over for successive years. Thus, pianists at the time, including Hoffman, seemed to limit the music they performed in public to the pieces they knew successfully demonstrate showmanship, while also appealing to popular musical tastes. For example, between 1847 and 1851 Hoffman's performances featured Thalberg's *Grande Caprice sur des motifs de La Sonnambula*, Op. 46. He programmed the work each successive year, usually giving several performances throughout the season. The same is true of Liszt's *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor*, S. 397 and Hoffman's own *Fantasia on National Airs*, which he also programmed regularly between 1848 and 1854.<sup>54</sup> By contrast, he performed a limited number of character pieces, seldom repeating them. Since Hoffman only appeared once or twice on most programs, he only required a few works for any given performance, and for that matter, an entire season. In this sense, his repertoire was functional.

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<sup>52</sup> Toward the end of the century and much later in his career, Hoffman made infrequent appearances that included pieces by Bach, Schumann, and others.

<sup>53</sup> The popularity of the operatic fantasy in New York cannot be overstated. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, pieces in this category remained the foundation of most programs by virtuosos who visited and/or stayed in New York.

<sup>54</sup> The New York press cites Hoffman performing two works titled "Fantasia on National Airs," one attributed to de Meyer and the other composed by himself. The work by de Meyer is a set of variations on "Hail Columbia" and "Yankee Doodle," published as *Airs Nationaux Américains*, while the piece by Hoffman is called Variations on "Hail Columbia" and "God Save the Queen." This work remains unpublished and survives as a signed holograph at the New York Public Library (OCLC 78646634).

Performance practices established later in the nineteenth century would suggest the quantity of Hoffman's repertoire was limited; however, considering the circumstances, this approach makes sense. Furthermore, although the repetitive nature of Hoffman's programs might seem extreme today, it was typical of the time.<sup>55</sup>

### **Hoffman and the Concerto**

From his first years in America, concerto engagements occupied a prominent position in Hoffman's performance activity, and remained so throughout his entire career. In 1842, the New York Philharmonic Society was founded. Hoffman first played with the Society on 27 November 1847, when they programmed Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25. With this performance, Hoffman became the second pianist in the history of the Society to appear as soloist.<sup>56</sup> The success of this initial engagement led to a forty-five year relationship with the Society and nineteen other scheduled appearances.<sup>57</sup> Throughout his career, Hoffman was showcased in concertos by Beethoven, Chopin, Hummel, Mendelssohn, Mozart, and Weber, as well as contemporary works by the English composer William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875) and the Moravian-born Ignaz Brüll (1846-1907). His playing generally received positive remarks in the press; however, one performance during the 1853-54 season proved critical to Hoffman's reputation.

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<sup>55</sup> Understanding this dynamic further underscores the huge significance of Anton Rubinstein, who arrived in America in 1872. The Russian pianist came equipped with a massive repertoire, which included many more canonic works than operatic fantasies. Rubinstein's concerts frequently lasted for hours and by contrast, made very limited use of supporting artists.

<sup>56</sup> At the time, Henry Christian Timm (1811-1892) was the only other pianist to appear with the orchestra. He performed works for piano and orchestra during the Society's first five seasons (see Chapter One). Interestingly, Timm played the same Mendelssohn concerto twice during the previous season.

<sup>57</sup> Including public rehearsals, Hoffman appeared with the Society over thirty times. Only one other pianist during the nineteenth century played as frequently with the Society. Sebastian Bach Mills also gave twenty scheduled performances with the orchestra, not including public rehearsals.



On 4 March 1854, Hoffman appeared with the New York Philharmonic Society on the third concert of their twelfth season, playing the second and third movements of Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 11 to rave reviews.<sup>58</sup> With this performance, critics were unanimously convinced of the pianist's artistic merits, beyond the superficial virtuosity of his previous programs. Henry C. Watson, now writing for *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, recognized a new level of artistic expression, stating that the pianist's *rubato* was perfect, great, and idiomatic of Chopin's playing.<sup>59</sup> The writer for the *Albion* also remarked: "Mr. Hoffman truly astonished us by the progress he has made since we last heard him. Always a fine and brilliant, but an impetuous, dashing, not over-careful pianist, he seems to have suddenly corrected all the faults which heretofore might critically have been found in him."<sup>60</sup> The *Tribune* declared that Hoffman "brought down the house."<sup>61</sup> His triumphant performance and artistic progress likely were contributing factors to the pianist receiving honorary membership to the New York Philharmonic Society later that year.

Although the Chopin concerto proved a breakthrough event, Hoffman's reputation as a soloist rested largely on his performance of works by Mendelssohn and Mozart.<sup>62</sup> On 14 February 1885, Hoffman gave his final concerto appearance with the New York Philharmonic

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<sup>58</sup> This performance was announced as the New York premiere of this concerto; however, the pianist Henry Christian Timm gave the same concerto almost a decade earlier on 21 November 1846.

<sup>59</sup> Brodsky Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 2:491.

<sup>60</sup> *The Albion*, 11 March 1854. Burkhardt concludes his review with a sharp reprimand of Hoffman's encore, which was apparently a piece by Gottschalk (likely an "Introduction and Grand Waltz di Bravura"), calling the work out of place. For an encore, the critic expected a repeat of the piece that was "demanded." This incident sheds light on the practice of giving encores during the nineteenth century. If the audience recalled an artist, it was common practice for the performer to repeat that piece. Today, of course, and later in the century, we expect the performer to offer an additional work.

<sup>61</sup> "Concert of the Philharmonic Society," *Tribune*, 7 March 1854, 6.

<sup>62</sup> Of Hoffman's twenty scheduled performances with the New York Philharmonic Society, eleven were in works by Mozart or Mendelssohn.

Society.<sup>63</sup> By this point in the century, another generation of pianists had come. Although the younger virtuosos boasted bigger works by Liszt, Brahms, Rubinstein, and Tchaikovsky, the Society still saw merit in calling upon Hoffman to perform Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor, K. 466: "The gentleman has for years enjoyed a most enviable reputation among musicians of the city, one of the testimonials of which is the honorary membership he holds in the Philharmonic Society. This membership is our musical peerage and nobody upholds it with greater dignity than Mr. Hoffman."<sup>64</sup> The writer for the *Tribune* sang the merits of Mozart, contrasting the work with the "showy and sonorous concertos of to-day;" furthermore, declaring the necessity for "the most brilliant mechanical skill imaginable" and "a delicate appreciation of the spirit of Mozart's age." The review concludes with glowing approval of Hoffman's performance:

Mr. Hoffman in a marked degree possesses all these requirements. He reproduced the body of the concerto with the greatest fidelity to all its beauties and filled it with the delightful spirituality which Mozart intended the body to carry. The technical exposition was finished and clear; the poetical sentiment had lovely health and over all the interpretation rested the ease and grace which told of a perfect co-operation of all the elements of good pianoforte playing. The playing called out most hearty and deserved enthusiasm.<sup>65</sup>

This review not only demonstrates the high level of ability Hoffman displayed in concerto performance, it also gives some indication to the position he achieved in the ranks of New York's musicians. The sentimental tone of the introductory remarks underscores the virtuoso's popularity and brings attention to the reputation Hoffman secured through a lifetime of work.

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<sup>63</sup> On 21 April 1892, Hoffman made his last appearance with the New York Philharmonic Society. For this occasion, he played the piano part in Hummel's Piano Quintet in D Minor, Op. 74. On 9 November 1897 Hoffman performed his war-horse: Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in G minor under Anton Seidl at Chickering Hall. This event marks the final concerto performance of Hoffman's career.

<sup>64</sup> "New-York Philharmonic Society," *Tribune*, 15 February 1885, 7.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

## The Collaborative Pianist

Throughout his career, chamber music also held a significant place in Hoffman's professional activities. The periods between 1852 to 1858 and 1882 to 1889 demonstrate his most active periods in this arena. Although not new to New York audiences, chamber music was normally only included, to some degree, as part of the "miscellaneous" concerts that were typical throughout the much of the nineteenth century. At this time, events dedicated entirely to chamber genres were not common.<sup>66</sup> By the 1840s several attempts to organize chamber music series became important endeavors. In 1843, the violinist Ureli Corelli Hill (1802-1875), one of the founding members of the New York Philharmonic Society, their first president and conductor, established the earliest chamber music series in New York City. The effort was short-lived, but paved the way to more significant developments.

In 1850, the German musician/journalist Hermann S. Saroni (1824-1900) spearheaded the most significant effort to date, which ultimately became one of the most successful and long-running chamber music series in New York during nineteenth-century. Saroni had recently purchased *The American Musical Times* from fellow literary figure, Henry C. Watson. After renaming the weekly periodical *Saroni's Musical Times*, he soon established the "chamber music soirées" as a promotional vehicle for his journal. With purchase of a subscription, Saroni gave his customers the option to buy tickets to the highly publicized events, while early-bird subscribers received free admittance. The series ran for almost a decade, with many of the city's

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<sup>66</sup> By 1816-17 the first concerts showcasing chamber music appeared in the "Academic and Didactical" concerts. In 1839, the pianist simply known as Étienne seems to have been one of the earliest pioneers in the genre. On 19 May 1841, Louis Rakemann appeared in concert with the German violinist, Leopold Herwig (1815?-1845). The two artists performed a Beethoven sonata for violin and piano. This was likely the first time such a work was presented in New York. At the same concert, all four movements of Beethoven's Quintet in E-Flat Major, Op. 16 (1796) were also performed. Again, on 6 December 1841 Rakemann included a Beethoven trio in his final appearance with assisting artists, John Nagel (violin) and George Knoop (cello). Scenarios like this became common, with artists programming a chamber work or two that employed the supporting members of the evening's concert.

best and most prominent artists engaged. Beginning in 1852, Hoffman made regular appearances as soloist and collaborator until the soirées final season in 1858.

With the dissolution of Saroni's "soirées," a period of twenty-two years passed before Hoffman's re-emergence as a chamber player on a formal level.<sup>67</sup> In 1878, directed by the German-born violinist, Richard Arnold (1845-1918) and assisted by fellow New York Philharmonic Society members, the New York Philharmonic Club announced their establishment.<sup>68</sup> The Club organized its first concert series in 1880 and became one of the most significant local chamber ensembles since the Mason/Bergmann (later, Mason/Thomas) group that first performed some twenty-five years prior.<sup>69</sup> The writer for the *New York Times* called the Club, "without a doubt, one of the best that has ever been organized in this City."<sup>70</sup> During the 1880 season, Hoffman performed with the ensemble at its second concert and continued making frequent appearances until 1889. Through his relationship with the Philharmonic Club, the press affirmed Hoffman's abilities as an important chamber player: "The temptation is strong to say that he stands easily at the head of New York's pianists in ensemble playing; his individual work is always finished, and his conception of the duties of one who co-operates with others in the

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<sup>67</sup> See Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 23. According to the pianist's wife, by the early 1870's, the "miscellaneous" approach to concert giving was falling out of fashion. Recitals and chamber music were becoming much more appreciated. She documents that Hoffman organized a subscription series that ran for three seasons at the Chickering piano establishment, which predated Chickering Hall. The venue included a small concert hall, which according to Mrs. Hoffman, was ideal for chamber music. The concerts were small and social events, too "informal to enter the lists of public criticism." Beginning in the late 1860s, Hoffman also became very active with the organization of Trio clubs, which met in private houses.

<sup>68</sup> Richard Arnold served as concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic Society from 1885-1909. He was a director of the Society from 1879-95 and vice-president from 1895-1918. Following studies with Ferdinand David in Leipzig, Arnold came to the United States and took the position of first violinist in the Theodore Thomas Orchestra.

<sup>69</sup> Little has been written about the New York Philharmonic Club. What can be learned comes from the New York periodicals of the day. The ensemble was founded in late 1879 by members of the New York Philharmonic Society and seems to have continued performing, with various changes in personnel until the final years of the nineteenth century (1897?).

<sup>70</sup> "The Philharmonic Club," *Times*, 10 November 1880, 5.

production of a work worthy of all praise.”<sup>71</sup> Previously, other pianists such as Timm, Scharfenberg, and later, William Mason (1829-1908) may have held more visible positions, but Hoffman was also a highly respected collaborative artist and among the first keyboardists in New York who regularly performed chamber music.

### **Teaching in New York**

Throughout most of his life, Hoffman dedicated a large portion of his musical energy to pedagogy. It is difficult to determine precisely when the pianist adjusted his professional activities, to place more emphasis upon teaching; however, the shift seems to have occurred late in the 1860s. By 1870, a noticeable decline in Hoffman’s public performance record coincides with his marriage to Fidelia Marshall Lamson (1848-1921) of Ipswich, Massachusetts.<sup>72</sup> At this time, Hoffman’s concert activity dwindled, with the pianist making fewer and fewer public appearances. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s annual performances with the New York Philharmonic Society, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Mendelssohn Glee Club, various chamber music events, and occasional benefit concerts would bring the pianist out of seclusion only two or three times each season. Thus, for the next thirty years, efforts previously poured into performance were now concentrated mainly on teaching and composing.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> “Musical Matters,” *Tribune*, 11 March 1885, 4.

<sup>72</sup> The couple were married on 29 March 1869. Hoffman was thirty-seven, while Fidelia was twenty-one years old.

<sup>73</sup> According to Mrs. Hoffman, this shift began much earlier at the termination of the Lind concerts in 1851; however, Hoffman’s performance record supports the notion that he remained more active throughout the 1860s. Mrs. Hoffman also suggests that Richard did embrace married life and afterwards, seldom took engagements that might take the pianist from the tranquil family life he enjoyed. In total, the Hoffmans had six children; the youngest daughter was the sculptress, Malvina Hoffman (1885-1966). With the responsibility of a fairly large family, it is likely that Hoffman chose the more practical aspects of teaching and composing, allowing for more time at home.

By all accounts, Hoffman seems to have been a highly-regarded piano teacher. Some sources suggest that only Mason and Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898), two other leading pedagogues in New York at the time, shared his elite status.<sup>74</sup> In his memoirs, Hoffman makes minimal reference to his own pedagogical activities.<sup>75</sup> The pianist does, however, recall meeting and befriending the pianist, Ernest Lubeck (1829-1876). While visiting London, Hoffman heard the pianist perform and later traveled to Lubeck's home, in Paris. Hoffman states that he sent some students who desired studies abroad to Lubeck.<sup>76</sup> These must have been among his earliest pupils, since Lubeck died in 1876. Beyond this, the pianist remains silent, making no mention of specific students or further pedagogical connections. Although Hoffman apparently sent pupils abroad, it seems none went on to establish important careers. Throughout the last quarter of nineteenth century, many of America's most promising young pianists such as Homer Newton Bartlett (1845-1920), Julie Rivé- King (1854-1937), and William H. Sherwood (1854-1911), to name a few, sought instruction from teachers like Mills and Mason, who were associated with Liszt. Ultimately, as with many pedagogues, the majority of Hoffman's clients were probably dilettantes from the families of New York's social elite.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> See E. Douglas Bomberger, ed., *Brainard's Biographies of American Musicians* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), 147-49. The biography of "Richard Hoffman" originally appeared as entry No. 27 in January 1880.

<sup>75</sup> Hoffman did, however, contribute an informative article on pedagogy: "How to Stimulate Through and Imagination in a Pupil" to the publication *The Music of the Modern World* by Fanny Morris and Anton Seidl (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1895). The article was republished in Hoffman's autobiography.

<sup>76</sup> Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 137-38.

<sup>77</sup> As mentioned above, Mrs. Charles B. Foote was an amateur pianist and a student of Hoffman whose name is remembered because of her involvement with the testimonial concert in 1897. Hoffman's *Gondolier's Song Second Barcarolle*, Op. 104 is dedicated to Mrs. C. B. Foote.

## Hoffman the Composer

Throughout most of his professional career, Hoffman was an active composer. Works published in the United States include 130 opus numbers, while several appeared without cataloguing references. Adolescent works survive, along with a few earlier compositions that were apparently available to the British market and seem to have never been published in America. Hoffman's output is mainly character pieces, transcriptions and fantasies for solo piano, a handful of songs, and religious service music.<sup>78</sup>

In terms of keyboard logistics, Hoffman's music reflects the influence of de Meyer, Thalberg, and Chopin, while his harmonic language generally remains within the style of composers from the first half of the nineteenth century. Hoffman's works demonstrate a preference for clear textures coupled with fluent and elegant technique as opposed to bravura display. Frequently, lyrical melodies are surrounded with delicate filigree-work, recalling the compositional approach of Thalberg. His writing demonstrates a noted understanding of the keyboard idiom with a focus decidedly toward ease of execution. In general, Hoffman's music is accessible to the amateur pianist, while possessing enough quality, charm, and technical demand to be successful on the concert stage. When placed beside similar works by contemporaries such

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<sup>78</sup> A complete catalogue of Hoffman's published works does not exist. Back matter printed with *Beyond Reverie*, Op. 86, published by Wm. A. Pond of New York supplies a partial catalogue that includes Op. 1 through Op. 81, while similar title pages, etc. from works published by J. H. Schroeder of New York gives titles ranging from Op. 59 through Op. 130. Publications by Ditson, Schirmer, and others account for various pieces as well. Occasionally, discrepancies exist between publishers, especially with the composer's later works. For example, *La Naide, Reverie* was published by Schmidt (1893), while the song, "Crossing the Bar" was also published by Ditson (1893), both as Op. 112. A similar scenario occurs with Op. 106 and Op. 130. There are also several works that do not include opus numbers (see Appendix Two). From the nine published examples of service music, *Te Deum*, Op. 62 was "composed for the choir of St. Thomas Church," while the title page for "Christ Our Passover" Easter Anthem, Op. 69 indicates: "Composed for the Choir of Trinity Church New-York." The other service music may have been written for these same churches. Toward the end of the nineteenth century works by a German composer of the same name also appear. This "Hoffman's" music was published in Germany with contradictory opus numbers, suggesting a different composer. Furthermore, another German composer whose name is spelled "Richard Hofmann" (1844-1918) was also published in the latter part of the nineteenth century. These are not to be confused with Richard Hoffman (1831-1909).

as Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, and even Gottschalk, this music, however, is limited in terms of technical or harmonic innovation. This may explain why Hoffman's pieces never received regular concert performances and why they are not included in the volumes of canonic piano literature today.<sup>79</sup> During their time, however, Hoffman's pieces were popular in the parlor, likely where the composer intended for them to be performed.

By age thirteen, Hoffman's compositions were available to the British market. His adolescent works are typical of the time: variations and fantasies on popular tunes and operatic sources, polkas, quadrilles, and other dance forms. Characteristic traits among these early pieces are florid scale-passages, extended octave sections, and cadenzas written over a simple chordal framework in the left hand. Frequently, the young composer incorporates doubled thirds and interlocking octaves and chords, as well as a variety of three-handed textures. Some of Hoffman's early music, especially the variation sets and operatic arrangements, are ambitious concert pieces designed to display the pianist's technical abilities. Among these, two works stand out as most notable: the Grand Fantasia on *Maritana* by William Vincent Wallace and the Andante and Twelve Variations on "Carnival de Venice," which presents an intriguing case.

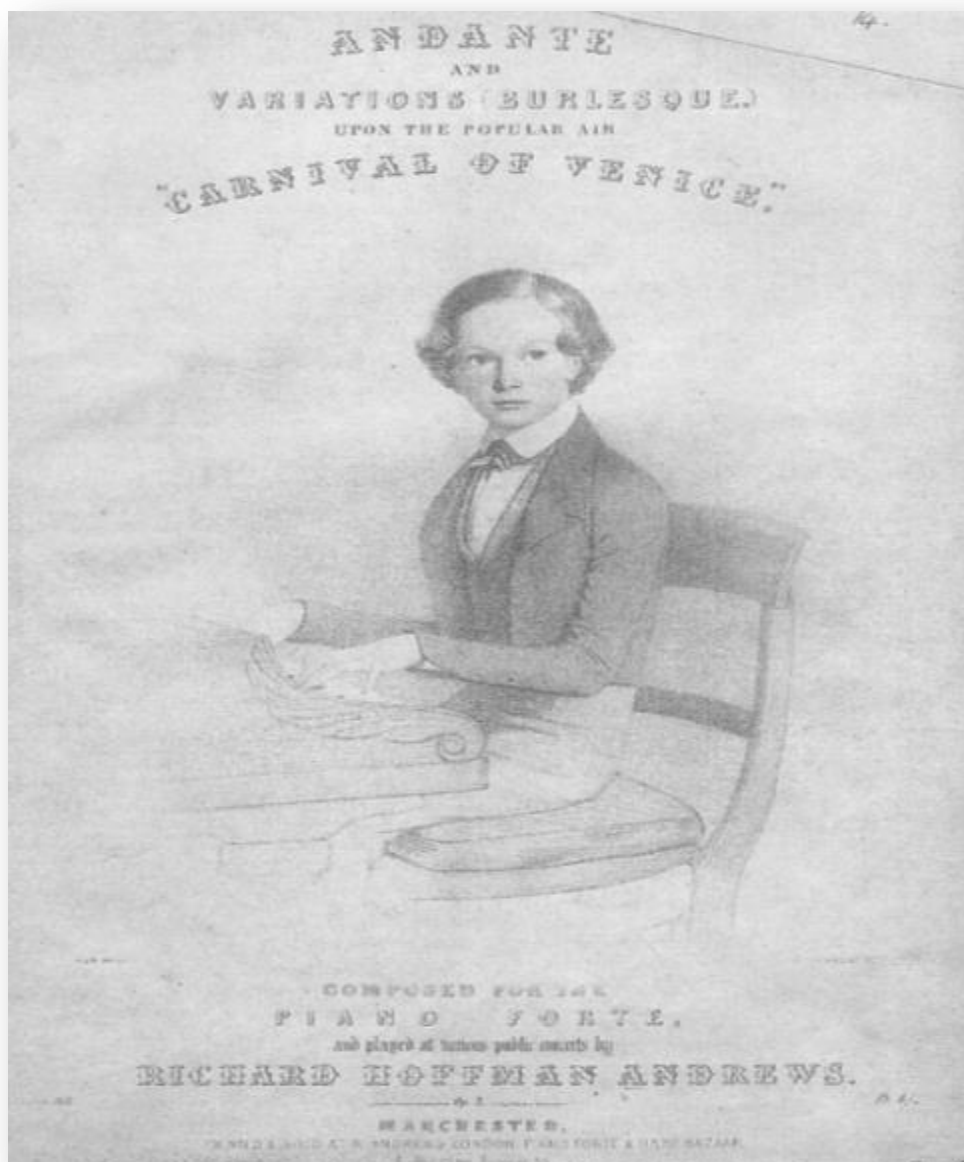
On 15 March 1845, the *Manchester Courier* ran advertisement for Hoffman's "Carnival de Venice," which the pianist began using in concert two months earlier. The ambitious work was described as a collection of variations imitating the "peculiar styles" of the celebrated

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<sup>79</sup> Although Hoffman's early reputation in America rested largely on his playing of operatic fantasies by Thalberg and de Meyer, the pianist occasionally performed his own compositions to critical acclaim. Following a concert on 11 February 1858 the *Tribune* gave a generous review of Hoffman's performance of two of his own compositions: "His two pieces; one 'Reverie,' Twilight very beautiful, and another, 'Marche Funebre' . . . so good, that produced in Europe before writers for the piano have increased as at present, would have established the reputation of the composer . . . As it came from young Hoffman's elegant fingers, it is worthy of any composer in Europe." (*Tribune*, 13 February 1858). See also E. Douglas Bomberger, *A Tidal Wave of Encouragement: American Composers' Concerts in the Gilded Age* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2002), 5. The Russian pianist Annette Essipoff (1851-1914), a student of Leschetizky (she later married her teacher), made her American tour in 1876-77. Toward the end of the tour she presented two all-American recitals in New York (5 May) and in Boston (12 May). Her programs included works by Hoffman, Mills, Mason, and Gottschalk.



virtuosi of the day, and purchase of the sheet music also came complete with a lithographic likeness of the composer.<sup>80</sup>



**Figure 2.2: Lithograph portrait of Hoffman from the title page of “Carnival of Venice”<sup>81</sup>**

<sup>80</sup> *Manchester Courier*, 15 March 1845.

The work begins with a 35-measure introduction that incorporates an elaborate display of octaves, filigree passages, a chromatic scale in contrary motion spanning the entire keyboard, and moments of consecutive double thirds, concluding with a downward sweep of interlocking octaves, which sets up the introduction of the popular folk tune. With each following statement, Hoffman embellishes the original with technical figurations designed to emulate the showmanship of currently popular performers.

With the first variation, “A la Paganini,” Hoffman recalls the acrobatic virtuosity of the famous violinist with a right-hand figuration that expands outwards with descending leaps while retaining a static “g” in the upper voice. The effect is similar to Liszt’s *La Campanella*, which also mimics the “little bell” from Paganini’s Violin Concerto No. 2 in B Minor.

**Example 2.1: Richard Hoffman, *Carnival de Venice*, “A la Paganini,” mm. 51-58**

(A la Paganini.)

<sup>81</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Andante and Variations (Burlesque) Upon the Popular Air “Carnival of Venice”* (Manchester: R. Andrews Piano Forte & Harp Bazaar, 1845). Title page and all musical examples reproduced with permission from The British Library Board (Shelfmark: Music Collections h. 722.II. (14.))

After variations recalling Theodor Döhler (1814-1856), Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst (1812-1865), Thalberg, and the pianist Eduard Buddeus, Hoffman imitates the delicate virtuosity of Herz, which frequently showcases melodies embellished by filigree figurations and the composer's preference for leaping right-hand techniques. In this sixth variation, the theme is stated in octaves accompanied by sixty-fourth note turn figurations. Ascending octaves lead to descending thirds and sixths, concluding with a scintillating descending scale and a three-octave leap in the right hand:

**Example 2.2: Richard Hoffman, *Carnival de Venice*, “A la Herz,” mm. 100-07**

The image displays three systems of musical notation for the piece "A la Herz" from Richard Hoffman's *Carnival de Venice*. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the instruction "(A la Herz.)". The second system includes markings for "Accel?" (accelerando), "Scherzando", and a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. The third system features an "8va" (octave) marking, a "loco" instruction, and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic with the instruction "marcatiss." (marked). The notation includes complex right-hand passages with filigree and leaping techniques, as well as accompaniment in the left hand.

Hoffman then presents “Carnival” in the guise of Camillo Sivori (1815-1894), Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870, Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1785-1849), Carl Czerny (1791-1857), and de Meyer, concluding with a final variation and coda: “A la Liszt.” The bravura variation is

constructed of large chords and leaps in both hands that recall the final variation (*Allegro deciso*) from Liszt's *Transcendental Étude No. 4 in D Minor, Mazeppa*. Hoffman concludes with a coda of interlocking octaves, played "Prestissimo e fortissimo" and the piece ends with a bang:

**Example 2.3: Richard Hoffman, *Carnival de Venice*, "A la Liszt" and coda, mm. 167-81**

12

Bravura.

*ff* (A la Liszt.)

*ritardo?*

*loco.*

*ff*

*Longa Pausa.*

*fff*

*fff*

*Prestissimo e fortissimo.*

*fff* *cres* -----

*fff* *cres* -----

*cen* *do.*

*cen* *do.*

*cen* *do.*

*ff* *furibondo.* *ff*

*ff* *furibondo.* *ff*

*cres.* *ritard?*

*cres.* *ritard?*

*fff* *ten:* *fff* *ten:*

Andante and Twelve Variations on “Carnival de Venice” is significant, because it demonstrates the fourteen-year old Hoffman’s abilities not only as a pianist but also as a composer, and suggests a desire to be associated with the highest levels of virtuosity.<sup>82</sup>

Throughout the 1850s and 1860s, while Hoffman’s reputation as a pianist was established in America, he also became locally recognized as a composer for the instrument as well. His earliest pieces from this period seem to have been published in the British market first, then within a few years, appearing in the United States. In several cases, works appeared in slightly different arrangements and under different titles when they were finally offered to American publishers. For example, Hoffman’s *Three Studies* likely first appeared on the British market during the 1850s. The set includes: 1. “Impetuoso Impromptu;” 2. “Sunrise O’er the Sea;” and 3. “Etude (left hand).” The last piece is clearly ascribed to Edward Hoffman; the first piece is by “Richard Hoffman,” while the second is composed by “R. Hoffman.” This may raise questions about who actually composed the first two pieces, since the composer’s father often published under the same names, especially, “R. Hoffman.” Upon comparison with Hoffman’s later American publications, however, the answer becomes clear. “Impetuoso Impromptu” is simply the introduction, the A section, and coda from a larger work entitled *Impromptu*, Op. 6 (pub. 1867). “Sunrise O’er the Sea” is the introduction only from a much later work: *Tarantella*, Op.

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<sup>82</sup> The cover pages of these early scores carry the inscription: “Printed and Sold at R. Andrews’ London Piano Forte & Harp Bazaar” in Manchester. Many also include the insignia of London distributor, Cramer, Beale & Chappell (among others). Whether the Manchester firm or the London music supplier actually published the music is unclear. Discerning Hoffman’s earliest compositions from pieces written by his father can also be a tricky matter. Hoffman’s father was extremely prolific, with piano pieces, songs, and arrangements numbering in the hundreds. Studying advertisements in the British press suggests that Hoffman published several pieces by the age of fifteen. Generally, Hoffman’s compositions were marketed under the name, “Master Richard Hoffman Andrews” or “R. Hoffman Andrews,” (sometimes attaching “junr.” or “fils” to the moniker), while works by his father are generally labeled as composed by “R. Andrews” or “Richard Hoffman Andrews (the elder).” A distinction is not always consistent, especially in modern catalogues and databases. Occasionally compilers are not aware of two things: first, these are two different composers; second, and more commonly, some of Hoffman’s earliest compositions are erroneously catalogued as works by his father. Since he used the name “Richard Hoffman” after arriving in America and published under the same name further confuses the issue, especially with the earlier works.

35 (pub. 1872?). These two works are earlier fragments that the composer later fleshed out before presenting them to American publishing houses.

Several other early pieces were published in variant forms and under several different titles. For example, *Le Soir Reverie* appeared in England as an abridged version of *By the Sad Sea Waves*, Op. 9 (pub. 1864). This shortened edition was also available to the British market under the title *Twilight Second Reverie*. Again, it seems Hoffman initially published the work in London, later expanding the piece for the American market. *Premier Polka de Salon* was published without opus number by Wm. Vanderbeek in 1853, and is among Hoffman's earliest publications in America; however, the piece also appeared in London under the title *Eugénie Polka Elegant de Salon*, Op. 20, with a completely different introduction and coda.<sup>83</sup> *Twilight Reverie* (No. 1) later appeared in the United States as *Twilight, Le Crépuscule*, Op. 3. A handful of works were published in England, without opus numbers or dates, and seem to have never made it to press in America. Included in this category are *Les Adieux Schottische Elegante*, *Les Soirées Dansantes*, *The Bell Polka Brillante*, *The Sea Nymph*, *Scene Du Ballet*, and *Danse Des Negres Bagatelle-Burlesque*.<sup>84</sup> Although these works are early efforts, they demonstrate a style more consistent with Hoffman's later American publications rather than with pieces composed during his prodigy years (1844-46), which were also not published in the United States.

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<sup>83</sup> The inclusion of this opus number is problematic. Prior to his American publications, only two of Hoffman's compositions include this sort of cataloguing information. The first example published with an opus number is *Andante and Twelve Variations on "Carnival de Venice"* (1845), which was assigned Op. 3 in some advertisements. Catalogue numbers do not appear regularly on Hoffman's compositions until his American publications. For the U.S. market, *La Gazelle, Andante Élégante* represents Hoffman's Op.1 (1857-58?). Incidentally, this work also appeared in England in 1854, without the introduction and coda included in subsequent American editions and without an opus number.

<sup>84</sup> Several of these compositions appear in collections published in London such as "Richard Hoffman's Drawing Room Album." Included with these pieces is *Dixiana Caprice*, Op. 23 (1861), a work almost certainly conceived of after his arrival in America. That this piece is found in the company of several other compositions not published in the United States suggests Hoffman was publishing works simultaneously in London and America. This complicates efforts toward confirming exact dates of the composition for certain works.

Character pieces fill a prominent place in Hoffman's *oeuvre*, accounting for approximately one-third of his published output. The popularity of the piano as the centerpiece of the cultured American parlor and the ever-increasing number of citizens with a modicum of musical education led to a healthy demand for piano music. On the whole, Hoffman's works serve very efficiently. They are seldom overly taxing on the pianist and demonstrate an apparent desire to produce numbers that would appeal to the appetite and ability of the amateur consumer base. Not surprisingly, the character pieces often resemble smaller works by well-known composers such as Chopin, Mendelssohn, or Schubert. He also tends to favor traditional forms such as ternary or rondo, and with only one exception, Hoffman never took on the developmental approach of sonata-allegro form.<sup>85</sup>

In the tradition of many nineteenth-century composers, Hoffman's character pieces frequently incorporate currently popular dance forms. Examples include several polkas, marches, waltzes, a tarantella, and a gavotte. An intriguing example is *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, which illustrates Hoffman's style and demonstrates the influence of Chopin in similar works. *Valse d'Adieu* is Hoffman's first published waltz, which appeared in 1866 and is dedicated to "Miss Lamson."<sup>86</sup> The waltz begins with an eighteen-bar introduction in C-sharp minor, setting a very solemn mood:

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<sup>85</sup> *Sonate Bouffe*, Op. 33 (1869) accounts for Hoffman's only published example using sonata-allegro form. The composer curiously draws upon "The Lancers," "Three Blind Mice," and "Pop Goes the Weasel" as his thematic material. One wonders whether this satirical work was a mid-nineteenth century jab at the Classical establishment of the past. See *New York Herald*, 27 September 1869, 2: "It can only be considered as a curiosity, and serves no purpose in which any intelligent musician would take any interest . . . Mr. Hoffman might be better employed than attending to such things."

<sup>86</sup> "Miss Lamson" is likely Fidelia Marshall Lamson, whom Hoffman married three years later.



Example 2.4: Hoffman, *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, introduction, mm. 1-18<sup>87</sup>

As was common with waltzes and other dance forms, *Valse d'Adieu* then becomes sectional, introducing a new melody every sixteen measures for a total of eight themes. Alternating between elegant and playful tunes in D-flat major and G-flat major, and then B major and A major, the composer gives the impression of remembering joyful times together.

With theme one, Hoffman introduces a graceful and lilting waltz in the key of D-flat major. The simple and lyrical qualities of the music are effective and reminiscent of similar works such as Chopin's *Waltz in A-Flat Major*, Op. 69, No. 1, which also bears the title: "*Valse de l'adieu*":

<sup>87</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12 (New York: Beer & Schirmer, 1866).

**Example 2.5: Hoffman, *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, theme one, mm. 19-34**

The musical score for Example 2.5 is a piano arrangement of the first theme from Hoffman's *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, measures 19-34. It is in 3/4 time and marked "Tempo di Valse." and "p". The score is written for piano with a treble and bass clef. The melody in the right hand consists of descending three-note fragments, eighth-eighth-quarter, which effectively shift the rhythmic stress from beat one to the second and third beats accordingly. The result is a hemiola effect as the melody now takes on the feel of duple meter.

At m. 51, Hoffman introduces the first theme in G-flat major. The section is clever in its rhythmic devices. Here, the composer presents a melody comprised of descending three-note fragments, eighth-eighth-quarter, which effectively shift the rhythmic stress from beat one to the second and third beats accordingly. The result is a hemiola effect as the melody now takes on the feel of duple meter:

**Example 2.6: Hoffman, *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, theme two, mm. 51-56**

The musical score for Example 2.6 is a piano arrangement of the second theme from Hoffman's *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, measures 51-56. It is in 3/4 time and marked "brillante.". The score is written for piano with a treble and bass clef. The melody in the right hand is characterized by a dotted-half note tied across the bar line, which creates a cross-rhythmic effect.

With theme three, Hoffman returns to D-flat major and introduces a new melody. This time, the waltz is again lilting and graceful, yet by tying the dotted-half note across the bar line, Hoffman retains some of the cross-rhythmic effect presented in theme two:

**Example 2.7: Hoffman, *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, theme three, mm. 68-74**

A musical score for piano, measures 68-74. The key signature is G-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The right hand plays a melodic line with a series of eighth notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is present at the beginning of the first measure.

The second theme in G-flat major enters at m. 83. Here, Hoffman introduces a motive comprised of running eighth-notes that appears first in the accompaniment, but is quickly taken up as an integral part of the right-hand melody. As the eighth notes are passed between the hands every two measures, the suggestion of a duet becomes clear:

**Example 2.8: Hoffman, *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, theme four, mm. 82-93**

A musical score for piano, measures 82-93. The key signature is B major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The right hand plays a melodic line with a series of eighth notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present in the second measure of the first system. The score is divided into two systems, with the second system starting at measure 88.

With the next section, Hoffman introduces the first theme in B major. The duet suggested in the previous section is now unified as the melody is doubled in consecutive thirds and sixths:

**Example 2.9: Hoffman, *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, theme five, mm. 125-132**



Following another theme in B major and a new one in A major, the work comes to a climax with the ninth section. Now, Hoffman introduces a new waltz in C-sharp minor, creating a painfully stark contrast with the previously stated material in major keys. This simple and cold theme seems to suggest the actual moment of farewell:

**Example 2.10: Hoffman, *Valse d'Adieu*, Op. 12, theme eight, mm. 169-182**



The waltz concludes with a reprisal of the two previously stated D-flat themes and ends with the original introductory material in C-sharp minor, suggesting a return to the initial melancholy state of mind. This pensive or reminiscent quality pervades Hoffman's character pieces, as the composer often suggests with the titles themselves.

Several of Hoffman's character pieces may be categorized as lyrical and carry descriptive titles designed to stimulate the imaginations of performer and listener alike. Subjects such as twilight, midnight, and moonlight frequently adorn his title pages, while sub-titles include key words that allude to some sort of reminiscence, suggesting a pensive or thoughtful mindset. Thus, a title such as *Twilight Le Crépuscule (Rêverie)*, Op. 3 is typical of Hoffman and the nineteenth-century romantic preference in general. Seldom technically challenging, Hoffman's character pieces generally focus more on the imagery suggested by the title as opposed to any sort of virtuosic display.

Between 1874 and 1899, Hoffman composed five character pieces evoking the musical styles of the West Indies. Each one is appropriately given a Spanish title and labeled "Cuban Dance." This group includes: *Cascarilla Cuban Dance*, Op. 43; *Chi-ci Pipi Nini Cuban Dance*, Op. 51; *Chiquita Third Cuban Dance*, Op. 53; *Maricita Cuban Dance*, Op. 85; and *La Manita Cuban Dance No. 5*, Op. 130. With these pieces, Hoffman employs rondo form, calling for three distinct themes, introduction, and coda. Not surprisingly, each work is stylized, incorporating Latin-sounding melodies, peppered with syncopations, and habanera rhythms in the left-hand accompaniments. The following excerpts from *Chi-Ci Pipi Nini*, Op. 51 demonstrate these characteristics:

Example 2.11: Hoffman, *Chi-Ci Pipi Nini*, Op. 51, A section, mm. 32-41<sup>88</sup>

Elegante.

The musical score for Example 2.11 consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system shows measures 32-35, and the second system shows measures 36-41. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked 'Elegante.' The dynamics include piano (*p*) and a ritardando (*Rit.*). The score features numerous triplets in both hands, with some marked with a '3' above the notes. There are also some asterisks (\*) in the second system, possibly indicating specific performance instructions or editorial markings.

Another example from *Chi-Ci Pipi Nini* demonstrates Hoffman's tendency to build excitement and infuse more technically demanding material in the C section of his Cuban dances. Here, the composer introduces consecutive double sixths and thirds, which lead to the climax of the piece:

Example 2.12: Hoffman, *Chi-Ci Pipi Nini*, Op. 51, C section, mm. 85-95

The musical score for Example 2.12 consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system shows measures 85-90, and the second system shows measures 91-95. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The dynamics include fortissimo (*sf*) and fortissimo (*ff*). The score features consecutive double sixths and thirds in the right hand, leading to a climax. There are also some asterisks (\*) in the second system, possibly indicating specific performance instructions or editorial markings.

<sup>88</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Chi-Ci-Pipi-Nini Cuban Dance*, Op. 51 (Boston: Oliver Ditson & Co., 1872).

The beginning measures of the coda are another instance where Hoffman incorporates a standard duple-meter habanera rhythm in the accompaniment: dotted- rhythm (or the equivalent) on beat one followed by straight eighth-notes on beat two:

**Example 2.13: Hoffman, *Chi-Ci Pipi Nini*, Op. 51, coda, mm. 141-150**

The image shows a musical score for the coda of 'Chi-Ci Pipi Nini' by Hoffman, measures 141-150. The score is in G major and 2/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a habanera rhythm in the bass line. The right hand has a melodic line with grace notes. Dynamics include pp and meno mosso.

It is difficult to determine what extra-musical influences such as cultural trends, fashions, or socio-political conditions may have encouraged Hoffman to experiment with Latin style; however, the growing number of Cuban inhabitants in New York during the last quarter of the nineteenth century may have provided inspiration. By the 1870s, growing political unrest forced many Cubans to leave their homeland, with large numbers relocating to Manhattan.<sup>89</sup> Perhaps Hoffman observed the musical styles of the West Indies as immigrants naturally would have brought these traditions to New York. Undoubtedly, he was also familiar with Gottschalk's success in this arena with works such as *Suis Moi! Caprice*, Op. 45; *Souvenir de Porto Rico*, Op.

<sup>89</sup> See Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Chapter 28: "Splendid Little War" discusses the political climate that encouraged the immigration of Cubans and Puerto Ricans to New York between 1870 and 1898.

31; *Ojos Criollos*, Op. 37; and *El Cocoyé Grand Caprice Cubain*, Op. 80 to name a few, and Hoffman may have been inspired by his colleague's efforts. Nonetheless, his *Cuban Dances* demonstrate further interest by another composer in America dabbling with Latin American styles before the end of the nineteenth century.

Occasionally, Hoffman presents the ever-popular character piece that can only be described as a perpetual motion study. These examples are not etudes, but definitely focus on finger dexterity and technique rather than the evocation of extra-musical imagery alone. Several works fit into this category, specifically: *Les Clochettes Impromptu Brillante*, Op. 50 (1866); *Impromptu in C Minor*, Op. 6 (1867); and *Spinning Song*, Op. 100 (1889). These three pieces immediately recall similar works by other nineteenth-century composers such as Mendelssohn, Chopin, and Schubert, while demonstrating Hoffman's dashing and dramatic writing style.<sup>90</sup>

*Impromptu in C Minor* is among Hoffman's most successful perpetual motion pieces. The piece begins with sixteen measures marked "Allegro impetuoso," which establish the home key and provide a dramatic introduction. Quick cadenzas on the mediant, E-flat (m. 7) and on the dominant, G (m. 9) establish tonal ambiguity, while the descending harmonic minor scale coupled with delayed resolution of the introduction's final cadence create an effective dramatic moment before launching into this perpetual motion extravaganza. The following "Presto" incorporates rondo form and relies on agility and fleet fingers to navigate constant sixteenth-note figurations. The overall effect is reminiscent of pieces by Chopin, such as the Prelude in B-flat Minor, Op. 28 No. 16 or the *Fantaisie-Impromptu*, Op. 66.

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<sup>90</sup> Hoffman's transcription, *Moto Perpetuo by Paganini*, Op. 102 is a formidable challenge and perhaps the most demanding perpetual motion piece in his catalog.



Example 2.14: Hoffman, *Impromptu* Op. 6, introduction and A section, mm. 1-34<sup>91</sup>

**I M P R O M P T U .**

COMPOSED BY  
RICHARD HOFFMAN.

*Allegro impetuoso.*

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system (mm. 1-4) begins with a treble clef and a bass clef. The tempo is marked *Allegro impetuoso.* and the dynamic is *ff*. The second system (mm. 5-8) continues the melodic and harmonic development. The third system (mm. 9-12) is marked *accel:* and *sf*. The fourth system (mm. 13-16) is marked *Presto.* and *p*. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

<sup>91</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Impromptu*, Op. 6 (New York: Wm. Hall & Son, 1867).

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The image displays five systems of musical notation for piano. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The notation includes various musical elements:

- System 1:** Features a complex, rapid melodic line in the treble clef with many slurs and ties. The bass clef has a simpler accompaniment with slurs.
- System 2:** Similar to the first system, with intricate melodic patterns in the treble and accompaniment in the bass.
- System 3:** Continues the complex melodic development in the treble, with the bass providing harmonic support.
- System 4:** Shows a change in texture, with the treble clef having more spaced-out notes and the bass clef featuring more active, rhythmic patterns.
- System 5:** The final system on the page, featuring a mix of melodic lines and chords in both staves, with dynamic markings like 'p' and 'sf'.

Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) and *sf* (sforzando). There are also accents (^) and slurs throughout the piece. The page number '3' is located in the top right corner.

Throughout the 1850s and 60s, the popularity of opera fantasies and similar arrangements demanded that composers be prolific in this genre. One of Hoffman's earliest publications in America, *Here's To You Harry Clay: Grande Fantaisie*, a noteworthy example.<sup>92</sup> The work demonstrates one of Hoffman's few overtly virtuosic compositions, in a similar vein to the adolescent Andante and Twelve Variations on "Carnival de Venice" from half a decade earlier. The showpiece is also among Hoffman's final efforts before curtailing this sort of writing. Perhaps more significant, the piece is one of only two instances where the composer touches on political or patriotic subjects.<sup>93</sup>

By the 1840's clubs and associations whose members supported the policies and legacy of Henry Clay (1777-1852) and his illustrious political career were being established in New York City. Beginning in April of 1846, the Clay Festival Association organized annual tributes to the birth of the "Statesman of the West." The celebrations naturally included a large banquet, followed by numerous toasts and speeches, sonnets, odes, and songs honoring the famous Kentucky politician and thrice presidential candidate.<sup>94</sup> Occasionally, the Association engaged prominent New York musicians as special guest contributors.

On 12 April 1850, commemorating Clay's seventy-third year, Hoffman was invited to perform for the Association.<sup>95</sup> Composed expressly for this event, the pianist played his

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<sup>92</sup> This work seems to be Hoffman's first actual American publication, by Firth, Pond & Co., 1850 (without opus number).

<sup>93</sup> The other piece that falls into this category is the Variations on "Hail Columbia" and "God Save the Queen" (unpublished). A signed holograph in ink resides in the New York Public Library, OCLC 78646634. Hoffman programmed this work frequently throughout the 1850s.

<sup>94</sup> Typically, the song "Here's to You Harry Clay" followed the first toast. Certain patriotic songs included "Yankee Doodle," "Hail Columbia," and "Hail to the Chief." Other favorite and appropriate songs such as "Home Sweet Home," "Auld Lang Syne," "The Kentucky Gentleman," and "Oft in the Stilly Night" were also interjected between speeches and toasts. Often, "Let the Toast be Dear Woman" closed the evening. Toasts to the memory of George Washington, John C. Calhoun, and Daniel Webster were also integral moments of the ceremony.

<sup>95</sup> It is difficult to determine why the Association chose Hoffman for this event. Although Hoffman was among the most celebrated virtuosos in New York, he was not an American citizen. Also, the pianist's political views are

virtuosic *Here's To You Harry Clay: Grande Fantaisie*, based on two appropriate tunes: "Here's to You Harry Clay" and "Viva Le Clay." Not unlike contemporaneous operatic fantasies, the work exhibits some of the composer's most ambitious technical writing. Designed to grab the attention of his illustrious audience, Hoffman begins with an elaborate 50-measure introduction, incorporating a variety of virtuosic techniques such as trills, repeated notes, filigree passage-work, large leaps, octaves, and thickly-voiced chords often spanning a tenth. Concluding the pianistic fireworks with a short cadenza, Hoffman introduces "Here's to You Harry Clay" in grand style:

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unknown. Regardless of the circumstances, this seems to be the only instance when the Association showcased a pianist for the festival. The publicity Hoffman gained through this event was perhaps rather significant, as the event placed the pianist directly before some of New York's most powerful and influential citizens.

Example 2.15: Hoffman, *Here's To You Harry Clay Grande Fantaisie*, "Here's To You Harry Clay," mm. 50-68<sup>96</sup>

HERE'S TO YOU HARRY CLAY!

*Maestoso Grandioso.*

Hoffman follows with a variation. An interesting moment occurs with the second half of the tune, where Hoffman adorns the original with a variety of chromatic scales:

<sup>96</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Here's to You Harry Clay Grande Fantaisie* (New York: Firth, Pond & Co., 1850).

Example 2.16: Hoffman, *Here's to You Harry Clay Grande Fantaisie*, “Here's To You Harry Clay,” variation one, mm. 75-84:

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece, specifically a variation of "Here's to You Harry Clay" from Hoffman's *Grande Fantaisie*. The score is written for piano and consists of five systems of music, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system includes dynamic markings *f*, *p*, and *f*, and the tempo marking *Meno mosso.*. The second system features a *p* dynamic. The third system includes a *p* dynamic. The fourth system includes a *rescendo.* marking. The fifth system includes a *rit.* marking. The score is marked with *8va* (octave) markings and includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and accidentals. The page number 644 is visible at the bottom center.

Following an extended octave section, Hoffman introduces “Vive Le Clay.” The new tune is only stated once before another variation on “Here’s to You Harry Clay” in repeated

notes enters. Beyond the quick quintuplets in the right hand, the widely-spaced left hand figures pose a particular challenge for the performer:

**Example 2.17: Hoffman, *Here's to You Harry Clay Grande Fantaisie*, “Vive Le Clay” and “Here's to You Harry Clay,” variation two, mm. 102-18:**

V I V E L E C L A Y !

For the finale, Hoffman begins with another variation on “Here’s to You Harry Clay.” In this case, the composer uses one of his standard techniques: voicing the theme in octaves and fleshing out the harmonies with chordal notes in the same hand, while the left hand presents

chords that interlock rhythmically with rests or gaps in the theme, creating a perpetual motion effect:

**Example 2.18: Hoffman, *Here's to You Harry Clay Grande Fantaisie*, finale and “Here's To You Harry Clay,” variation three, mm. 131-36:**

**F I N A L E .**

Allegro.

The musical score consists of two systems of music. The first system begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and includes a 'gza' (grace notes) marking. The second system includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and a 'cres.' (crescendo) marking. The score is written for piano with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

Before wrapping up, Hoffman wanders through various chromatic harmonies but never actually establishes a new key. Using the same compositional technique as above, the composer suddenly adds another patriotic touch by cleverly incorporating “Yankee Doodle” at m. 151, beginning with “c” on beat one:



**Example 2.19: Hoffman, *Here's to You Harry Clay Grande Fantaisie*, finale and “Yankee Doodle,” mm. 149-54:**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system features a treble clef staff with a complex, dense texture of chords and a bass clef staff with a more rhythmic accompaniment. Performance markings include 'gva' (glissando) at the beginning, 'rit.' (ritardando) in the middle, and 'pp Staccato.' (pianissimo, staccato) towards the end of the first system. The second system continues the piece with similar dense chordal textures and rhythmic patterns.

Concluding with a bang-up *finale*, *Here's To You Harry Clay Grande Fantaisie* was one of Hoffman's early American showpieces. His use of thickly-voiced and widely-spaced chords, coupled with extensive octave sections and driving force, suggests the influence of his former teacher. The work could easily have been written by de Meyer, as it bears many trademarks of the virtuoso's style.

During his virtuoso years, Hoffman remained a prolific arranger, crafting solo piano renditions of songs, oratorios, and orchestral works, while most of these efforts focused primarily on operatic sources.<sup>97</sup> Following the tradition set by other pianists such as Herz, de Meyer, Thalberg, and Liszt, the composer published several works based on the popular operas of the day. Since the pianist's own performance repertoire centered mainly on showpieces by other

<sup>97</sup> Between 1854 (when Op.1 appeared in London) and 1874 (with Op. 40) over half of Hoffman's compositions were operatic fantasies or transcriptions of other works such as oratorios. There is a noticeable change, however, with Op. 41-81, with the majority being character pieces, songs, and service music.

renowned virtuosos, Hoffman programmed his own fantasies with less frequency. Thus, further observation of these compositions reveals two distinct characteristics: although several are technically challenging, these pieces are more accessible than similar compositions by top virtuosos, suggesting Hoffman targeted the amateur market. More importantly, however, these works demonstrate the extent that he actively identified with New York's current musical tastes.

Hoffman composed the majority of his opera-based works between 1856 and 1874. Not surprisingly, he drew from a wide range of sources, including Giuseppe Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata*, and *Rigoletto*; Gaetano Donizetti's *La Favorita*; Giacomo Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*; and Charles Gounod's *Faust*. Each opera for one reason or another was popular in New York. Most seem to be in response to successful premieres, important productions, the appearance of various divas, and other related musical happenings. Several examples underscore the notion that Hoffman's timely publication and choice of source operas was a strategic approach to the sheet music market.

Of the sixteen fantasies written during this time, Hoffman published seven shortly after their respective New York City premieres, while six of the seven were based on the most frequently-staged opera during the current or previous season. For example, Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* was first staged in New York City on 11 February 1861. The opera was heard twelve times during 1860-61 and another seven times the following year, making it the most frequently-staged opera in the city for two consecutive seasons. Hoffman's transcription appeared in 1862, within a year of the local premiere. As "Faustomania" swept over New York, another opportunity presented itself. Gounod's blockbuster was first staged on 21 December 1863. During the next two seasons *Faust* dominated the city's operatic stages, with a total of thirty-three performances in Italian and eight in German. Just over a year after the premiere and

during the height of the opera's popularity, Hoffman's *Morceau de Salon sur l'opera Faust de Ch. Gounod*, Op. 25 appeared in January of 1865.<sup>98</sup> Both works demonstrate a preoccupation with concurrent premieres and the most frequently-staged opera of each season, suggesting that Hoffman (and music publishers) believed the sheet music market would support piano fantasies on works in this category.

Other pieces were likely published in response to various operatic events or conditions, and capture specific or outstanding moments in New York's musical life. In some cases, Hoffman's arrangements reflect the cultural status of a long-standing favorite. For example, his transcription *Ten Minutes With Mozart on Themes from Don Giovanni*, Op. 15 appeared in 1862, almost forty years after the New York premiere.<sup>99</sup> This work, however, occupied a special position as the only opera by Mozart performed regularly in New York during the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>100</sup> The Americanist Vera Brodsky Lawrence suggests that *Don Giovanni* had attained a certain prominence in the city, and that familiarity with this opera was regarded as a kind of cultural status symbol among New York's social elite.<sup>101</sup> By publishing an accessible arrangement of *Don Giovanni*, Hoffman capitalized on the opera's place in society, likely appealing to a segment of the populace who identified (or wanted to identify) with those who were familiar with the symbolic opera. Along with *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and *Faust*, this transcription is an example of Hoffman's focus on the sheet music market, presenting few technical challenges and, in the case of *Ten Minutes With Mozart*, not going beyond the abilities of the amateur.

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<sup>98</sup> The publisher Scharfenberg & Luis acquired legal rights on 10 January 1865.

<sup>99</sup> New York audiences first heard *Don Giovanni* on 23 May 1826. Hoffman's arrangement was acquired by Firth, Pond and Co. on 18 July 1862. See John Graziano, ed. *European Music and Musicians in New York City, 1840-1900* (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2006). "An Opera for Every Taste: The New York Scene, 1862-1869." 269.

<sup>100</sup> From 1849-65, New York audiences heard *Don Giovanni* every season except for one: 1854-55.

<sup>101</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 2:7.

Hoffman's first *Caprice de Concert*, Op. 4 (1860) presents a more concert-worthy example and is outstanding because it seems to document several major musical events between the years 1858 and 1860. In this piece, the composer recalls a work with long-standing appeal, a monumental new production, and a currently-popular blockbuster.<sup>102</sup> The fantasy is in four sections, incorporating themes from three sources: Donizetti's *La Favorita*, Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*, and Verdi's *La Traviata*. Closer examination of these three operas and their concurrent productions gives insight into the types of events that may have inspired Hoffman.

*Caprice de Concert* opens with material from Donizetti's French grand opera, *La Favorita* (1840). By including this opera, the composer connects to a work with long-standing audience appeal. In 1845, *La Favorita* debuted in New York City to critical reviews predicting: "La Favorite would become La Favorite of the season."<sup>103</sup> By 1850, the opera had become a local repertoire standard.<sup>104</sup> The following excerpt demonstrates Hoffman's setting of the chorus "Bei raggi lucenti" from Act One. The theme is stated with right-hand octaves over a leaping chordal accompaniment in the left hand. Hoffman makes the otherwise straightforward presentation slightly more interesting and technically challenging by including leaps in the right hand, re-striking the melodic A-flat octaves, while doubling the D-flat in octaves for the left hand. The effect necessitates mobility on the part of the performer and creates a broad and sonorous support for Donizetti's lyrical melody:

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<sup>102</sup> Between 1860 and 1891, *Caprice de Concert*, Op. 4 went through numerous editions. C. Breusing acquired legal rights on 16 April 1860.

<sup>103</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:331. *La Favorita* was first heard in NYC on 26 June 1845.

<sup>104</sup> During the 1849/50 season, *La Favorita* was the most frequently performed opera in New York, staged thirteen times.

Example 2.20: Hoffman, *Caprice de Concert*, Op. 4, “Bei raggi lucenti,” mm. 1-6<sup>105</sup>

The image shows a musical score for piano, measures 1-6 of "Bei raggi lucenti" by Richard Hoffman. The score is in 2/4 time and features a "Maestoso" tempo. The right hand has a melodic line with a "marcatissimo" section starting in measure 5. The left hand has a bass line with "ff" dynamics and "Ped." markings. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Next, *Caprice de Concert* captured the excitement over a current production of Verdi’s *La Traviata*. New York City audiences first heard this opera in 1856, and like *La Favorita*, it would also become a repertoire standard.<sup>106</sup> In its first two seasons, *La Traviata* had a healthy run of eight and seven performances respectively, but the following year (1858-59) was the most frequently staged opera in New York, with a total of nineteen.

The appeal of *La Traviata* was largely due to the appearance of two divas: Marietta Piccolomini in 1858 and Inez Fabbri in 1860. American audiences eagerly anticipated Piccolomini, who was already recognized in Europe for her portrayal of Violetta. Her arrival created excitement reminiscent of the 1850 Jenny Lind tours, as the *Times* article from 13 October 1858 makes clear: “The Piccolomini fever has set in, and it will rage in the best blood in the land until relief has been obtained by the old fashioned method of depletion [bloodletting].

<sup>105</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Caprice de Concert sur des motifs de Favorita, Huguenots & Traviata*, Op 4 (New York: Beer & Schirmer, 1860).

<sup>106</sup> The New York premiere took place on 3 December 1856.

Mr. Ullman stands ready with lancet and basin, and his fee, we are informed will be but two dollars (the new price for reserved seats).”<sup>107</sup> The debut of Inez Fabbri two years later received similar acclaim, with critics unanimously heralding her as the greatest Violetta, vocally and histrionically, ever to appear in New York; her debut was “in every way important.”<sup>108</sup> Following the Piccolomini craze and coinciding with the debut of Fabbri, Hoffman published *Caprice de Concert* Op. 4 in 1860, suggesting a plausible connection to the opera’s current popularity.<sup>109</sup>

In the following excerpt from *Caprice de Concert*, Hoffman quotes “Di Provenza il mar, il suol” from *La Traviata*. Although the composer chose to incorporate the well-known baritone aria instead of one highlighting Violetta, he nonetheless, calls attention to Verdi’s blockbuster and the opera’s concurrent production. With this section, Hoffman effectively demonstrates his preference for three-handed techniques, placing the aria theme in the central region of the keyboard, doubling the melody in consecutive thirds and sixths. To accomplish the illusion, Hoffman adds the necessary bass notes to establish the harmonic foundation, while further incorporating a scintillating descending scale above that terminates into the melody itself. To render each passage seamlessly, the performer must alternate the melodic figure between the hands accordingly:

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 153

<sup>108</sup> *The Albion*, 21 April 1860, 187.

<sup>109</sup> In 1858, Hoffman published *Morceau de Salon sur La Traviata*, Op. 13. This fantasy is also likely in response to the appearance of Piccolomini and the popularity of the opera in general.

Example 2.21: Hoffman, *Caprice de Concert*, Op. 4, “Di Provenza il mar, il suol,”  
mm. 56-63

The image displays four systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The music is characterized by a complex texture of overlapping lines, including a prominent melodic line in the upper register of the treble clef and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the bass clef. The notation includes various markings such as 'Ped.' (pedal), 'pp' (pianissimo), 'm.g.' (mezzo-gioco), and '8' (octave). The piece is in a key signature of one flat and a 7/7 time signature. The first system includes the markings 'Ped. pp m.g.' and 'Ped.'. The second system includes 'Ped.' and 'Ped.'. The third system includes 'Ped.' and 'Ped.'. The fourth system includes 'Ped.' and 'Ped.'. The music features a series of descending eighth-note patterns in the upper register, often marked with an '8' for octave, and a more active bass line with chords and single notes.

*Caprice de Concert* continues with material from Meyerbeer’s *Les Huguenots*, another opera long familiar to New York audiences. In this case, a new production of this famously

spectacular work brought it to the forefront of the musical scene.<sup>110</sup> Toward the end of the spring 1858 season, Ullman called for a complete recess, allowing Academy forces to prepare for the great season finale: a mammoth production of *Les Huguenots*, which the impresario promised would eclipse anything ever seen on an operatic stage.<sup>111</sup> The opera opened on 8 March to critical reviews praising its brilliant display, perfect presentation, and abundant resources. *The Evening Post* (9 March 1858) declared the performance: “an epoch in our musical history.” The new production received nine consecutive performances and was brought back twice in December; making it the most frequently performed opera of the memorable 1857-58 season.<sup>112</sup> Likely, this important production inspired Hoffman’s inclusion of the demanding contralto aria, “Nobles seigneurs, salut” for the third section of this fantasy.<sup>113</sup>

Following a descending filigree passage that concludes the statement of “Di Provenza il mar, il suol,” Hoffman modulates from D-flat major to B-flat major and presents the contralto aria, “Nobles seigneurs, salut” from *Les Huguenots*. The transcription of this material is straightforward; the theme is in the right hand, while a simple base note/chordal accompaniment supports in the left. The *dolce e cantabile* character of the excerpt provides contrast between the previous technical demands of “Di Provenza il mar, il suol” and the finale, where Hoffman returns with new material from *La Favorita*:

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<sup>110</sup> *Les Huguenots* premiered in NYC on 11 August 1845, but the epic production of 1858 had a great impact on the city.

<sup>111</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3:111. This production included five new sets, 300 new costumes, a forty-member orchestra, 200-voice chorus, and an all-star cast.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 118. For *Les Huguenots* alone, box office totals were \$30,000.

<sup>113</sup> Hoffman’s *Les Huguenots Grand Duo Dramatique*, Op. 5 is also likely in response to the 1858 production.



Example 2.22: Hoffman, *Caprice de Concert*, Op. 4, “Nobles seigneurs, salut,” mm. 91-101

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a treble and bass clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 3/4 time signature. It includes markings for 'Moderato.' and 'dolce e cantabile'. The second system continues the piece with similar markings. The third system concludes the piece with a 'Ped.' marking and a final cadence. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

After opening *Caprice de Concert* with “Bei raggi lucenti” and following with material from *La Traviata* and *Les Huguenots*, Hoffman concludes with “Io t’amo” from the fourth act finale of *La Favorita*. At the time, the opera’s final act was a particular favorite, often presented for matinee performances, apart from the rest of the opera. By giving this section a prominent role, Hoffman recalls the popularity of the opera and furthermore, memorializes current events that showcased the locally popular fourth act:<sup>114</sup>

<sup>114</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3: 137, 161, 238-39, and 271. Frequently this opera is mentioned in the context of a matinee performance of the fourth or final act only.

Example 2.23: Hoffman, *Caprice de Concert*, Op. 4, finale from *La Favorite*, "Io t'amo,"  
135-154

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of four systems of music. Each system is written for the right and left hands on a grand staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes several performance instructions and markings:

- System 1:** Starts with a dynamic marking of *ff* and the tempo instruction *a tempo.* It features a pedaling instruction (*Ped.*) and a triplet of eighth notes. A dotted line with the number '8' indicates an octave transposition for the right hand.
- System 2:** Continues the piece with similar rhythmic patterns and includes another *Ped.* marking.
- System 3:** Shows further development of the musical material, with a *Ped.* marking and triplet figures.
- System 4:** Concludes the section with a *Ped.* marking and a *rall:* (rallentando) instruction at the end.

The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulation marks such as slurs and asterisks. The overall texture is dense and technically demanding, characteristic of a caprice.

The image displays five systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The notation includes various ornaments (marked with '8' and a dotted line), triplets (marked with '3'), and dynamic markings such as 'Ped.', 'ff', 'rall.', and 'a tempo.'. The music is in a minor key, indicated by the key signature. The piece features a descending octave/arppeggiated theme, with the harmonic structure divided between both hands. The notation is complex, with many notes and ornaments, and includes a section with a 'rall.' marking and a section with 'a tempo.' marking.

In the above excerpt, Hoffman presents the duet “Io t’amo” in octaves, while descending octave/arppeggiated figures divided between both hands surround the theme. The harmonic

structure is further fleshed out with fundamental octaves in the low bass register, while chords are added in both hands. The effect is straightforward and almost formulaic, giving the section a quasi-improvisatory effect. In the penultimate line, Hoffman includes a climactic moment: an interlocking chromatic scale divided between the hands. Then, the descending octave/arpeggiated figure returns to conclude the piece. *Caprice de Concert* is a good example of Hoffman's more ambitious writing. He effectively draws upon several virtuosic techniques, making the piece fairly challenging; however, none stretch the limits of virtuosity and the composition remains accessible to the advanced pianist.

Hoffman's inclusion of material from *La Traviata* in *Caprice de Concert* suggests a plausible connection between current popular performances, in part due to specific performers, and his motivation to compose. A decade later, however, with his arrangement of Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet*, the relationship between operatic superstar and inspiration becomes unmistakable. Hoffman's *Hamlet de Thomas*, Op. 30 appeared in 1870, two years before the opera's American premiere.<sup>115</sup> These unusual circumstances demonstrate an instance where Hoffman's arrangement possibly promoted the opera as a link between the forthcoming production and the prospective audience. Since Hoffman's transcription predates the New York opera debut, it also suggests a connection to other important musical events.

On 19 September 1870, the Swedish diva Christine Nilsson (1843-1921) made her American debut at Steinway Hall. In concert form, Nilsson gave arias from Handel's oratorio *Theodora*, Verdi's *La Traviata*, and the "Mad Scene" from Thomas' *Hamlet*. The critic for the *New York Herald* suggested that Nilsson's rendering of the "Mad Scene" was "sung and acted with such mingled *abandon*, childish glee, and sad feeling that the audience broke forth in an

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<sup>115</sup> The American debut of *Hamlet* took place on 22 March 1872.

avalanche of applause.”<sup>116</sup> The historian George Clinton Densmore Odell suggests that Nilsson’s performance “struck that generation . . . as an incomparable piece of dramatic singing, wherein the *fioriture* but heightened the dramatic effect.”<sup>117</sup> According to Hoffman, the coming of Nilsson was among the most important musical events in America, after the continental tours of Lind and Thalberg: “We have rarely, if ever, had a finer actress on the opera stage, whose divas up to this time had seldom developed great histrionic ability.”<sup>118</sup> Most likely, the excitement created by Nilsson and the potential success of the forthcoming opera encouraged Hoffman to transcribe themes from *Hamlet*.

Hoffman’s *Hamlet de Thomas* draws from several sections of the opera and is a loose arrangement of each. Thus, the piece is better described as a paraphrase rather than a true transcription. Although Hoffman’s composition begins with “Entre d’ Hamlet” from Act One: scene one, and also includes the love duet, “Doute de la lumière,” over half the arrangement is dedicated to “scene d’Ophélie.” This coupled with the fact that *Hamlet de Thomas* appeared two years before the American premiere of the opera supports the notion that Hoffman wanted to create a reminiscence of Nilsson’s performance.

The following excerpt is “Ballade d’Ophélie from the “Mad Scene.” Hoffman’s simple arrangement captures the solemn nature of the music, while the descending scale figures suggest the famous coloratura moments from throughout the scene:

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<sup>116</sup> George Clinton Densmore Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 9:92.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

<sup>118</sup> Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 143.

Example 2.24: Hoffman, *Hamlet de Thomas*, Op. 30, “Ballade d’Ophélie,” mm. 175-198<sup>119</sup>

Andantino con moto.

Ballade d'Ophélie.

*P*

*ppp*

*rull.* *et tempo.*

*(éclatant de rire)*

*Ped.* *ta*

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<sup>119</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Hamlet Opera de A. Thomas*, Op. 30 (New York: G. Schirmer, 1870).

On the whole, Hoffman's operatic arrangements fit nicely into the category of amateur-friendly works. His *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Morceau de Salon sur l'opera Faust de Ch. Gounod*, *Ten Minutes With Mozart*, and *Hamlet de Thomas*, are not virtuoso showpieces and were likely fashioned with accessibility and sheet music sales in mind.

On the other hand, fantasies that include the word "caprice" in the title venture into the technically-demanding side of Hoffman's craft. Between 1860 and 1874, he composed four works entitled *Caprice de Concert* and one *Fantaisie-Caprice*. This category includes: *Caprice de Concert*, Op. 4; *Rigoletto de Verdi Fantaisie-Caprice*, Op. 18 (1864); *Crispino e la Comare Opera de Ricci Caprice De Concert*, Op. 26 (1866); *Dinorah Caprice de Concert*, Op. 29 (1863); and *Mignon Fourth Caprice de Concert*, Op. 40 (1874). In these works, the composer extensively employs three-handed effects, filigree passages, large leaps, and extended octave sections. Although fairly demanding, they still, in a sense, are amateur works when compared to similar pieces by Liszt or Thalberg.

After *Caprice de Concert*, Op. 4, *Rigoletto de Verdi Fantaisie-Caprice*, Op. 18 is one of the composer's most successful examples in the genre. Hoffman's arrangement based on Verdi's famous opera was first published in 1864. A review of the second edition appeared in the *New York Tribune*: "The Rigoletto Fantasie Caprice has been frequently played by Mr. Hoffman in public and always with marked success. Since its publication its popularity has so much increased as to demand a second edition . . . It is a dashing salon piece, where it will long remain a favorite."<sup>120</sup> This fantasy offers two of Hoffman's most attractive three-handed effects, while underscoring the composer's preference for clear textures and a more restrained approach to

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<sup>120</sup> *Tribune*, 21 October 1865, 9.

keyboard pyrotechnics. The influence of Thalberg is unmistakable as the writing demonstrates how Hoffman aligned himself with the famed virtuoso's methods:

**Example 2.25: Hoffman, *Rigoletto Opera de Verdi*, Op. 18, "Caro nome," mm. 125-131<sup>121</sup>**

<sup>121</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Rigoletto de Verdi Fantasie-Caprice*, Op. 18 (New York: Beer & Schirmer, 1864). Excerpts from *Rigoletto de Verdi Fantasie-Caprice* are reproduced with permission from the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (1555-832).



Example 2.26: Hoffman, *Rigoletto Opera de Verdi*, Op. 18, “La donna è mobile,” mm. 192-207

The image displays a piano accompaniment score for the opera *Rigoletto*, specifically the scene "La donna è mobile" (measures 192-207). The score is written for piano and consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 2/4. The first system begins with the instruction *pp una corda.* and includes a *Ped* marking. The second system continues the texture with *Ped* markings. The third system features a dynamic shift to *ff*. The fourth system concludes with *ff maestoso.* and *con burla.*, and includes *Ped* and *martellato.* markings. The score is annotated with various performance directions such as *8* (octave), *A* (accents), and *\** (fingerings), along with slurs and phrasing marks.

Example 2.25 showcases Gilda's well-known aria, "Caro nome;" the composer embeds the theme in a middle voice, while adding octaves and chords below and a delicate filigree arpeggio figure above. The melody is passed between the hands as necessary; melody notes are circled and/or connected to highlight the effect. Similarly, Example 2.26 comes from the finale of *Fantaisie-Caprice*, as Hoffman quotes the famous aria, "La donna è mobile." Here, Hoffman surrounds the theme with an ascending arpeggio figure. The theme sounds as the first note of the arpeggio in the right hand, while at other moments the melody occurs as the top note of the left-hand chords. Both examples necessitate the melody be divided between the hands, giving the illusion of three hands.

By the late 1860s, as audience interest began shifting away from operatic fantasies, Hoffman adjusted his efforts to include transcribing orchestral works. According to the composer's wife, "The difficulty in finding satisfactory arrangements for the piano of orchestral music induced him to give much time to this kind of composition."<sup>122</sup> In 1868, Hoffman published Op. 41, his first effort in this vein, with a transcription of the "March" from Louis Spohr's Symphony No. 4 in F Major, Op. 86, "The Consecration of Sound." Within a decade, another transcription from Spohr's fourth symphony, works by Mendelssohn, and much later (1894), arrangements of three works by Tchaikovsky round out Hoffman's contribution to this genre.<sup>123</sup> The transcription of the "Scherzo" from Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 3 in A Minor, Op. 56 "Scottish," demonstrates the composer's approach:

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<sup>122</sup> Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 54.

<sup>123</sup> Hoffman's orchestral transcriptions include the Cradle Song from Spohr's Symphony "Power of Sound," Op. 39; Scherzo from Mendelssohn's "Scotch" Symphony, Op. 59; "Fairy Chorus" from Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Op. 78. A set of three arrangements of Tchaikovsky's works were published in 1894: No. 1 Scherzo from Symphony No. 4, Op. 36; No. 2 Andante from Symphony No. 5, Op. 64; No. 3 Adagio cantabile from Sextet Op. 70. The Tchaikovsky arrangements do not include opus numbers.

Example 2.27: Hoffman, "Scherzo" from Mendelssohn's "Scotch" Symphony, Op. 59, mm. 1-26<sup>124</sup>

## SCHERZO

From MENDELSSOHN'S SCOTCH SYMPHONY.

*Vivace non troppo.* TRANSCRIPTION BY RICHARD HOFFMAN.

PIANO. *pp* *sf* *sf* *f* *sf* *p* *leggiere staccato.* *f*

<sup>124</sup> Richard Hoffman, Scherzo from Mendelssohn's Scotch Symphony, Op. 59 (New York: Martens Brothers, 1880).

The above excerpt from Hoffman's transcription of the second movement (*Vivace non troppo*) from Mendelssohn's third symphony effectively captures the graceful, elegant, and joyous character of the original, while the perpetual sixteenth-note motion in the left hand poses a particular challenge for the performer.

Hoffman's orchestral transcriptions are often virtually note-for-note renderings as with the Spohr arrangements; however, he occasionally takes a more liberal approach. For example, with Mendelssohn's "Scottish" Symphony, Hoffman omits the development section, giving an economic yet efficient impression of the original. On the whole, these works were almost certainly designed for the amateur market; however, transcriptions such as the "Scottish" Symphony often pose technical difficulties that can only be fully rendered by an advanced pianist.<sup>125</sup>

Between 1870 and 1909, when his last published pieces appeared, the majority of Hoffman's output were original compositions; however, the composer still devoted much effort to transcription. Five arrangements from Wagner's operas, three excerpts from Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and the "Cavatina" from *Samson and Delilah* by Saint-Saëns appeared between 1886 and 1904. These are smaller in scope than his symphonic arrangements and do not approach the technical demands of the earlier operatic caprices. Hoffman made transcriptions of other vocal genres as well, including excerpts from Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion*, BWV 224; Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*, Op. 36; Handel's *Joshua*, HWV 64; the "Sanctus" and "Agnus Dei" from Gounod's *St. Cecilia's Mass*; as well as several songs by Schubert and others. Although these transcriptions occupy a prominent place in Hoffman's later catalogue,

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<sup>125</sup> According to his wife, Hoffman often performed the "Scotch" Symphony transcription as an encore.

they remain amateur level arrangements and are less significant than his treatments of symphonic excerpts.

Character pieces still represent the majority of Hoffman's later output. The overall construction of these later works show little development beyond the compositional strategies employed in the earlier pieces. Hoffman continued using traditional forms, and their architecture, such as chordal structures and overall pianistic techniques also remain relatively unchanged. The main difference is Hoffman's willingness to incorporate less traditional titles for several later compositions. Although some earlier works carry colorful names such as *Twilight*, *Le Crépescule*, Op. 3 or *Venice. A Midnight Sketch*, Op. 11, the composer favored titles such as "Impromptu," "March," or that of various dances, like waltzes and polkas. In later years, he never completely abandoned traditional titles, especially when dance forms are incorporated; however, later works make use of non-traditional monikers such as *Forest Musings*, Op. 73; *Ships That Pass in the Night*, Op. 119; or *Two Musical Coupons*, Op. 123: No. 1, "A Bicycle Ride" and No. 2, "Plantation Scene." Whether Hoffman's titles take the conservative approach of Chopin or employ more colorful descriptors like Schumann, the music itself generally resembles the character pieces of Mendelssohn, Schubert, or Chopin.

An example of Hoffman's later compositional style comes from the "cantanto" section of *Valse Melodique*, Op. 77 (1883). This excerpt showcases a Chopinesque melody in octaves with octave-thirds combinations that alternate between the hands, forming a very effective accompaniment figuration:

Example 2.28: Hoffman, *Valse Melodique*, Op. 77, “cantando,” mm. 112-150<sup>126</sup>

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of six systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The piece is marked "cantando." and "f" (forte). The notation includes various chords, arpeggios, and melodic lines. There are some performance markings such as "Pia." and "A." in the bass staff of the third system. At the bottom left of the score, the publisher's information "E. S. & C<sup>o</sup> 900" is visible.

<sup>126</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Valse Melodique*, Op. 77 (New York: Edward Schuberth & Co., 1883).

Ultimately, this body of work is archetypical of mainstream nineteenth-century piano literature. Whether crafting a fantasy based on a popular opera, transcribing a favorite symphonic or vocal work, or composing original character pieces, Hoffman's music parallels the output of contemporary models. His pieces are distinctive, yet seldom demonstrate a unique or innovative voice. Rather, Hoffman seemed content to operate within established compositional styles set in place by Europeans who went before him. The *Cuban Dances* and *Here's To You Harry Clay Grande Fantaisie* do, however, demonstrate interest in Americana. One other example, *Dixiana Caprice on the Popular Negro Minstrel's Melody* "Dixie's Land," Op. 23 is a dashing setting of Dan Emmett's famous minstrel song, which is described in Chapter 5. Beyond these, American nationalism is generally not a part of Hoffman's compositional palette.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Hoffman does, however, make a brief reference to the potential of Native American influences on the future of music in the United States: "Who knows, indeed, but the descent of the native Indian will be capable of singing the songs of the forest primeval, the rush of the cataract, and the legends of his vanished tribe, in harmonies as yet unheard or even imagined . . . If the road is so short from the prairie to the pulpit, and from the wigwam—shall we say to the White House?—why may not music look for a new prophet among this people so amenable to the influences of civilization?" (Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 155-56).



**Figure 2.3: Portrait of Richard Hoffman. The Tully Potter Collection.**

### **Twilight of a Career**

By 1897, the year of Hoffman’s “Golden Jubilee” concert, the pianist had generally retired from public life. A handful of notable events, however, kept the pianist active to a minimal extent. In 1893, he was honored with a Doctorate in Music from Hobart College in New York. According to Hoffman’s wife, he usually forgot to include this honor when applying



his signature.<sup>128</sup> On 9 November 1897, the pianist made a final concerto appearance, playing his war-horse Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in G minor, under Anton Seidl and his orchestra at Chickering Hall. The New York press also documents two final performances of note. On 31 January 1899, Hoffman appeared with the Madrigal Singers at Chickering Hall. For this concert, he played several selections by Schumann and Chopin that the writer for the *New York Times* graciously acknowledged: "Mr. Hoffman's performance of the novelette (op. 21, no. 8) was a piece of reposeful playing, in which the experience of a long artistic career and a matured technic were happily combined."<sup>129</sup> On 12 April 1900, upon the closing of Chickering Hall, Hoffman was invited to perform at a benefit concert for J. Burns Brown, long-time manager of the establishment. This seems to be Hoffman's last documented public performance.

In his final years, the pianist mainly taught and continued regular rehearsals with his Trio club, which met at the Hoffman home. His most frequent collaborators were the violinist Samuel B. Grimson (d. 1955) and cellist Paul Morgan.<sup>130</sup> The violinist Gustav Dannreuther (1853-1923) and members of his string quartet also joined Hoffman for music-making.<sup>131</sup> These informal meetings must have been dear to the aged virtuoso's heart. Demonstrating his fondness for chamber music, Hoffman's last and unfinished work was a trio for piano, violin, and cello.<sup>132</sup> Since the pianist did not teach during the summer months, he typically enjoyed the recreation of various east-coast resort destinations. While taking his annual holiday, Hoffman died on 17

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<sup>128</sup> Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections*, 40.

<sup>129</sup> "The Madrigal Singers," *Times*, 1 February 1899, 7.

<sup>130</sup> In 1924, Grimson married Hoffman's daughter, Malvina. The couple divorced in 1936. Grimson also wrote a book entitled, *Modern Violin Playing* (New York: The H. W. Gray Co., 1920).

<sup>131</sup> Dannreuther's String Quartet, initially known as the Beethoven String Quartet was formed in 1884. On 13 March 1890, Hoffman performed Schumann's Piano Quintet in E-Flat Major, Op. 44 with the ensemble.

<sup>132</sup> According to Mrs. Hoffman, the string parts for this work were left incomplete at the time of Hoffman's death. To date, the fragments of this work have not been located.

August 1909 at Mount Kisco, New York. The following day, he was interred in the family plot at Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx, New York.

## **In Conclusion**

For fifty years, Hoffman was an integral part of the music scene in nineteenth-century New York City. His multi-faceted career serves as a working model, illustrating the typical kinds of endeavors a working pianist would undertake when establishing themselves in the profession. Hoffman's performance record demonstrates the many scenarios within which a pianist needed to operate, while his approach to concert programming sheds light on the kinds of repertoire expected by American audiences at the time. As a concerto performer, Hoffman gave some of the earliest hearings of today's canonic repertoire, while his appearances in chamber music were among the primary efforts to establish the genre in the United States. The pianist was also prolific in the compositional side of his craft. Since Hoffman's output spans fifty years, his works stand as material evidence documenting the shifting musical trends of nineteenth-century American musical culture, tastes, and consumption. While the product of Hoffman's teaching was not the world-class pianists of the next generation, his instruction nonetheless was significant to the artistic edification of New York City.

Hoffman stands as an important contributor to the musical development of America. He should be remembered among other key figures, great and small, who worked the fertile artistic soil of a country in its musical adolescence. The landmark American tours of pianists like Thalberg, Anton Rubinstein, Hans von Bülow, and even Gottschalk received much deserved publicity and were without a doubt influential to the establishment and popularity of piano

performance in the United States; however, the tireless work of numerous lesser-known musicians like Hoffman was also important. As celebrated virtuosos came and went pianists like Hoffman remained. Each metropolitan center in the United States including Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, as well as New York, had such significant musicians who contributed to each city's musical life. This study of Hoffman and his place in the artistic development of New York City stands as one small step toward a more complete understanding of the nineteenth-century American musical heritage.

### Chapter Three

#### LISZT IN AMERICA AND THE CASE OF SEBASTIAN BACH MILLS

On 20 February 1859, the English-born pianist Sebastian Bach Mills (1839-1898) burst onto the New York scene, giving the American premiere of Schumann's Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54.<sup>1</sup> At the time of his debut, the pianist was only nineteen years old, but critics quickly placed him among the highest ranking musicians in America, and indeed, the greatest living pianists.<sup>2</sup> The press heralded Mills as nothing less than a genius and the most remarkable player in the country.<sup>3</sup> In contrast to the impressive and influential Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871) who had recently toured the United States, Mills's performance style and repertoire encouraged critics, who immediately identified him as a product of the "Liszt School." Association with the renowned Hungarian virtuoso was a powerful tool, which the pianist used to launch an important and enduring career. By actively programming this repertoire, Mills became the first resident pianist to champion Liszt, which enhanced the composer's reputation and provided greater knowledge of his music in America.

This chapter investigates the reception of Liszt's piano music in the United States, focusing on Mills and his significant position. I introduce Mills by discussing his prodigy years in England, followed by his studies in Germany, and concluding with the pianist's arrival and debut in New York. Since Mills was responsible for giving Liszt's piano music a more

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<sup>1</sup> The premiere was given under the direction of German-born conductor, Carl Bergmann (1821-1876), at the sixth Bergmann Sunday evening concert. Mills quickly gave a second performance with the New York Philharmonic Society on 26 March 1859.

<sup>2</sup> See *The New York Evangelist*, 19 May 1859, 4. See also *The New York Observer and Chronicle*, 26 May 1859, 166.

<sup>3</sup> Vera Brodsky Lawrence, *Strong on Music: The New York Music Scene in the Days of George Templeton Strong* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 3:279.

prominent place in the American musical scene, an understanding of his background is useful. Next, I reconstruct the image and perception that Americans may have held of Liszt throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Since the legendary virtuoso never visited the United States, his reputation was fashioned largely by commentary in the press. Periodicals, journals, and newspaper articles encouraged curiosity, intrigue, and fascination as they reported on Liszt's European accolades. Coupled with literary references, early performances by other pianists fleshed out the initial impression as they provided the first examples of Lisztian virtuosity for American audiences. With this framework in place, I describe the decisive steps Mills took to champion Liszt, while investigating why the press labeled the pianist as a product of the "Liszt School." His performance record indicates that Mills programmed more of the composer's music in America than any pianist who preceded him. Exploring connections between Mills as virtuoso and his association with the famous composer will illustrate how the pianist skillfully constructed a career, how the American press conceived and defined the notion of a "Liszt School" at the time, and how Mills helped shape the early reception of Liszt's music in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

## **A Prodigy in England**

Mills was born on 13 March 1838 in the British market town of Cirencester, located approximately 100 miles northwest of London. His father, John William Mills, was organist at

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<sup>4</sup> See Leslie Jane Finer, "The Dissemination and Reception of Liszt's Piano Music in New York, 1835-1875." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 2006. Finer's research documents nineteenth-century American reception of Liszt in a general way, inviting further and deeper examination. Her work includes early performances, cataloguing most of the pianists and the compositions they presented to American audiences, and includes information concerning the publication of Liszt's music in America.

Gloucester Cathedral and a music teacher, while his mother was Welsh and of noble descent.<sup>5</sup> By virtue of his profession, John Mills provided a musical environment at home, where his children naturally received a thorough education in music.<sup>6</sup> These circumstances encouraged Sebastian's natural talent and his skills quickly developed. At age seven Mills appeared on London stages, with the press calling him, "Master Sebastian Bach Mills, the wonderful infant pianist," and "the wonder of the musical world."<sup>7</sup> An announcement in the *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette* for a series of concerts at the Pump Room Promenade Concerts demonstrates the pianist's early achievements:

The extraordinary brilliancy and classical performance of the Child (only six years of age) have produced the greatest sensation and astonishment at the Promenade Concerts given by M. Jullien, and at the Private Concerts of the Nobility and Gentry. This singularly gifted child plays, with extreme correctness (from memory), the most difficult compositions of Sebastian Bach, Handel, Beethoven, Czerny, &c., so that he may be justly considered a Musical Prodigy.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the coming year, similar reports appeared regularly in the British press, and by 1847 they had declared Mills the greatest musical prodigy of the day. Another review stated: "A very

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<sup>5</sup> See *American Phrenological Journal* 31/1 (January 1860): 7. See also *The Wilkes-Barre Record*, 9 February 1899, 7. A letter written by J. W. Parson to the editor appeared in the Pennsylvania periodical shortly after Mills's death. Parson, who was a teacher of "voice culture" in New York and according to his own claim, a close friend of Mills, discussed the pianist's birth record: "the fact is—from his own lips—that he was born in a little village of Coity, in Wales, about twelve miles west of Cardiff, and adjoining the county, where I was born. Mills and I discussed the subject many times, and, because we were both to the manor born, became great friends—since May, 1877."

<sup>6</sup> Following initial musical instruction from his father, Mills apparently studied with W. E. Evens, a local teacher. For there, the pianist spent time under Cipriani Potter (1792-1871) and Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875) at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Mills's younger brother and sister were also trained pianists who established careers in music. By 1861, the British press announced performances by Lilla Mills. On 29 April 1861 Lilla appeared at the Cheltenham Assembly Rooms: "The celebrated Juvenile Pianist (only twelve years old), daughter of Mr. J. W. Mills, and sister of Sebastian Bach Mills . . . will perform on the Pianoforte, selections from the most celebrated composers." (*The Cheltenham Chronicle*, 23 April 1861). Sebastian's younger brother, William F. Mills was also making public performances by the late 1860s, with the British press suggesting a London debut in 1867. William arrived in New York City in 1870, establishing himself as a professional pianist and teacher. His obituary appeared in the *New York Times*, 1 May 1883: "William F. Mills, the well-known pianist, died in this City yesterday (30 April 1883) after a brief illness."

<sup>7</sup> See *The Morning Post*, London, 30 May 1845; and *The Morning Chronicle*, Friday, 20 June 1845.

<sup>8</sup> *The Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, Thursday, 17 December 1846. See also *The Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, Thursday, 24 December 1846.

young artiste, Sebastian Bach Mills, played some fantasies on the piano-forte in a surprising manner. His execution is brilliant, his style bold and forcible, and his recollection of so many long compositions, replete with varied and complicated movements, truly astonishing.”<sup>9</sup> Auditors seemed amazed by his “extreme correctness,” a hallmark Mills would display throughout his career, and his ability to play even the largest compositions entirely from memory.

On 3 July the *Bristol Mercury* announced a series of four concerts given between 7 and 9 July 1847. The music Mills programmed was included—he apparently played the same pieces for all four concerts—and indicates the nature of Sebastian’s training, while illustrating the nine-year-old pianist’s early accomplishments:

CONCERT SERIES at the ROYAL ALBERT ROOMS<sup>10</sup>

Grand Fantasia from <i>Masaniello</i>	Czerny
Fugue in C-Sharp Minor	J. S. Bach
Brilliant Variations on <i>Gavotte de Vestris</i>	Hertz [ <i>sic</i> ]
Organ Fugue in E-Flat Major	Albretchberger [ <i>sic</i> ]
Brilliant Rondino, from <i>Precioso</i>	Weber
Prelude and Fugue in E-Flat Major	J. S. Bach
Theme and Variations, in A Major	Mozart
Fugue in F-Sharp Minor	Handel
Grand Divertimento from <i>Zampa</i>	Hérold
<i>Witches Dance</i>	Paganini

The works by Bach, Handel, Albrechtsberger, and Mozart demonstrate the classical approach to Mills’s early training, while the rondo by Weber, a fantasy by Czerny, variations by Herz, and the arrangement of Paganini’s *Witches Dance* rounded off his programs with flash and flair. Following a concert on 6 August 1849 one review called the young pianist: “Second Mozart,”

<sup>9</sup> *The Bristol Mercury*, Saturday, 27 November 1847.

<sup>10</sup> Program reproduced from an announcement that appeared in *The Bristol Mercury*, Saturday, 3 July 1847.

noting that he played everything from memory, “with the spirit of an *improviser*, and the accuracy of a copy machine.”<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the next decade, Mills sustained an active schedule, performing regularly throughout England.<sup>12</sup> In November 1856 announcements for a “S. B. Mills Benefit Concert” began appearing in the press. On 7 November the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* ran the first of several invitations: “The Friends of Mr. Sebastian Bach Mills . . . to consider the subject of getting up a Benefit Concert on his behalf previously to his leaving Sheffield for the purpose of completing his studies on the Continent.”<sup>13</sup> The article ran for five consecutive days, with a formal meeting scheduled for the evening of 11 November to discuss particulars. Following a month of preparations Mills gave the concert on 9 December 1856. Four days later, *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* announced: “Mr. S. B. Mills, a very promising young pianist, who has been for some time past resident in this town, and is now leaving, as we understand, for the purpose of completing his musical education and studies on the continent.”<sup>14</sup> Mills gave two more concerts before his departure, one on 19 December and another on 24 February 1857.<sup>15</sup> The absence of further concert announcements or reviews in the British press suggests that Mills left England in early 1857.

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<sup>11</sup> *The Hereford Times*, Saturday, 11 August 1849.

<sup>12</sup> The British press documents heavy performance activity during 1847, 1849, 1855, and 1856. There are four seasons that Mills does not seem to appear in print: 1848, 1850, 1852, and 1854. During the 1851 and 1853 seasons only one performance is documented. It is unclear why these gaps exist.

<sup>13</sup> *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 5, 6, 7, and 8 November 1856.

<sup>14</sup> *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 13 December 1856.

<sup>15</sup> *The Cheltenham Looker-On*, Saturday, 21 February 1857. This apparently is the last mention of Mills performing in England.



## Studies at the Leipzig Conservatory

Mills spent two years in Leipzig, where he was a student of Louis Plaidy (1810-1874), Carl Mayer (1799-1862), Carl Czerny (1791-1857), and Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870).<sup>16</sup> At that time, several exceptionally talented musicians went through the Leipzig Conservatory. The impressive roster included the composers Dudley Buck (1839-1909), Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900), and John Francis Barnett (1837-1916); violinists August Wilhelmj (1845-1908) and Carl Rosa (1842-1889) who later became an important opera impresario; and the English-born operatic singer, Clara Kathleen Rogers (1844-1931) who was known by her stage name, Clara Doria. Three pianists—Walter Bache (1842-1888), Madeline Schiller (1845-1911), and Edward Dannreuther (1844-1905) joined Mills—rounding out this group. These notables became important musicians throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, and several performed in the United States.

Little is known concerning Mills and his time in Leipzig. Short biographies appearing years later and obituaries typically only mention the pianist's instructors, providing little insight into his studies.<sup>17</sup> One article, "Reminiscences of Great Composers. In the Leipsic Conservatory," appeared in *The Brisbane Courier* on 8 January 1890 and recounts the memoirs of a fellow student. The author gives a vivid depiction of 1858 to 1861 when the aforementioned musicians spent their formative years at the Conservatory. The section entitled: "A Master of the Piano" provides a rare account of Mills:

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<sup>16</sup> Most sources agree that Mills studied with Czerny; however, these lessons must have been few, since the pianist arrived in Germany no earlier than March 1857 and the famous pedagogue died on 15 July of the same year.

<sup>17</sup> The archive for the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Leipzig states that Mills was a pupil at the Conservatory from 1857 to 1858. The archive preserves his enrolment record, enrolment form, and two certificates.

He was at the time a stylish, handsome young man, very different to most of the pupils, who seemed to think that long hair was indispensable to the study of music. He was a good player when he came, but developed into, I think, the finest Chopin player, with, perhaps, the exception of Alfred Yaell [*sic*], I have ever heard . . . I remember one Friday evening, the so-called ‘abend unterhaltung’ someone was to play Mendelssohn’s C minor trio, but for some reason, which I forget, was unable to play the two last movements. Jenny Lind (Mdme. Goldschmidt) was there, and it was, of course, not desirable to bring out a fragment only. Mills, who was among the audience, consisting of the masters, pupils, and a few guests, was asked whether he would undertake to play the last two movements, which he did, without rehearsal or preparation, so perfectly and in such a tempo the scherzo, that there was a general burst of applause, a thing not allowed in those days, although now everyone is applauded.<sup>18</sup>

The author, whom the Australian periodical does not cite, gives a brief yet telling statement concerning Mills. Beyond praising Mills for not having Lisztian locks of hair, the article suggests that his musical talent was exceptional. That the pianist was called upon at a moment’s notice to fill in with the piano part of the Mendelssohn trio, in the presence of such illustrious guests, demonstrates certain confidence in the young musician’s abilities. The author also alludes to Mills’s playing of Chopin, which the pianist would also be recognized for years later in the United States.

In her autobiography, *Memories of a Musical Career* (1919), Clara Kathleen Rogers includes a brief but, nonetheless charming account of Mills and his studies:

John Sabastian Bach Mills [*sic*] – the lad who so overwhelmed us by playing Bach’s fugues from memory in Cheltenham. He had preceded us to Leipzig and stood already in high repute at the Conservatorium as a pianist. He was the delight of Plaidy’s heart as the perfect and brilliant exponent of his technical method, and when, later on, Mills fell madly in love with a beautiful English girl – a Miss Young – who was in Leipzig with her mother and sister, Plaidy was in despair! That anything should intervene to interrupt the brilliant career that he had chalked out for Mills in Germany was an unbearable grief for him! He did all he could to separate the lovers, appealing to my mother to help, when he found that Mrs. Young’s efforts and those of her sister did not avail with the dark-eyed beauty. It was all in vain, however, for

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<sup>18</sup> *The Brisbane Courier*, 8 January 1890, 7.

in the long run the lovers had their way and ended by getting off to America together in spite of an intrigue to which Plaidy in his desperation had recourse to stop the proceedings. Mills settled in New York with his wife, where he stood very high as a pianist and teacher and, let us hope, was happy ever after!<sup>19</sup>

Rogers's recollections give little in-depth discussion concerning Mills's playing; however, she does indicate his abilities and suggests that he was a favorite pupil of Plaidy, who was apparently his primary piano instructor. She also references Mills's future career in the United States and his marriage.

On 6 March 1858, a plea for contributions from the "lovers of musical art in Cheltenham to aid a townsman in the completion of his studies as a pianist" appeared in *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*. The announcement suggests that Mills planned to remain in Germany for the duration of 1858 but apparently lacked financial support to continue his studies.<sup>20</sup> The British press is unclear whether Mills procured the necessary funding; however, years later, *The New-York Musical Gazette* printed a short biography in 1874, stating that Mills made his German debut in December 1858, "at a grand Gewand-Haus concert in Leipsic," suggesting that the pianist did receive necessary financial support.<sup>21</sup> Two months later, the pianist arrived in New York.

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<sup>19</sup> Clara Kathleen Rogers, *Memories of a Musical Career* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 1919), 114-15. Incidentally, Mills and Antonia Young were married on 22 February 1859, only two days after his New York premiere of Schumann's Piano Concerto in A Minor. See also *American Phrenological Journal* 31/1 (January 1860):7. The periodical notes that pianists William Mason and Charles Fradel were his groomsmen.

<sup>20</sup> This same article suggests that Mills also had the intention of studying with Franz Liszt.

<sup>21</sup> *The New-York Musical Gazette*, 8/4 (April 1874). The archive for the Gewandhaus Orchestra confirms that Mills did perform the second and third movements from Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 11 with that orchestra on 2 December 1858.

## Early American Performances of Works by Liszt

Until the arrival of Mills in 1859, no pianist in America made a concerted effort to champion Liszt. Several other keyboardists, however, were already programming the virtuoso's showpieces and through their performances, American audiences gained an initial exposure to Liszt. On 4 November 1839, the earliest documented public performance in the United States occurred. This often cited event took place at New York's Apollo Rooms when the Polish pianist C. Kossowski (dates unknown) introduced Liszt's *Grand Galop Chromatique*, S. 219. Subsequent performances caused one critic to label this work, "the wildest and most original thing of all, and displayed a genius which we might expect from this devout admirer of Beethoven."<sup>22</sup> Following Kossowski's Boston debut, a member of the local press declared:

It is exceedingly wild and seems the *ne plus ultra* of what a genius for complexity is able to contrive—yet it was played with such a perfect gradation of power – such brilliancy of touch—and such precision of time, as to form a combination of excellence that called forth the warmest approbation from the delighted audience.<sup>23</sup>

A tour de force showpiece, the *Grand Galop* is emblematic of the superficial virtuosity that was currently in vogue and was one of a select few Liszt pieces at the time to receive multiple performances by a variety of pianists in the United States.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *The Dial*, 1/1 (July 1840), 130.

<sup>23</sup> "Mr. Kossowski," *Boston Post*, 13 March 1840, 1.

<sup>24</sup> On 28 December 1840 Ludwig Rakemann (brother of Frederic Rakemann) included the *Grand Galop Chromatique* on his program; it was next programmed by the pianist G. F. H. Laurence on 5 June 1851. Madeleine Graever-Johnson also gave a performance of the work on 19 January 1858. Little is known of C. Kossowski. His initial performances received critical approval, crediting the pianist for "introducing us to the new school of Piano Forte playing" and calling Kossowski a pianist of "fire and energy . . . promise and inspiration." ("The Concerts of the Past Winter," *The Dial*, July 1840, 124). Apart from a few documented performances in New York City, the Polish virtuoso seems to have vanished by the 1850s. Extant reviews from 1843 suggest Kossowski was cancelling performances, with critics showing indifference toward his "careless" playing. (*The Pathfinder*, 13 May 1843, 182). See also Henry Edward Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society of New York; A Memorial* (New York: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1892), 42. Krehbiel accounts for the formation of the New York Philharmonic Society. His inclusion of "Extracts from the Second Annual Report" names Kossowski as a member who had recently left the city. The entry gives no indication to where the pianist relocated; however, this does explain why Kossowski suddenly vanished

The German pianist, Frederick Rakemann (1821-1884) was also recognized for providing early renderings of Liszt's music in America. He arrived in late 1842, and the press quickly took notice. The pianist was said to possess remarkable powers, capable of skillful execution, taste, and feeling.<sup>25</sup> Rakemann's New York debut took place at the Apollo Rooms on 7 November 1842. For this concert, the pianist included Liszt's *La Serenata e L'Orgia Grande Fantaisie sur des motifs des Soirées Musicales de Rossini*, S. 422i; *Hexaméron*, S. 392; unspecified *Songs Without Words* by Mendelssohn; and Thalberg's *Fantaisie sur L'Opera Moïse de Rossini*, Op. 33. Rakemann was praised for his ability to imitate Thalberg's style and for giving equally successful renditions of Liszt's music. The following season, Rakemann offered a three-concert subscription series. His programs included the same pieces from his debut, but also featured various transcriptions of Schubert songs and Liszt's arrangement of Beethoven's "Adelaïde," S. 466. Although Rackemann's performance repertoire of Liszt was not extensive, it was unusual for the time.<sup>26</sup>

Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, the most frequently heard Liszt composition in the United States was his *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor*, S. 397. At the time, Gaetano Donizetti's operas were among the most popular entertainments in New York City and *Lucia* was one of the most successful. The opera was first staged in New York on 15 September 1843 and within a few years became a staple in the local repertoire.<sup>27</sup> Likely, in response to the

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from the New York musical scene. This also seems to prove that Kossowski was an original member of the Society. According to Krehbiel, the Society's first volume of minutes is lost.

<sup>25</sup> See *The New World*, 12 November 1842, 320.

<sup>26</sup> See *Ibid.* Rakemann's public performances of Liszt included approximately four or five transcriptions. He was highly praised for likely the first American performance of *Hexaméron* (1837), for which Henry Cood Watson stated, the work contained "difficulties so difficult [that they could] hardly be conceived."

<sup>27</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1:429-30. During the 1847 season, *Lucia* had a run of nine consecutive performances, marking its first important success. See also Andrew C. Minor, "Piano Concerts in New York City 1849-1865." (Master's thesis, University of Michigan, 1947), 29. In 1849, the opera was staged a total of sixteen times, rivaled only by Vincenzo Bellini's *I Puritani*, which had the same number of performances. See also John Graziano, ed. *European Music and Musicians in New York City, 1840-1900* (Rochester, New York: University of

opera's solid success, pianists wasted no time including *Lucia* fantasies in their programs.<sup>28</sup> Between 1849 and 1859 at least fifteen pianists in New York actively programmed piano solos based on this popular opera. Inclusion of *Lucia* fantasies on concert programs was so common that it seemed practically *de rigueur*. Visiting virtuosos such as Henri Herz (1803-1888), Leopold de Meyer (1816-1883), and Thalberg performed their own arrangements, while August Gockel (1826-1861), Alfred Jaëll (1832-1882) and several of New York's notable pianists, including Richard Hoffman (1831-1909), Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869), and the Austrian-born Gustave Satter (1832-?) played Liszt's.<sup>29</sup> Gottschalk himself seems to have only included three Liszt compositions on his programs, with the *Lucia* fantasy being the one he performed most frequently.<sup>30</sup> Hoffman, who was a student of de Meyer and a dedicated disciple of Thalberg's methods, played multiple arrangements by these two virtuosos; however, when the English-born American pianist decided to program a *Lucia* fantasy, he initially also chose Liszt's.<sup>31</sup>

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Rochester Press, 2006). "An Opera for Every Taste: The New York Scene, 1862-1869." 268. Between 1843 and 1869, *Lucia di Lammermoor* was staged at least once every season, with multiple performances most years.

<sup>28</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 1: 401. On 3 January 1846 Jules Fontana (1810-1869), the disciple of Chopin, made his New York debut, when he likely gave the first American performance of Liszt's *Lucia* fantasy. See *New York Herald*, 4 January 1846. Critical response to Fontana was lukewarm at best with the press focused more on the mediocrity of the pianist rather than the works he programmed. In response, Fontana opted against a concert career, announcing in the press his intention to teach instead.

<sup>29</sup> Between 1845 and 1858 New York audiences heard seven pianists play Liszt's fantasy. Five others performed their own arrangements, two played Émile Prudent's Fantasia on Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Op. 8, while Hoffman apparently played both Liszt's and de Meyer's fantasies, and Jaëll performed both Liszt's and Prudent's.

<sup>30</sup> The other two Liszt works were: *Bénédiction et Serment*, S. 396 from *Benevenuto Cellini* and Weber's *Invitation to the Dance*, arranged by Liszt. Incidentally, by 1856, Gottschalk introduced a fragment of his own *Lucia* fantasy (now lost), thus dropping the Liszt arrangement from his programs.

<sup>31</sup> See "Burke and Hoffman," *Harbinger*, 15 January 1848, 86. Following a concert series in Boston, the *Harbinger* claimed: "His best piece was the fantasia on *Lucia di Lammermoor*, by Litz [*sic*], which the glitter-loving audience had not the good sense to demand again." The press credits Hoffman with one of the earliest performances of this work in America, but they also cite his inclusion of de Meyer's arrangement of the same opera. In light of Hoffman's artistic persuasions one wonders if he actually only performed de Meyer's fantasy, with critics possibly confusing this arrangement with that of Liszt.

Until the second half of the nineteenth century, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor* stood as the only Liszt composition heard frequently and programmed by multiple pianists in the United States. Thus, due to its popularity, Liszt's *Lucia* was perhaps, for the time, the best indicator of his virtuosic style for American audiences. The arrangement is emblematic and implements many Lisztian trademarks: octaves with thirds included, consecutive double notes passages, fleet-fingered cadenzas, tremolos for orchestral effect, and a variety of three-handed figurations. Beyond being an aural extravaganza, the *Lucia* fantasy is also dramatically visual, providing a virtuosic display piece for performers and an entertaining spectacle for audiences.

Following a brief introduction, Liszt presents something very interesting to watch as he transcribes "Chi mi frena in tal momento?" from the finale of Act Two. Liszt begins with the orchestral accompaniment and quickly brings in the duet of Lord Enrico Ashton (baritone) and Sir Edgardo di Ravenswood (tenor), which unfolds into the famous Sextet. Since the duet is between two male voices, their parts occupy the mid-range of the keyboard, while the orchestral accompaniment demands a constant overlapping and crossing of hands to execute:

Example 3.1: Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor*, mm. 14-21<sup>32</sup>

The image shows a musical score for Liszt's *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor*, measures 14-21. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a vocal line (m.d.) and a piano accompaniment (m.s.). The piano part consists of arpeggiated chords in the right hand and foundational harmonic notes in the left hand. Performance markings include 'accentato assai', 'mf', 'mp ma sempre marcato', and 'cresc.'. Fingering numbers are provided for the piano part.

Liszt follows with an extended section (mm. 61-74) encompassing arpeggios in the right hand, while the Sextet's main melodic material sounds as the top note of chords in the left hand. Foundational harmonic notes appear in the bass and the total effect is that of three-handed playing, creating another visually impressive scenario:

<sup>32</sup> Franz Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor Fantaisie Dramatique* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1982).



**Example 3.2: Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor*, mm. 61-62**

The musical score for Example 3.2 consists of two systems of piano music. The first system shows the right hand with a melodic line featuring a trill and a grace note, and the left hand with a chromatic accompaniment. The second system continues the piece with similar textures. Performance markings include *p marc: ed espress: il canto*.

Interspersed between each section, the composer includes trademark chromatic-filigree cadenzas that whizz up and down the entire keyboard. None more impressive, however, than m. 77, where broken chords in octaves ascend the piano chromatically as an orchestral tremolo rumbles beneath. The dramatic gesture leads to the cadenza and a smashing conclusion:

**Example 3.3: Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor*, m. 77**

The musical score for Example 3.3 shows a chromatic ascent of broken chords in the right hand, accompanied by a tremolo in the left hand. The marking *trem.* is present in the left hand.

One local critic called *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor*, “perhaps the most difficult composition attempted in public.”<sup>33</sup> For American audiences at the time, Liszt’s *Lucia* fantasy was apparently recognized as a prime example of cutting-edge piano writing, demonstrating the virtuosic limits to be obtained.

Pianists were also responsible for introducing Liszt’s orchestral works to audiences in the United States. On 6 February 1859, the conductor and ardent Liszt supporter, Carl Bergmann (1821-1876), presented *Les Préludes*, S. 97(1854) to New York City as part of the Schiller Festival. Almost three months later, on 30 April, The New York Philharmonic Society also programmed the work as they closed out the 1858-59 season. In its original conception, this symphonic poem was the novelty of the year; however, the piece was not entirely new to New York audiences. William Mason (1829-1908) and the pianist Candido Bertini had already performed Liszt’s two-piano arrangement of *Les Préludes* two years earlier.<sup>34</sup> On 27 February 1857 the duo was included on the second program of the New York American Music Association’s second season and was pronounced the hit of the evening.<sup>35</sup> Another performance predating the orchestral debut occurred on 11 March 1858, when Satter and Robert Goldbeck (1839-1908) also played the two-piano arrangement.

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<sup>33</sup> *Musical Review and Choral Advocate*, 26 October 1854, 370-71. The comment was made following Mason’s performance of Liszt’s *Illustrations of Le Prophète*, S. 414 on 12 October 1854. Although the writer declared *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor* was “perhaps the most difficult composition attempted in public,” he opined the piece was “ease itself,” after hearing *Illustrations of Le Prophète*.

<sup>34</sup> The arrangement was previously performed by Mason and Satter on 21 January 1857 in Boston. See: *Boston Evening Transcript*, 22 January 1857. The review called the piece: “a noisy, boisterous affair, little else than a grand study for hand and finger exercise that did not commend itself by any melodic beauty either to the mind or ear or listener.” See also *Dwight’s Journal of Music* 10/18 (31 January 1857): 142-43. Dwight was even more critical: “There were here and there brief, flitting fragments of something delicate and sweet to ear and mind, but these were quickly swallowed up in one long, monotonous, fatiguing *melée* of convulsive, crashing, startling masses of tone, flung back and forth as if in rivalry from instrument to instrument. We must have been very stupid listeners; but we felt after it as if we had been stoned, and beaten, and trampled under foot, and in all ways evilly entreated.”

<sup>35</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 2:72-73. The Association’s impetus was to perform and support the work of America composers. Thus, inclusion of Liszt’s symphonic poem although a success, must have seemed a little out of place.

In America throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, performances of Liszt's piano music received modest representation at best. Between 1839 and 1858, well over fifty different pianists appeared on New York concert stages, programming less than thirty different compositions by Liszt. Most were heard once or twice, with few pieces receiving regular performances.<sup>36</sup> Some pianists played the *Grand Galop Chromatique*, the *Lucia* fantasy, or another of Liszt's transcriptions, but works by other virtuosos, especially Thalberg's operatic fantasies, were heard more frequently.<sup>37</sup> Popular keyboardists such as, Jaëll, Gockel, Goldbeck, Gottschalk, Satter, and Maurice Strakosch (1825-1887) may have programmed Liszt, but all played their own compositions more frequently still.

Some attempted Liszt and failed, while others achieved various levels of success. Critics praised Hoffman and Gottschalk for their renditions of the *Lucia* fantasy, while destroying the pianist Gabrielle de la Motte for her attempts. Following her 17 November 1853 debut, for which, de la Motte programmed *Les Patineurs* from Liszt's *Illustrations of Le Prophète*, S. 414, William Henry Fry coldly opined: "We have never heard a woman who could play the music of that master, and, what is more, we never wish to hear one."<sup>38</sup> Although Fry's statement is blatantly sexist, and there is no way to know the legitimacy of his critique on strictly musical grounds; it nonetheless suggests that de la Motte's performance was poorly received.

When the noted pianist, Mason first programmed a *Hungarian Rhapsody*, critical response was not overly enthusiastic. In 1849, the Boston-born musician went to Europe, where he came under the influence of several important pianists and pedagogues, including Ignaz

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<sup>36</sup> See Minor, "Piano Concerts in New York City 1849-1865." Although dated, this thesis remains one of the most exhaustive sources on the subject.

<sup>37</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 2:701. "For more than twenty years, scarcely a pianist had appeared in the United States who had not played Thalberg's compositions, principally his fantasies on themes from operas."

<sup>38</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 2:416. Original review from, *Tribune*, 18 November 1853.

Moscheles (1794-1870), Alexander Dreyschok (1818-1869), and Liszt. Ultimately, Mason was accepted among the first members of the Weimar circle, where he remained for just over a year (April 1853- July 1854). He was surrounded by many of the most talented musicians of the time and absorbed an incredible amount of insight regarding the legendary Hungarian virtuoso. According to Alan Walker, Mason's accounts remain one of the most vivid images of Liszt and the heady environment of the Weimar era: "No one has captured the atmosphere of the Altenburg times more perfectly than William Mason."<sup>39</sup>

In 1854, Mason returned to Boston with New York critics eagerly anticipating his local debut. The pianist gave his first performance in the city on 12 October at Niblo's Saloon, followed by a second engagement two days later. The concerts were preceded with a private matinée at Niblo's on 5 October, which was reviewed by the *Tribune* the following day. For the critic William Henry Fry, Mason was considered a particular novelty deserving special attention, since the United States had produced so few first-class artists.<sup>40</sup> In contrast with what normally was offered from the American concert platform, Mason's selections were unusual and perhaps, unexpected:

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<sup>39</sup> Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Weimar Years, 1848-1861* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1993), 187.

<sup>40</sup> "Mr. Mason, the Pianist," *Tribune*, 6 October 1854, 7. It is also noteworthy that the pianist's father was Lowell Mason (1792-1872), who was one of the most recognized and esteemed musical figures in the United States. This fact coupled with William's American birth likely contributed greatly to the initial interest in the pianist and his career in general.

MASON MATINÉE at NIBLO'S SALOON<sup>41</sup>  
5 October 1854

<i>Rhapsody on Hungarian Airs</i>	Liszt
<i>Sehnsucht Am Meere</i>	Rudolf Willmers
<i>Saltarello</i>	Alexander Dreyschock
Impromptu in A-Flat Major, Op. 29	Chopin
Fugue in E Minor	Handel
<i>Rhapsodie zum Wintermärchen</i> , Op. 40	Alexander Dreyschock
<i>Grand Caprice Héroïque</i>	Antoine de Kotski

The typical operatic fantasy was nowhere to be heard, while auditors might have anticipated more than the single (and unspecified) “Rhapsody on Hungarian Airs” to represent Mason’s significant and highly-publicized time with Liszt.<sup>42</sup>

Mason’s approach to programming remained consistent throughout the pianist’s career. Novel for the time, he typically chose to present well-rounded programs, including some of the earliest American performances of Beethoven sonatas and the local premieres of compositions by Chopin. Regardless of Mason’s association with the Weimar circle and the strategic advantages this afforded, he never capitalized on the opportunity. Mason declined to program large amounts of Liszt and never promoted himself as a Lisztian pianist. According to the music critic and teacher, William Smythe Babcock Mathews (1837-1912), who was an enthusiastic admirer of Mason’s artistry and pedagogical methods, music by Liszt occupied a surprisingly small place in the pianist’s repertoire: “In 1855 when Dr. Mason returned from Weimar, he had no more than at the outside a half dozen concert pieces by Liszt in his repertoire.”<sup>43</sup> Ultimately,

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<sup>41</sup> Program reproduced from the *Tribune*, 6 October 1854, 7.

<sup>42</sup> Mason’s formal debut (12 October 1854) included all of the works he previously played for the private introductory matinée, but he also programmed all three movements of Beethoven’s Piano Sonata in C-Sharp Minor, Op. 27, No. 2 “Moonlight.” This was likely the first time the entire sonata was publicly performed in New York.

<sup>43</sup> William Smythe Babcock Mathews, “Liszt as Pianist and Piano Composer,” *Etude*, 20/5 (May 1902). Mathews suggests that Mason used to “play the ‘Lucia,’ the ‘Rigoletto’ occasionally, and the ‘Second Hungarian Rhapsody,’ having been the first to play it in this country.” Prior to Mason’s years in Germany, the pianist did make a handful of regional concert appearances. For a performance in Cincinnati (16 September 1848), Mason programmed the

Mason's programs tended to showcase music by Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, and the pianist's own compositions.<sup>44</sup>

Although Mason did not focus on Liszt's music to an extent as to be called a specialist, he nonetheless, gave some of the earliest performances of the composer's works in the United States. Beginning with his aforementioned debut, Mason frequently programmed a "Rhapsody on Hungarian Airs." Later concerts cite the pianist playing *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12*, likely the same composition. Mason's first performances of this work were met with mixed reviews. Richard Grant White, critic for the *Morning Courier & New-York Enquirer*, opined that the rhapsody "produced a marked impression . . . the impression was due only to the young musician, for the composition was very rhapsodic and, we are willing to believe, extremely Hungarian, but certainly not melodic."<sup>45</sup> Following another performance in 1856, the critic Theodore Hagen exclaimed: "Liszt's Hungarian fantasies will never do in a concert-room."<sup>46</sup> These reviews in no way suggest substandard performances by Mason, who was considered one of the top pianists in the country. Rather, they demonstrate the uncertainty towards Liszt's music held by American critics at the time.

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*Lucia* fantasy. He seems to have later revived the work for performances in 1868 and 1879. Evidence of Mason giving public performances of Liszt's "Rigoletto" transcription have not surfaced, while Mathews is likely referring to *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12*, rather than the ever-popular No.2. See Kenneth G. Graber, "The Life and Works of William Mason (1829-1908)" (Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Iowa, 1976); see also Graber, *William Mason (1829-1908) An Annotated Bibliography and Catalog of Works* (Warren, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 1989). According to Graber's research, *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12* seems to be the only such work by Liszt that Mason kept in his active performance repertoire.

<sup>44</sup> At his second New York concert, Mason played Liszt's *Illustrations du Prophète de Meyerbeer*, S. 414. Other works he performed throughout his career include Liszt's arrangement of Schubert's Fantasy in C Major, D. 760, (Wanderer Fantasy) for piano and orchestra; the paraphrase of Carl Maria von Weber's *Schlummerlied Mit Arabesken*, S. 454; and a paraphrase from Raff's opera *König Alfred*. See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3:198, 372, and 523.

<sup>45</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 2:505-06.

<sup>46</sup> *The New-York Review and Gazette* (9 February 1856), 35.

Mixed reviews in the press, coupled with a less than dominant presence of Liszt's music from concert stages in the United States, suggests that preference for a different pianistic style and even a certain prejudice toward Liszt's piano music existed in America throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Gottschalk's own critical perspective of Liszt's piano pieces supports this notion and is worth consideration:

In [them] we see the constant effort of one seeking to hide the sterility and triviality of his ideas beneath a mantle of the unusual, the eccentric, and the obscure. He invents nothing. Intoxicated by the facility of his fingers, he piles up difficulty upon difficulty as if he wished only to defy other pianists.<sup>47</sup>

Gottschalk suggests that Liszt's music was difficult for the sake of difficulty itself and nothing more. To assume, however, that pianists avoided this repertoire simply because they lacked the ability to pull it off doesn't make sense. Although more accessible in some ways, many of the pieces by Thalberg, de Meyer, and even Gottschalk present similarly formidable challenges. With other repertoire to choose from, the nature of Liszt's technical demands may have been considered excessive. Gottschalk also seems reluctant to grant Liszt much artistic merit, regardless of his harmonic innovations and ultimate influence on other composers such as Richard Wagner (1813-1883).

In his memoirs, the way Hoffman discusses Liszt, coupled with his direct endorsement of Thalberg is also informative, suggesting a different aesthetic preference regarding pianism at the time. Regarding Liszt, the English-born American pianist has very little to say, and what the author does report, almost seems like an aside. As a child, Hoffman remembers attending Liszt's Manchester concert in 1840 or 1841. He recalled the virtuoso's "curious appearance" and

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<sup>47</sup> S. Frederick Starr, *Bamboula! The Life and Times of Louis Moreau Gottschalk* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 53.

suggests that the virtuoso was “not at that time a general favorite in England.”<sup>48</sup> Hoffman does, however, state: “I regret that I never had an opportunity of hearing him later in life, when I am sure I should have had more pleasure both in his playing and his programmes.” The statement is subtle, but nonetheless, suggestive. It is clear, at least from an initial impression that Hoffman did not care for Liszt’s style or his music. The pianist’s own performance repertoire supports this notion, since beyond youthful performances of *Hexaméron*, S. 392, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor* was apparently the only Liszt composition that Hoffman programmed.

In contrast, Hoffman provides detailed accounts of Thalberg and how the virtuoso had a profound influence on his own musical persuasions: “As a boy I learned nearly all his compositions and operatic arrangements, and have never forgotten them, although I have not looked at the notes for twenty-five years or more.”<sup>49</sup> In discussing the Austrian pianist’s landmark American concerts, Hoffman declares: “He was satisfied to be successful in his own compositions, which remain the best operatic transcriptions extant.”<sup>50</sup> Without going into details or encouraging debate, Hoffman’s convictions are clear. Considering the prominent place of operatic fantasies throughout much of the nineteenth century, the pianist’s opinion supports the notion that some preferred a different aesthetic.

Later in his *Recollections*, Hoffman refers to several of the important pianists he knew and heard throughout his long career in New York; yet with the exception of Hans von Bülow (1830-1894), not a single one directly associated with Liszt finds their way into Hoffman’s memoirs. The exclusion is suggestive, as the author was no doubt familiar with the numerous Lisztian pianists who dominated the New York scene later in the century. Thus, both Gottschalk

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<sup>48</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1910), 82-84.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 86-87.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 129-30.



and Hoffman—two of America’s most prominent musicians—allude to a potential prejudice toward Liszt or at the very least, a preference regarding pianistic style and repertoire that apparently was prominent in America throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.

Considering current approaches to concert programming and prevailing attitudes towards Liszt’s music at the time, this repertoire might have been risky business for a young pianist trying to build a career. As observed with de la Motte, less than perfect performances invited damaging reviews in the press, while encouraging the sustained attacks leveled against Liszt’s compositions in general. Beyond the opinions expressed by Gottschalk and Hoffman, critics in the United States eagerly labeled the composer’s music as “terrible” and “vulgar,” “eccentric,” “excessively tedious,” and, as stated above, Gottschalk faulted the music for being overly difficult.<sup>51</sup> Detractors called Liszt an unimportant composer of “technical trash” and “musical rot.”<sup>52</sup> His orchestral music endured the most severe rebukes, as conductors such as Bergmann and Theodore Thomas (1835-1905) regularly programmed the composer’s symphonic poems, but the virtuoso’s piano pieces were not spared. The critic for the *Albion* summed up the general

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<sup>51</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 2:672. Strong recounts Eisfeld’s Fourth Soirée, which took place on 23 February 1856. Gottschalk performed Chopin’s *Scherzo in B-Flat Minor*, Op. 31 and received a triple encore. His final work was Liszt’s *Bénédiction et Serment: Deux motifs de Benvenuto Cellini de Berlioz*, S. 396. Strong called the piece “a sledgehammer Fantasia, which may have been meant to depict the bombardment of Sebastopol.” The critic, “Gamma,” writing for the *Albion*, also reviewed the performance: “were we Gottschalk, we should by no means consent to expend our talent on Liszt, engrafted on Berlioz,” further calling the arrangement a “terrible piece.” (*The Albion*, 1 March 1856). See also *Times*, 25 December 1860: Reviewing the New York Philharmonic Society concert on 22 December 1860, Seymour opined: “to the very commonplace transcription from ‘Rigoletto’ by Liszt . . . an excess of vulgar and impotent effort . . . This particular quartette has always been considered good, and we see no reason why it should be brought into disrepute by the oppressive patronage of a magnate who never yet touch a simple melody without strangling it.” Seymour continues with an overall positive review of Liszt’s “Festklaenge,” but states “the work is “a very vigorous orchestral production, in which all the acknowledged vices of harmony and harmonic progression are paraded as special boldness and eccentric originalities on the part of the composer.” See also *Times*, 26 March 1860. Seymour says of Liszt’s symphonic poem, *Tasso: lament e triofo*, “The work, considering its excessively tediousness, was well performed.”

<sup>52</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3:198. Mason performed Liszt’s transcription of Weber’s *Schlummerlied*. Hagen called the piece “especially delicious,” while Seymour declared the work, “a mass of technical trash.” See also *Strong on Music*, 3:474-75. George Templeton Strong attended a performance on 12 February 1862. A program for the event was found inside Strong’s journal, complete with marginal annotations. An anonymous pianist performed Liszt’s *La Campanella*. Strong called the piece “musical rot.”

attitude: “Liszt, in all he does is essentially vulgar; his piano compositions are only remarkable for pretending to be what they are not—orchestra pieces.”<sup>53</sup>

### **Liszt by Reputation in America**

Regardless of negative perceptions toward Liszt’s music in general, when Mills appeared on the scene, critics in the United States immediately associated the pianist with Liszt by virtue of his style of playing. Since most Americans had not seen or heard the famous virtuoso himself, an indication of how the musically-informed perceived Liszt will provide perspective to this bold assertion concerning the artistry of Mills.

For audiences in the United States, Liszt must have been an intriguing subject. Since first-hand accounts concerning the virtuoso were sparse, his reputation in the United States was fueled largely by the press, who by the 1830s provided a steady stream of information concerning current musical happenings in Europe. On 16 February 1839, one of the earliest examples in America mentioning Liszt was printed by *The Musical Magazine*, which regularly chronicled London’s musical activities and frequently re-printed British reviews. The original article documents the 1838 season in London. Among the pianists who performed that year, Liszt is mentioned as “that eccentric genius, who delights in taking up indifferent compositions, and transforming them under his hands into beautiful creations of the imagination.”<sup>54</sup> Eight months later, the same periodical ran another article: “The Pianoforte,” which originated in *The London and Westminster Review* earlier that year. The author recalls a public concert given by Liszt in Paris:

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<sup>53</sup> *The Albion*, 7 May 1859, 223.

<sup>54</sup> *The Musical Magazine*, “Piano-Forte Virtuosos in London.” 16 February 1839, 53.

When the last duet began I chanced to be sitting at the end of Liszt's instrument. As it proceeded I felt such a storm of energy in his performance that the boards on which we were placed seemed to spring with life. It was a crash of notes—a passion so intense, so vehement, so violent, that it rose to a strong hysteric, and the artist, after one tremendous sweeping chord, fell back in the arms of his friends.<sup>55</sup>

The colorful prose employed to describe the virtuoso's powerful playing, coupled with the display of extreme showmanship observed in Liszt's final gesture likely sparked great curiosity as such dramatic imagery was seldom, if ever, used to describe a pianist in the United States at the time.

Throughout the 1840s, the press regularly reminded American readers of the Liszt phenomenon, creating a reputation of legendary proportions. A writer for *The Albion* simply stated that his playing “exceeds all bounds.”<sup>56</sup> Another British source, appearing again in *The Musical Magazine* opined: “To speak seriously, the power, caprices, the inequalities, the wonderful genius, and the wonderful impertinences of his pianoforte playing, reached England by report . . . As, therefore, a strong personal interest and curiosity has been excited among the musical public”<sup>57</sup> A more colorful account, from Hans Christian Andersen's “A Poet's Bazaar,” appeared later in *The Christian Parlor Magazine*. Following a concert in Hamburg, the Danish author provides a picturesque depiction typical of audience's response to this new brand of virtuosity: “When Liszt ceased playing, flowers rained down upon him. Lovely young maidens, ancient dames who yet had once been lovely young maidens, flung their bouquets; but he had flung a thousand bouquets of sound into their hearts and heads.”<sup>58</sup> Such entries likely piqued

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<sup>55</sup> *The Musical Magazine*, 12 October 1839, 323.

<sup>56</sup> *The Albion*, 13 March 1841, 96.

<sup>57</sup> “The Pianoforte,” *The Musical Magazine*, 12 October 1839, 323.

<sup>58</sup> “Liszt, the Pianist,” *The Christian Parlor Magazine*, 1 May 1849.

American interest in the virtuoso's abilities and the unusual reception elicited from his audiences.

When technical prowess and his effect on young ladies seemed insufficient, journalists increased the intensity. In November 1840, *The Knickerbocker* printed, "Extracts from a Notebook" as the memoirs of a traveler who heard Liszt in Frankfurt. The writer compared Liszt's playing with the forces of nature and implied supernatural connotations:

Hardly had he sketched the vision before us, when a storm began, such as I have seldom witnessed. The instrument rained, hailed, thundered, moaned, whistled, shrieked round those basaltic columns, in every cry that the tempest can utter in its wildest paroxysms of wrath. It was almost too powerful and ungoverned at the last; and at the instant that this thought entered into the mind, the wind lulled, the elements were spent, the calm came; the brooks and water-courses took up their song of exultation; the air was refreshed, the birds chirped, the sun put forth, and 'the young leaf lifted its green head.'<sup>59</sup>

In 1841, *The Knickerbocker* ran correspondence from another observer who heard Liszt in Hamburg, stating: "No praise can be too extravagant, when applied to him . . . I believe he would depict the Falls of Niagara, and set its solemn under-tones to music, in his matchless mastery of an instrument which I really never *heard* before."<sup>60</sup> The reference to Niagara Falls must have carried significant weight with American readers, since many would have understood the sublimity of this natural phenomenon. Comparing the virtuoso with such an immense force of nature underscored Liszt's gigantic presence on the European music scene, while adding mystique and fascination to the musically-informed in the United States.

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<sup>59</sup> *The Knickerbocker*, November 1840, 420.

<sup>60</sup> *The Knickerbocker*, October 1841, 358.

## The “Liszt School” and Arrival of Mills

Since Mills later became a key figure in early American Liszt reception, a connection to the famous virtuoso has long been speculated. A year prior to the pianist’s arrival in New York, an article in *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* stated Mills’s intentions: “through the efforts of a few friends, was enabled some time ago to proceed to Leipzig, in the hope of adding to his theoretical as well as practical education, under the able direction of M. Liszt.”<sup>61</sup> Documents published later, however, such as biographies and obituaries in the United States, make no mention of such arrangements. As most pianists who did study with the legendary virtuoso (and many who didn’t) eagerly advertised a Lisztian-pedigree, and Mills did not, suggests that these lessons never occurred.<sup>62</sup>

Mason seems to have the final word regarding Mills and studies with Liszt. According to a letter dated 8 July 1867, in response to previous correspondence with Mason, Liszt expresses great interest in meeting both Theodore Thomas and Mills:

Those artists who desire to give themselves the trouble of understanding and interpreting my works are separated, by that alone, from the ranks of the commonplace. I, more than anyone, owe them gratitude, and I shall not fail to show it to Messrs. Thomas and Mills when I have the pleasure of making their acquaintance.<sup>63</sup>

Liszt’s statement indicates that during his studies in Leipzig, Mills never met the celebrated virtuoso. The letter also seems to be in response to previous correspondence by Mason that

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<sup>61</sup> *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 6 March 1858. Obituaries appearing in the British press suggest that Mills did study with Liszt; however, these are likely citing the mentioned article from 6 March 1858. No source to date confirms whether lessons with Liszt took place.

<sup>62</sup> On 8 June 1850 *The Home Journal* ran an account, “Notes from the Journal of a Young American, a Musical Student in Germany.” The article discusses a performance by Carl Mayer and that he “has long been on terms of intimacy” with Franz Liszt. Since Mills reportedly studied with Mayer, this might be the closest connection to Liszt.

<sup>63</sup> William Mason, *Memories of a Musical Life* (New York: The Century Co., 1901), 291-92.

apparently mentioned a forthcoming potential visit. Thus, a meeting with Liszt may have occurred when Mills toured Germany in 1867 or during subsequent visits in 1871 or 1878.<sup>64</sup>

Throughout the 1870s and 1880s the American press documents departures by Mills for Europe and returns to New York, but they do not mention a meeting between the two. Had the pianist spent time with Liszt during one of these European excursions, the press likely would have publicized such a noteworthy event.

Two months after his German debut, the nineteen-year-old Mills arrived in New York City. With conservatory training and European accolades under his belt, Mills quickly established a reputation as capable and available pianist.<sup>65</sup> In the months preceding his formal concert debut, Mills performed with the Mendelssohn Union, the New York Philharmonic Society, and appeared with several other musicians and entertainers. The critic for the *New York Daily Times* declared: “Few artists have had the rare good fortune to vault so speedily into a high place of public regard, even with the rare ability which Mills possesses . . . In a few months he

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<sup>64</sup> 1857-58 seems a very unlikely period for Mills to have studied with Liszt. Circumstances were less than ideal, while it is difficult to know how extensive Liszt’s teaching was during these two years. See Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Weimar Years, 1848-1861* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 412-44 and 492-500. Liszt began the 1857 calendar year ill and bedridden with sores on his legs and abscesses that covered his feet. According to Walker, the composer required crutches to get about. The first four months of 1858 were spent travelling between Prague, Vienna, and Pest, where Liszt had accepted conducting engagements. Shortly after Liszt’s return to Weimar, preparations for the premiere of Peter Cornelius’s comic opera *The Barber of Bagdad* occupied much of Liszt’s time. The opera premiered on 15 December 1858 and was a fiasco, which ultimately led to Liszt resigning his post at Weimar. The time Mills spent in Germany immediately follows the first group of notable Liszt’s students, which includes Hans von Bülow (1830-1894), Carl Tausig (1841-1871), Julius Reubke (1834-1858), Karl Klindworth (1830-1916), Hans Bronsart (1830-1913), and Mason.

<sup>65</sup> See E. Douglas Bomberger, ed. *Brainard’s Biographies of American Musicians* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), 187-89. The entry on Mills (No. 34, August 1880) suggests that he originally arrived in America in 1856, but this seems to be incorrect. See also *The New York Musical Gazette* 8/4 (April 1874) gives the year 1859. British sources place Mills in England until 1857 and also confirm that the pianist remained in Leipzig until 1858.

had placed himself in the foremost rank of living pianists.”<sup>66</sup> Indeed, by the time of his formal concert debut, all eyes were on the young virtuoso.

The much-anticipated event took place on 19 May 1859 at Niblo’s Saloon. Beyond the standard inclusion of vocalists, the evening naturally showcased Mills. His portion of the program included a piano duo, *Hommage à Handel*, Op. 92 by Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870), which Mills performed with his wife (who was a fellow student at the Leipzig Conservatory); an unspecified trio by Mendelssohn, performed with the violinist Joseph Noll and cellist Carl Bergmann (1821-1876); Thalberg’s Etude in A Minor, Op. 45; the Polonaise in E-Flat Minor, Op. 26, No. 2 by Chopin; and two Liszt transcriptions: *Ouverture zu Tannhäuser von Richard Wagner*, S. 442 and the *Hochzeitsmarsch und Elfenreigen aus dem Sommernachtstraum*, S. 410 from Mendelssohn’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Mills won praise in the press for his capacity to “interpret every style of piano composition.”<sup>67</sup> His performance of the Liszt transcriptions, however, elicited the most enthusiastic remarks. Henry Cood Watson, critic for *Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, observed in Mills’s playing: “the highest level of mechanical perfection, flawless scale passages, magnificent octaves, and tremendous power.” The critic ultimately proclaimed Mills the world’s greatest pianist, eclipsing even Thalberg in his mastery of the keyboard.<sup>68</sup>

For over a decade, New York audiences had been accustomed to hearing pianists who were more associated with Thalberg’s style, such as Hoffman and Gottschalk, and had recently

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<sup>66</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3:299. The quotation originally appeared in a review in the *New York Daily Times* 23 May 1859 by the critic Charles Bailey Seymour.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 300. The original review appeared in *Leslie’s Journal* (28 May 1859): 409.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 299.

experienced the landmark concerts of the virtuoso himself.<sup>69</sup> Previous appearances by others such as Rakemann (1842) and Satter (1855), gave audiences a glimpse of the Liszt style because they too had programmed a few of the virtuoso's pieces. The arrival of Mills, however, presented a compellingly strong connection.<sup>70</sup> Charles Bailey Seymour (1829-1869), writing for the *New York Daily Times*, suggested that Mills splendidly represented the [Liszt School], which regarded "all piano emulation of the orchestra as legitimate."<sup>71</sup> Seymour further explained this approach: "Massive combinations, demanding manual strength and digital dexterity; huge fantastic designs, great certainty, and flexibility of touch—these are some of the characteristics of the Liszt School."<sup>72</sup> The critic for the *Albion* also declared: "We have never heard a player of the Liszt School who possesses so many good points. His power is immense but derived legitimately from the wrist; his touch is fine in quality and susceptible of the most nervous inflections; his execution appears to be limitless."<sup>73</sup>

Since very few pianists in America had actually studied with Liszt, the notion of associating one of them with the "Liszt School" requires explanation. An article from 26 November 1853 in *Dwight's Journal of Music*, entitled: "Pupils of Liszt and Mendelssohn" addressed the matter. The author discusses various humbug tactics employed by several

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<sup>69</sup> See Richard Hoffman, *Some Musical Recollections of Fifty Years* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910) 86-87 and 130. In his autobiography, Hoffman virtually declared himself a disciple of Thalberg. See also Emil Liebling, "Gottschalk and His Period," *The Musician* (October 1908): 487. Liebling discusses Gottschalk's compositional style, regarding his operatic fantasies: "In these Gottschalk introduces some startling effects, seemingly novel, but in reality, traceable to the Thalberg school." Regarding the composer's output in total: "Collectively speaking these compositions never transcend the limits of salon music."

<sup>70</sup> See *New World* (29 October 1842): 289 and also: *New World* (12 November 1842): 320. Rakemann first performed in New York on 7 November 1842. His concerts included a handful of Liszt's works; however, an association with the virtuoso was only mildly suggested. Likewise, Gustave Satter (1832-?) also performed several Liszt transcriptions, primarily arrangements of Beethoven's fifth and sixth symphonies. Satter, however, performed his own compositions much more frequently than works by Liszt.

<sup>71</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3:279.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *The Albion*, 9 April 1859, 175.



musicians arriving in America at the time, with the purpose of debunking or at least questioning certain claims. The article humorously suggests how in earlier times a popular strategy was to assume a sort of courtly title, such as: “Pianist to the Emperor of all the Russias;” or “First Violinist to her Royal Highness, the Princess So-and-So;” or perhaps, “Flutist to the Grand Duke of Weiss-nicht-wo.” When the article was published, however, a different strategy was in place: “announce themselves as ‘Pupils’ of Liszt, Thalberg, or Mendelssohn.”<sup>74</sup> That any current pianist might boast an association with Liszt, the author sarcastically remarked:

In regard to Liszt, we think that among the many who choose to recommend themselves by proclaiming that they made their studies under him, (some of them having, perhaps, really played a piece or two to him,) there are not two whom Liszt would be particularly proud to claim as his pupils. Other ‘pupils’ of his have never spoken, much less played, to him; yet as soon as they reach the American shore they become ‘pupils of Liszt.’

Although the article does not cite specific pianists, it clearly suggests that more than one, and likely several, claimed a Lisztian pedigree, hoping to gain publicity through association with the illustrious name.<sup>75</sup>

The case of Mills, however, poses a separate set of circumstances. According to documented sources, the pianist did not promote himself as a student, nor did he claim a connection to Liszt. Associating Mills with the celebrated Hungarian virtuoso occurred when the press suggested that his playing style represented the “Liszt School.” Stating that a pianist in America, based on their performances, was somehow connected to Liszt was a rare association.

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<sup>74</sup> *Dwight’s Journal of Music*, 4/5 (5 November 1853), 61.

<sup>75</sup> Three newly-arrived pianists were likely among those targeted by *Dwight’s Journal*: August Gockel (1826-1861) was fresh from the Leipzig Conservatory and claimed to be a student of Mendelssohn. Julie de Berg hailed from Vienna and claimed to be a pupil of Liszt and Thalberg. Gabrielle de la Motte advertised that she had studied with Liszt, Thalberg, Mendelssohn, and Émile Prudent. Although De la Motte’s success in New York was minimal during her brief stay in the city, she went on to become a successful teacher and member of the Boston musical scene.

In 1842, Rakemann was mildly linked to Liszt following his debut: “We consider Mr. Rakemann a very fine player in the schools of Thalberg and Liszt, and as much he probably ranks higher than anybody that has yet visited America.”<sup>76</sup> That the German pianist successfully demonstrated the “schools of Thalberg and Liszt” is one thing; however, to suggest that Mills’s playing “splendidly represented the Liszt School” was an unusually bold statement.

The chronology of Mills’s arrival in America may also suggest why critics were so eager to label the pianist a representative of the “Liszt School.” For two years prior to Mills’s debut, Thalberg dominated the musical scene. His presence was so significant that few other pianists ventured into New York concert halls between 1856 and 1858, at least while the famed virtuoso was performing in the city. The Americanist Vera Brodsky Lawrence suggests that an overabundance of chamber music and choral concerts account for so few soloists appearing during that time, but the sheer dominance of the virtuoso and an unavoidable comparison with the only pianist to rival Liszt bares consideration.<sup>77</sup> Who could follow Thalberg? The next logical step would be to bring Liszt himself to the United States, which would not happen. Thus, eight months after the Austrian virtuoso’s departure, Mills arrived. Following successful first performances, the pianist was immediately declared greater than Thalberg and a splendid representative of the “Liszt school.” From a certain perspective, it would seem that bestowing such accolades on Mills may have been a strategic move designed to contrast the new pianist’s

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<sup>76</sup> *New World* (12 November 1842), 320.

<sup>77</sup> See Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3:210-11. A handful of other pianists did give concerts in New York City during the period; however, almost without exception, these performances strategically took place when Thalberg was touring. Two women pianists of note, Madame (Countess) de Bienville and Madeline Graever-Johnson (1830-?) gave their debuts. De Bienville performed four concerts and received decent reviews, but quickly faded from the New York scene. For her concert on 7 January 1858 de Bienville programmed Liszt’s *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor*. Graever-Johnson on the other hand, remained in New York until 1862 and achieved great success. For her debut (8 December 1857), she programmed *Les Patineurs* from Liszt’s difficult *Illustrations of Le Prophète*, S. 414. She also played the *Grand Galop Chromatique*, S. 219 and *La Regata Veneziana* from the *Soirées Musicales de Rossini*, S. 424 at subsequent concerts.

style with that of Thalberg, while suggesting to New York audiences a tangible incarnation of Liszt in the absence of the virtuoso himself.

Prior to the arrival of the celebrated Liszt students later in the century, Seymour's description of the "Liszt School" seems to center on certain technical qualities, a performance style, and an overall effect—not necessarily an actual pedigree or musical lineage from the great virtuoso himself. According to Seymour, a Lisztian virtuoso was one who possessed great power, technical precision, confidence, and the ability to create orchestral effects with the piano. Whether the critic ever heard Liszt perform is not known; however, by citing these qualities and connecting Mills so closely to them, Seymour gives a good indication of how audiences perceived the new pianist, while suggesting that Mills may have been the first pianist in America to thoroughly demonstrate this style of virtuosity.

### **A Lisztian Virtuoso in America**

In contrast with all other pianists who preceded him, Mills actively promoted Liszt's piano music and may be called the first Lisztian virtuoso in America. Until the final two decades of the nineteenth century, no other pianist in the United States displayed more dedication to Liszt's piano works or performed them more regularly. Between 1859 and 1862, Mills programmed the paraphrase of Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" and "Dance of the Fairies" from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and/or Liszt's transcription of the Overture from Wagner's *Tannhäuser* for almost every public performance, with the occasional addition of the concert etude, *La Campanella* as an encore. By 1863, *Paraphrase de Concert sur Rigoletto*, S. 434; the *Waltz de L'opéra Faust de Gounod*, S. 407; and Liszt's *Polonaise No. 2 in E Major*, S.

223 also appeared on the pianist's programs. For 1865 and the following season, Mills added *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 10*; *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15*; and *Fantaisie sur La Sonnambula*, S. 393. By 1870 New York audiences had also heard Mills perform Liszt's *Illustrations de L'opéra L'Africaine*, S. 415; Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major; and Piano Concerto No. 2 in A Major.<sup>78</sup> Prior to embarking on his third tour of Germany, Mills gave a farewell concert on 24 April 1878 at Steinway Hall. The program included one of Liszt's *Soirées de Vienne*; *Valse Caprice d'après Schubert*, S. 427; and the transcription of the "Spinnerlied" from Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer*, S. 440.

Like most of his contemporaries, Mills frequently performed arrangements of popular operatic and orchestral literature, but unlike pianists of the previous generation he strategically introduced works by Liszt. The pianist's choice of repertoire often coincided closely with concurrent musical events and the contemporary socio-musical environment of New York City. For example, Felix Mendelssohn's music was widely performed in New York, and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Op. 61 in particular had been a local favorite for almost two decades. On 22 April 1843 the New York Philharmonic Society performed Mendelssohn's overture, likely for the first time in America. For the next twenty years *Midsummer Night's Dream* received regular performances in a variety of scenarios; from the overture alone to the entire play including Mendelssohn's incidental music. Performing Liszt's transcription of this popular work offered

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<sup>78</sup> With Theodore Thomas conducting, Mills gave the American premiere of Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major on 2 December 1865 as part of the Symphony Soirée Series. On 20 April 1867 Mills performed the concerto for the first time with the New York Philharmonic Society. On 26 November 1870 Mills performed Piano Concerto No. 2 in A Major. The American premiere of the second piano concerto was given in Boston on 5 October 1870 by the German pianist Anna Mehlig (1846-1928), with Theodore Thomas conducting. Mills's performance the following month was likely the first time the concerto was performed in New York. See "Miss Mehlig's Concert," *Times*, 5 March 1870, 4. On 7 March 1870 Mills and Mehlig gave a performance of *Hexaméron* arranged for piano duo. The two-piano version was apparently still in manuscript.

audiences a well-loved piece on the one hand and a taste of Liszt's style on the other. Writing for the *New York Daily Times*, Seymour reviewed one of Mills's first performances:

All the strong points of Mills's mechanism became thoroughly apparent. There are few piano pieces that demand so much orchestral color as this, or demand greater presence of mind in the performer. Mr. Mills played the piece faultlessly . . . A success more deserved we have never witnessed.<sup>79</sup>

The same critic previously connected Mills to Liszt through his orchestral style of playing, further recognizing this characteristic in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* arrangement. Thus, Mills keenly identified with the orchestral aspects of Lisztian virtuosity, contrasting with the vocal approach that underscored the currently-popular Thalbergian style.<sup>80</sup>

Mills similarly programmed the transcription of the overture from Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, further exposing audiences to Liszt via another currently popular work.<sup>81</sup> On 21 April 1855 the New York Philharmonic Society gave their first performance of the overture. William Scharfenberg (1819-1895), pianist and president of the New York Philharmonic Society recalled the premiere:

All the features of the success of the overture to 'Der Freischütz' the breathless interest, the momentary hush, the thunderous outburst of applause, were repeated when the overture to 'Tannhäuser' was played by the Philharmonic Society under the direction of Carl Bergmann for the first time.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> "Philharmonic Society," *Times*, 28 March 1859, 4.

<sup>80</sup> See Dana Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). In Chapter One: "Liszt, Thalberg, and the Parisian Publics," Gooley discusses the advantages Thalberg had with Parisian audiences because of the "vocality" of his piano style. This perspective apparently held true for audiences in the United States as well.

<sup>81</sup> Some sources state that Mills performed the transcription of the overture, while others suggest that it was Liszt's "Grand March" from Wagner's *Tannhäuser* ("Freudig begrüßen wir die edle Halle"), S. 445, no. 1.

<sup>82</sup> Henry Edward Krehbiel, *The Philharmonic Society of New York; A Memorial* (New York: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1892), 37-38.

The journalist, Sam Ward (1814-1884) also remembered the performance as one of the most successful orchestral events in recent American history:

Rarely has music exercised a more overwhelming influence than was displayed in the enthusiasm of that audience; and never did the hearts of artists beat with an honester [*sic*] pride in their art on that occasion; the luminous glories of which seemed the dawn of a new era in art.<sup>83</sup>

The overture quickly became a local favorite and was so frequently performed that both critics and audiences apparently grew weary of the music.<sup>84</sup> On 8 April 1859 *Tannhäuser* was staged for the first time in America, just over a month before Mills's own debut. The performance was a success, with the pro-Wagnerian critic Theodore Hagen boasting:

Not only the German, but the American press have almost unanimously appreciated the excellence of the work, and even those who were opposed to Wagner and his music cannot help acknowledging that the so-called 'Music of the Future' will do very well for the present, at least of [*sic*] America.<sup>85</sup>

Beginning with his formal debut, Mills frequently programmed Liszt's *Tannhäuser* transcription, enduring himself to the public and winning critical respect. In light of the overture's popularity and the initial success of the opera itself, the pianist's performance was well-timed. It is unclear whether Mills realized the overture's local appeal; however, he was probably aware of the operatic premiere and its positive reception only a month prior to his own concert debut. By strategically programming this work, Mills took advantage of current musical events and seized another opportunity to perform Liszt.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>84</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3:126n.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 231. See Theodore Hagen's review in the *Review and Gazette* (16 April 1859): 116.

When Mills first programmed *Waltz de L'opéra Faust de Gounod*, S. 407, he introduced another example of Liszt's music while anticipating an upcoming blockbuster. During the central decades of the nineteenth century, there was no greater operatic triumph in New York City than productions of Gounod's *Faust*, which began with the conclusion of the 1863 season.<sup>86</sup> The American press greatly anticipated the local premiere, stating that since its debut four years earlier, Parisian audiences heard the work over seven hundred times.<sup>87</sup> In New York, the opera sparked wild fire, which consumed the city for the next two seasons. Between 1863 and 1865 *Faust* was staged in both Italian and German for a total of forty-one performances, eclipsing all other productions. Composed in 1861, Liszt's fantasy focuses primarily on the waltz scene that concludes the opening act and the love duet between Faust and Marguerite from the second. Full of orchestra-like outbursts, intricate filigree passagework, and glissandos woven into the final statement of the waltz, this dazzling arrangement effectively demonstrates Lisztian virtuosity. Mills may have gone to great lengths, acquiring and quickly learning the recently-published showpiece. He gave the first American performance of *Valse de l'opera Faust de Gounod* on 7 November 1863, which predated the operatic premiere and provided further popular exposure to Liszt's music.<sup>88</sup>

For his first five seasons in New York, Mills mainly programmed Liszt's arrangements of music by others; however, by 1865 the pianist expanded his repertoire, showcasing some of the composer's original works. On 23 February 1865, Mills was a performer for the Metropolitan Musical Association Concert. For this event, he chose *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 10*, which

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<sup>86</sup> The New York City debut took place on 25 November 1863.

<sup>87</sup> See *New York Herald*, 23 November 1863, 2. See also *New York Times*, 25 November 1863, 4.

<sup>88</sup> Mills's promotion of this work was, however, rather short lived. By 1864, as with most other important pianist in the city, Mills had published his own arrangement: *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust de Gounod*, Op 17. Thus, by April of the same year, he was performing his own composition and had dropped the Liszt arrangement from his active repertoire.

received little attention in the press. Two weeks later, the pianist gave a soirée at Steinway's Rooms, concluding his program with the same composition. This time, the piece was encored, with the *Tribune* declaring: "the performance of Liszt's 'Rhapsodie Hongroise' was by far the most brilliant as a feat of executive agility that Mr. Mills gave during the evening . . . Mr. Mills possesses a most perfect technique, so perfect indeed, that it is hardly possible to imagine anything superior."<sup>89</sup> Unlike previous performances by other pianists, Mills typically won praise for playing Liszt's solo piano works, with critics focusing on his ability to do so rather than dwelling on issues they might have with the compositions themselves.

Having found success with *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 10*, Mills soon began programming *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15*, commonly called the *Rákóczy March*. Following a concert at Irving Hall on 13 May 1865 the writer for the *Tribune* commented on the pianist's rendition:

His performance of that wonderful Rakozy March [*sic*] by Liszt, wonderful for its monstrous difficulties, which horrify the beholder, astonish the hearer, and delight no one, was a magnificent specimen of mechanical execution. It could hardly have been more perfectly rendered.<sup>90</sup>

Again, the local press marveled at Mills for his playing, while audiences responded with "tumultuous applause" and demanded encores.<sup>91</sup> The Rhapsody was so well received that the pianist took every opportunity, including this work for most of his concerts throughout the next few seasons. By 1865, Mills had given exceptional performances of several Liszt compositions, which impressed audiences and provided them a means by which to better understand this music. The pianist's next move was to include an orchestra.

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<sup>89</sup> "Mr. Mills's Soiree of Piano-Forte Music," *Tribune*, 07 March 1865, 5.

<sup>90</sup> "Concert of Mr. S. B. Mills," *Tribune*, 16 May 1865, 5.

<sup>91</sup> See *New York Herald*, 20 May 1865; *New York Post*, 9 October 1865, 2; and *New York Times*, 9 October 1865, 4.



On 2 December 1865, with Theodore Thomas wielding his baton, Mills gave the American premiere of Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major. The press declared the new work "an interesting, yet bizarre original." Although dedicated to Liszt's friend and fellow virtuoso pianist, Henry Litolff (1818-1891), the press immediately concluded that the composer must have written the concerto for his "fussy henchman and friend," Hans von Bülow, which explained the over-abundance of passage work and inordinate difficulty:

The leading *motivo*, we think, is ductile but commonplace; it can be turned into a dozen different shapes, and, in fact, has been so turned over and over again. The slow movement is only pretty. To dress these subjects gorgeously; to exhibit as much breastpin as possible; to display the greatest amount of watch-chain and ring and shirt-bosom, has been the evident intent of Liszt. He has done better when he has sought to do less. But writing for a pianist like von Buelow [*sic*], and finding a better one like Mills, he has served a useful purpose.<sup>92</sup>

The critic for the *Tribune* lauded Mills: "In every point of execution, whether of delicacy, force, or sentiment, we could ask for nothing more for the perfect rendering of this concerto than he afforded us. It was, of all his public performances, the most brilliant, the most masterly, and the most entirely satisfactory."<sup>93</sup> Seymour gave final praise to the pianist, while taking another jab at the composer: "Mr. Mills played with wonderful force and *bravura*; with singular clearness and finish; and with a purpose that almost made us think that Liszt had one when he wrote the concerto."<sup>94</sup> Despite another successful performance by Mills, these reviews demonstrate the general attitude American critics held towards Liszt's original compositions. They often accepted his works for their originality but quickly condemned their eccentricities, the over-abundance of technical display, and ultimately questioned their validity. Mills may have been

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<sup>92</sup> *Times*, 10 December 1865, 5.

<sup>93</sup> *Tribune*, 5 December 1865, 7.

<sup>94</sup> *Times*, 10 December 1865, 5.

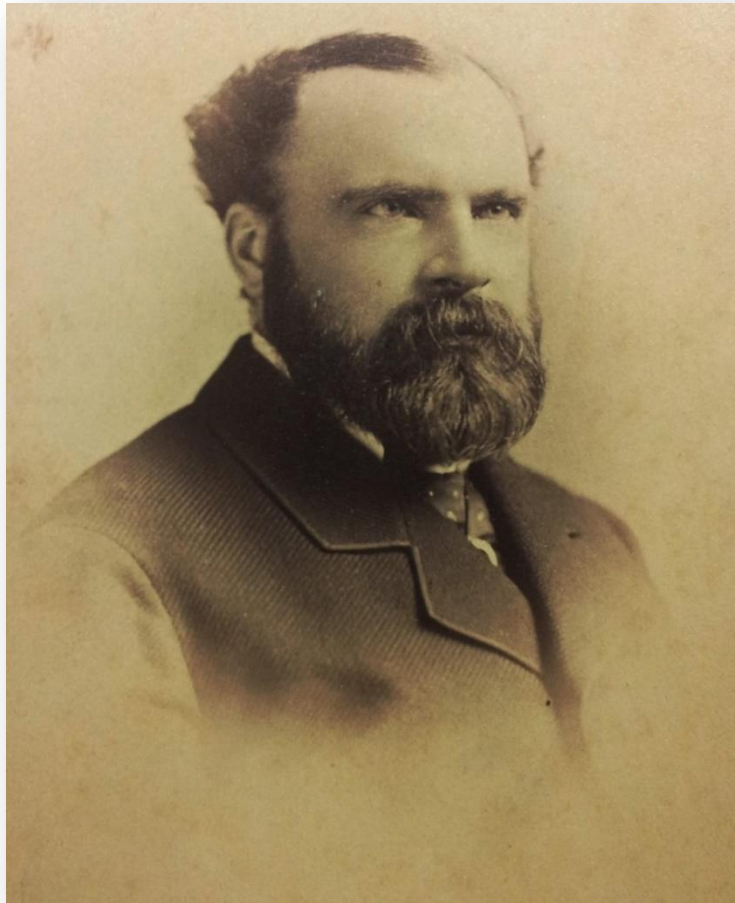
sensitive to this perspective, playing only Liszt's arrangements of other composer's works for years before attempting potentially controversial original pieces.

Even Mills's performances were not always beyond the tirades of the press. On 22 December 1860, he performed Liszt's *Paraphrase de Concert sur Rigoletto*, S. 434 for the first time in America. Seymour's response was incredibly harsh, calling the work "an excess of vulgar and impotent treatment."<sup>95</sup> The critic concluded with a strong reprimand of Liszt's transcriptions and arrangements in general, stating that the composer "dined off" the reputations of numerous first-rate composers, meddling with their music, and ultimately "strangling" the melodies.<sup>96</sup> Such condemnations were rare when Mills played Liszt; however, the review does underscore the attitude sustained by American critics toward the composer throughout much of the nineteenth century.

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<sup>95</sup> *Times*, 25 December 1860, 5.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*



**Figure 3.1: Portrait of Sebastian Bach Mills by Falk. Collection of the author.**

Mills was one of the most dynamic and high-ranking pianists in nineteenth-century America, and documenting his career gives enlightening perspective toward early Liszt reception in the United States. Two decades earlier, pianists were already playing Liszt's works in America; however, none promoted the virtuoso's music to the extent that Mills did. His very active performance schedule afforded New York audiences frequent opportunities to embrace Liszt's music, while providing greater knowledge of the composer. One writer simply stated:

“His (S. B. Mills) technique is perfect. In regard to technique his is second only to Liszt.”<sup>97</sup>

Another declared: “Mr. S. B. Mills, who undoubtedly stands king among all pianists this country has known . . . and whose superb abilities invariably sweep his audiences into great enthusiasm.”<sup>98</sup> Virtuosity allowed the pianist to showcase this repertoire and invited a close connection to the composer, while critically acclaimed performances by Mills likely became an important factor toward overcoming what negative bias existed toward Liszt’s music. Since the celebrated virtuoso never visited America, his music relied upon the endorsement and successful presentation of musicians like Mills.

Whether Mills was responsible for the foundation of a “Liszt School” of piano playing in America is difficult to determine. Since the pianist apparently did not study with the master, a connection to the legendary virtuoso is made by virtue of his playing style alone. Mills taught throughout his career, but documents suggest he was most active as a pedagogue later in life. One of his star pupils was the Cincinnati-born Julie Rivé-King (1854-1937). Following studies with Mills and Mason, King went to Europe, where she did receive instruction from Liszt.<sup>99</sup> In 1874, she returned to a very active and successful concert career in the United States. Other notables who studied with Mills include the American composer, pianist, and organist, Homer Newton Bartlett (1845-1920), and the prominent New York piano pedagogue, Carl M. Roeder (1870-1952).

Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century, the American press mentions several other pianists who studied with Mills. Some had

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<sup>97</sup> *The National Police Gazette*, 12 April 1879, 15.

<sup>98</sup> *The Christian Union*, 29 March 1871, 198.

<sup>99</sup> Some sources suggest that the pianist William H. Sherwood also studied with Mills; however, most accounts cite only Mason as his primary instructor in New York City. Sherwood also went on to study with Liszt. Mills dedicated his *Etude de Concert*, Op. 15, No. 2 to Sherwood. Another promising young student was Herman A. Rietzel (1863-1882), who died tragically at the age of nineteen, shortly after studies in Germany.

regional success, such as H. S. Krouse (1853-?) who was influential in the development of musical culture in Salt Lake City; Cordelia Smitsaert, who fulfilled a similar position in Colorado and the west; Estelle Roy-Schmitz, who was on the faculty of the Ward-Belmont School in Nashville; and David Walton Perkins (1847-1929), who made his New York debut in 1869. Perkins eventually settled in Chicago, where he and William H. Sherwood (1854-1911) founded the Sherwood School of Music in 1897. The Brooklyn-born tenor, Albert G. Thies, made his New York debut in the late-1870s as a pianist and was recognized for playing Chopin. He later abandoned piano performance in favor of an international singing career. Among the prodigies who studied with Mills were Julia Feist, Louise Hoeh, and Willie Pape (1850-1901). Hoeh was Brooklyn-born and made her debut at twelve years old. She went on to be a notable local talent. Feist was also from New York and made her debut at Steinway Hall on 18 January 1882. She also sustained a local career. Pape on the other hand, was one of Mills's earliest students. He was born on 27 February 1850 in Mobile, Alabama. The family moved to New York during the Civil War, where Pape studied with Mills, and they remained until 1863. Between 1863 and 1875, Pape toured Europe as a prodigy. Upon returning to the United States, Pape gave up music to study medicine. He practiced and served on the faculty at the Medical College of Mobile as professor of Physiology and Hygiene. Pape died on 30 August 1901.<sup>100</sup> The New York press mentions several other local teachers and pianists who studied with Mills and sustained minor careers, having long since vanished into obscurity.

In terms of pedagogical approach, Mason, who was the first American pianist to study with the famous virtuoso, might be a better candidate concerning the perpetuation of a Liszt

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<sup>100</sup> Chen, Amy, "The Willie Pape Scrapbooks: An Antebellum Alabama Child Prodigy," *Cool@Hoole* (12 December 2012). <https://apps.lib.ua.edu/blogs/coolathoole/2012/12/12/the-willie-pape-scrapbooks-an-antebellum-alabama-child-prodigy/>, consulted 16 May 2016.

tradition in the United States. Although Mason did perform to a certain extent, he devoted extensive efforts to teaching. Eventually other Liszt students, such as Raphael Joseffy (1852-1915) and much later, Alexander Siloti (1863-1945) became fixtures of the New York scene. Both were important teachers, representing a strong pedagogical link to Liszt as well. Through extensive performances and his teaching, Mills may also be credited for imparting a love and dedication for Liszt's music.

During his active years as a performer, Mills successfully filled the role of pianist in the American concert realm. In the late 1850s and throughout the 1860s, when he entered the performance arena, the piano recital was a rarity. Pianists seldom played entire programs without the assistance of other musicians, and Mills was no exception. When a pianist was included in a program, they generally played virtuosic arrangements, transcriptions, and fantasies, especially ones based on operatic sources. Although Mills occasionally programmed Beethoven sonatas and other music that was considered classical, and was recognized for local premieres and interpretations of Chopin, the bulk of Mills's concert repertoire initially remained in the categories of fantasies, transcriptions, and Liszt's original works.<sup>101</sup> Based on his virtuosic abilities, Mills was able to carve out a niche as a Lisztian pianist when very few others were playing this repertoire. Whether Mills's decision was strategic, striking out on new ground or simply the result of his musical tastes in general is hard to say; likely a combination of both. In this regard, however, he was somewhat ahead of the curve. Most virtuosos in America throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century would follow the model set by Mills, when programming Liszt became the rule rather than the exception.

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<sup>101</sup> On 11 February 1860 Mills gave the American premiere of Chopin's Fantasy in F Minor, Op. 49.

During the latter half of Mills's career, several pianists who studied with Liszt himself arrived in the United States. This virtuoso class included Anna Mehlig (arrived in 1869), Anton Rubinstein (1872), Hans von Bülow (1875), Julie Rivé- King (1875), Arabella Goddard (1876), Raphael Joseffy (1879), Adele Aus der Ohe (1886), and Moritz Rosenthal (1889), to name a few. Since these virtuosos (except Rubinstein) were direct products of Liszt, their performances naturally included his compositions. In programming their master's compositions, these pianists were well received, demonstrating a shift in attitude towards Liszt that was spearheaded by Mills.

Pianists also began filling entire concert programs, without the traditional assistance of other performers. In doing so, works by Bach, Chopin, Scarlatti, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms became standard repertoire, ultimately appearing as much as or more frequently than Liszt's own music.<sup>102</sup> The pianist's canon was becoming established, with concert programs that soon resembled the modern piano recital. Ultimately, Mills followed suit, giving occasional "musical soirées" throughout the late-1870s and early-1880s. For these recitals, Mills expanded his performance repertoire beyond his typical Liszt selections to include music by the aforementioned composers.

During this era of extreme change, Mills eventually turned from the concert stage, devoting more time to teaching and composition. There is no conclusive evidence explaining his decision; however, one source suggests that when Joseffy arrived in New York (1879), Mills retired.<sup>103</sup> The Hungarian pianist, who is the subject of Chapter 4, was a student of Carl Tausig

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<sup>102</sup> See Rena Charnin Mueller's essay, "Liszt (and Wagner) in New York, 1840-1890." *European Music and Musicians in New York City, 1840-1890*, ed. John Graziano, 59. When Dionys Prückner (1834-1896) visited New York in 1871-72, the only Liszt work he included in his programs was the arrangement of Weber's *Polonaise Brillante*. This seems somewhat surprising considering the pianist was a student of Liszt.

<sup>103</sup> "Sebastian Bach Mills Dead," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 24 December 1898, 5.

(1841-1871) and Liszt. His repertoire was extensive, including the same concertos and Liszt pieces that Mills championed, and more. In contrast to Mason, who limited performance activity in favor of teaching, Joseffy would become the first Liszt student to settle in America and establish a long and extensive career as both performer and teacher. Although the local press does not give specific details, they do allude to various health issues that may have also been contributing factors toward Mills curtailing his performance schedule.<sup>104</sup> Throughout the 1880s Mills remained active, however, on a much smaller scale and mainly in chamber music performance, which tapered to retirement in the 1890s.

The main purpose of this chapter examines Mills's important position in the early dissemination of Liszt's piano music in America; he nonetheless was also a key figure in many other facets of the New York musical scene. As a concerto performer, Mills played with the New York Philharmonic Society each season between 1859 and 1877 and was made an honorary member of the Society in 1866. He also appeared regularly with the Brooklyn Philharmonic and various other orchestral series. Several concerto performances by Mills were premieres in the United States or first-time presentations with the New York Philharmonic Society. Most notably, Mills was soloist for the American premieres of Schumann's Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54 (20 February 1859 with Bergmann/26 March 1859 with the New York Philharmonic Society); Ignaz Moscheles's Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 58 (11 February 1860); Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, Op. 21 (9 November 1861); Ferdinand

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<sup>104</sup> On 5 September 1880 the *Times* printed a short entry under the "Record of Amusements" column in which the pianist's health is a brief topic of discussion: "Mr. S. B. Mills was prevented by illness last season from playing, but having taken a long and needed rest at Catskill and Saratoga, will return next week in his usual health." (*Times*, 5 September 1880, 7). The article does not mention any specific ailments. Furthermore, throughout fall of 1879 and spring 1880, Mills did make several appearances, albeit on a much smaller scale than in previous years. Upon his return from Europe on 22 September 1889, Mills gave a brief and very rare interview. The ensuing article appeared the following day in the *Times*, with a quote from the pianist: "I went abroad to better my health . . . and I accomplished my desires." (*Times*, 23 September 1889, 8).



Hiller's Piano Concerto in F-Sharp Minor, Op. 69 (7 November 1863); Weber-Liszt *Polonaise Brillante*, in E Major, Op. 72 (5 November 1864); Mozart's Piano Concerto in C Major, K. 503 (4 November 1865); Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major, S. 124 (20 April 1867); Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 2 in A Major, S. 125 (26 November 1870, New York premiere only); Carl Reinecke's Piano Concerto in F-Sharp Minor, Op. 72 (6 January 1872); Hans von Bronsart's Piano Concerto in F-Sharp Minor, Op. 10 (17 February 1877); and Joachim Raff's Suite for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 200 (24 November 1877).

Mills was also active and highly lauded as a collaborative and chamber pianist. Without exception, reviews of his concerto and chamber music performances were overwhelmingly positive. As a composer, Mills was mildly prolific, with about sixty catalogued works (See Appendix Three). Entirely for the piano, this music demonstrates the influence of Chopin and Liszt, the two composers Mills performed most. Much of his output is accessible to the amateur, such as the once popular first *Tarantella*, Op. 13 (1863), while *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8 (pub. 1876); *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17 (1864), and the *Etudes de Concert*, Op. 15 (pub. 1882) to name a few, are technically difficult, demanding a high level of virtuosity.<sup>105</sup>

Mills died on 21 December 1898 in Wiesbaden, Germany. According to various sources in the American press, the pianist and his wife, Marie Antonia Young Mills, left New York in

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<sup>105</sup> Mills's published output supposedly includes at least sixty compositions; however, not all are accounted for. *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8 appears to be the first catalogued composition available, leaving the existence of Op. 1 through Op. 7 questionable. Op 8 through Op. 48, and Op. 60 are confirmed, while another gap includes Op. 49 through Op. 59. Whether the eighteen missing compositions were ever published is not clear but the surviving opus numbers do suggest that the remaining pieces were composed. Two different works are cataloged as Op. 35, while four other pieces are without opus numbers.

April/May 1898.<sup>106</sup> The *Times* suggests that Mrs. Mills “expressed a wish to end her days in Germany, her birthplace.” The *Tribune* stated that the pianist intended to remain abroad for three years and expected a return to New York thereafter. The Chicago press seems to agree with the *Times* that although Mrs. Mills and her extended family were of Chicago, she wished to return to the place of her birth. The press also suggests that the pianist intended to establish himself as a teacher in Germany, but the remaining months of his life hardly made this possible. The press alludes to Mills being in bad health for some time, and according to the *Chicago Tribune*, Mills’s brother-in-law, Otto Young, received word that the pianist had suffered an apoplectic stroke three weeks prior to his death. Apparently, paralysis set in and Mills never recovered.<sup>107</sup>

Mills’s frequent performances, coupled with his active teaching career did more to promote Liszt’s music in America than any pianist before him. According to Lawrence: “As a matter of historical record, Sebastian Bach Mills, over a long and lustrous career was one of the highest ranking, if least remembered, pianists of the American musical nineteenth century.”<sup>108</sup> Investigating Mills’s career, his prominent position before the arrival of the celebrated Liszt students toward the end of the century, and his early devotion to the composer’s music sheds light on another corner of the pianistic realm and illuminates the musical landscape of the United States.

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<sup>106</sup> *Democrat and Chronicle* (Rochester, New York), 19 April 1898, 6: “S. B. Mills, the veteran pianist, leaves New York to-day for an extended trip to the musical centers of Europe.”

<sup>107</sup> See “Sebastian Bach Mills Dead,” *Times*, 24 December 1898, 14; *Tribune*, 25 December 1898, A12; and “Sebastian Bach Mills Dead,” *Chicago Tribune*, 24 December 1898, 5.

<sup>108</sup> Lawrence, *Strong on Music*, 3:288.

## Chapter Four

### THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE PIANO AND THE CASE OF RAFAEL JOSEFFY

As fall approached and the 1879-80 concert season loomed on the horizon, rumors of the Hungarian pianist Rafael Joseffy (1852-1915) coming to America reached the New York press. Over the past two decades the city had welcomed several of Europe's most celebrated keyboard superstars. Some concertgoers remembered the landmark tours of Liszt's rival, Sigismund Thalberg (1856-58), but none made greater impacts than Anton Rubinstein (toured 1872-73) and more recently, Hans von Bülow (toured 1875 -76). Furthermore, twenty years had come and gone since a virtuoso the caliber of Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898) who arrived in 1859, embraced New York and decided to make the city his home. Joseffy would be next, and his credentials were impressive. The pianist was born in Hunfalu, a small Hungarian village, part of present-day Slovakia. At sixteen, he was sent Berlin to study with the eminent Liszt disciple, Carl Tausig (1841-71), whose playing was legendary, and whose recent and early demise was still being discussed among America's musically informed. In 1870, Joseffy went on to study with Liszt himself in Weimar, where he remained for two years. Following his Berlin debut in 1872, the pianist's reputation spread quickly across Europe and he was recognized as one of the great young talents. In 1879, Joseffy arrived in New York with the intention of touring for a season under the auspices of the Chickering Piano Company. One year led to thirty-five more; Joseffy established himself as a resident pianist and one of the most important musical figures in nineteenth-century America.

In this chapter, I investigate Joseffy's career and contributions to the New York musical scene. As a resident virtuoso, and one of the earliest in what might be called the golden age of the piano in America, Joseffy holds a special position. His performance record, devotion to teaching, and work in music editing provide insight, while illuminating the bustling musical landscape of New York City during the last decades of the nineteenth century. My discussion begins with Joseffy's landmark debut season, documenting his extensive concert activity, repertoire, and approach to programming. Next, I investigate the pianist's performance relationship with conductors, especially Theodore Thomas (1835-1905). Engagements with the famous American conductor spanned more than a decade, accounting for a majority of the virtuoso's large number of concerto appearances and the bulk of his public performance record. The relationship between these two eminent musicians sheds light on the pianist's approach to concert presentation, while illustrating certain aspects of performance practice during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Following a highly publicized and mysterious hiatus from the concert stage, Joseffy turned much of his efforts to pedagogy and music editing. A discussion of the pianist's commitment to teaching reveals how he directly impacted a generation and how Joseffy's influence resonates well into the twentieth century. Finally, I address Joseffy's work in music editing, another area with long-ranging significance, and how this final effort brought an illustrious career to a close.

### **The Debut Season, 1879-80**

Joseffy's first season in the United States was extraordinary. Including concerto appearances, solo recitals, matinées, and chamber music concerts, the pianist performed over thirty times in New York City alone. Local concertgoers had not experienced a pianistic exposition of this

magnitude since Rubinstein and Bülow accomplished similar feats earlier in the decade. An investigation of Joseffy's extensive performance record throughout his debut season helps illustrate the vibrancy of the New York musical scene, while demonstrating the local appetite for piano concerts in general. Documenting many of the pianist's New York City activities in terms of repertoire and programming approaches, with the addition of critical response from the press, presents a clear image of Joseffy, the pianist and performer.

On 14 September 1879 the *New York Times* announced that Joseffy had departed the previous day from Le Havre aboard the steamer *L' Amerique*, en route for the United States.<sup>1</sup> A week later his location was still somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean but the *Times* eagerly anticipated the pianist's arrival with a bold statement designed to capture the attention of New York's musical establishment: "This young virtuoso, who has suddenly become famous, is a pupil of Taussig [*sic*], and has received so many flattering endorsements from foreign critics and eminent musicians that he will naturally be listened to with interest."<sup>2</sup> The *Times* also announced his debut was postponed to 13 October but confidently predicted Joseffy would, "make a sensation here."

On Monday evening 13 October 1879, Chickering Hall was packed with an audience that, "contained a great number of the musical profession" who were, "attracted by a natural curiosity to hear a young virtuoso who has suddenly come to the front rank in Europe." Led by Leopold Damrosch (1832-1885), his orchestra performed Mendelssohn's overture to *Athalie*, and the "Adagio" from Saint-Saëns' Symphony No. 2, Op. 55. The great attraction, however, was Joseffy, who was the soloist in both Frédéric Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 11

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<sup>1</sup> According to William Steinway's personal diary, Joseffy arrived on 24 September 1879. <http://americanhistory.si.edu/steinwaydiary/>, consulted 11 June 2016.

<sup>2</sup> *New York Times*, 21 September 1879, 7.

and Franz Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major, S. 124. The critic for the *Times* called the program one of "such a high standard as to assure the lovers of music of an evening of uncommon interest and there was no disappointment." The review went on praising the pianist's style: "Herr Joseffy's perfect technique and exquisite taste are his two strong points . . . he does not pound the piano to pieces—but he is sufficiently strong for all essential purposes, and in the long and exacting programme last evening he did not falter or fail to play with expression and artistic appreciation of his music."<sup>3</sup>

Joseffy's rendition of the Chopin concerto was the highlight of the evening, with the writer for the *Times* stating that the Allegro and Romanza were, "both specimens of piano-playing that approached perfection." The Liszt concerto was no less successful, as the critic again stated that Joseffy "closed the concert with a brilliant audience waiting to hear the last notes of the work, and calling him out again to receive their applause." Toward the mid-point of the program, Joseffy inserted a set of solo pieces that included Johann Sebastian Bach's *Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue* in D Minor, BWV 903, the pianist's own arrangement of Luigi Boccherini's "Minuet," and his etude-version of Chopin's Waltz in D-Flat Major, Op. 64, No. 1 with added double notes and filigree. For these pieces, the pianist "won so much applause that he was unable to resist the demand of the audience, and played, for an encore, a tarantella of Liszt."<sup>4</sup> The critic concluded by announcing Joseffy's next concert for the following evening and that "he will be listened to with an interest that very few pianists have ever excited in New York."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> "Joseffy at Chickering Hall," *Times*, 14 October 1879, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. The *Tarantella* from Liszt's *Années de Pèlerinage, Deuxième Année: Italie, Venezia e Napoli*, S. 161.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

The review in the *New York Tribune* was impressive, as the writer recounted features in Joseffy's playing that would become recognizable trademarks of his performance style:

He is brilliant, yet not noisy, dashing without clatter. Neither does he dazzle us with hashes of irregular splendor, or overcome us with outbursts of passion and tempest. His playing, full as it is light, of life, of glowing color and of strong feeling, is justly measured and exquisitely symmetrical. Indeed, it is most brilliant when it is most delicate... There is perhaps no pianist now living whose work is so clean. Every note has its exact value and makes its exact effect. Every phrase is so clear that it shines; and every little embellishment keeps its outlines perfect. Nor is this precision the result of mere mechanical practice. It seems, on the contrary, to be the simplest expression of a poetical nature highly endowed with a sense of the beauty of form and proportion. Coupled with this elegance of execution is a wonderful—we are tempted to say an unparalleled—beauty of touch . . . If Joseffy's style was a surprise, his tone was a revelation. Few of us believed that the piano could produce sounds so sweet and so varied. Whenever he pressed the keyboard he dropped jewels from his fingers.<sup>6</sup>

Joseffy's local debut was an overwhelming success, leaving critics dazzled and searching for appropriate ways to describe the pianist's effect on audiences and his ability to coax such beautiful sounds from the instrument. The pianist's magical touch was apparently new and an unexpected surprise for listeners who seemed all too prepared for another piano thumper—and Joseffy was just getting started. For his first two weeks in New York, the pianist scheduled four more concerts and two Saturday matinées before short excursions to Brooklyn and Boston.

Joseffy's second performance took place on Wednesday, 15 October 1879. Again, Chickering Hall was filled with curious spectators and, according to the *Times*, the audience was again “composed of the best professional and amateur musicians of the City.”<sup>7</sup> This concert followed the same strategy employed two nights prior. This time, Joseffy began with Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-Flat Major, Op. 73, followed by a set of five solo pieces,

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<sup>6</sup> “Debut of Mr. Joseffy,” *New York Tribune*, 14 October 1879, 4.

<sup>7</sup> “Joseffy at Chickering Hall,” *Times*, 17 October 1879, 5.

and concluding with Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra*, S. 123. Although the pianist's success seemed complete after playing concertos by Chopin and Liszt, the writer for the *Times* suggested the Beethoven's *Emperor* would be a truer test of the pianist's abilities. His performance of the concerto met every expectation: "It was exquisitely played by Joseffy, and any doubts as to his ability to interpret the great master with the dignity and artistic conception of a natural-born and well-trained musician were set at rest."<sup>8</sup> The *Hungarian Fantasy* was also "played in grand style and with a dash and spirit never before heard in New York." Of the solo works on the program, the Fugue in A Minor by J. S. Bach was "played in a masterly way, showing his perfect technique," while Joseffy's arrangements of a Gavotte by Giovanni Battista Martini (1706-1784) and an Aria by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736), were rendered with "the most charming and delicate exhibitions of his graceful style."<sup>9</sup> Joseffy's final solo piece was Liszt's arrangement of the "Spinnerlied" from Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer*, which "surprised the audience and was so vehemently applauded" that the pianist was forced to return and gave Liszt's transcription of Schubert's *Barcarolle* for an encore.

Underscoring Joseffy's critical success, the *Times* declared, "no such complete and thoroughly satisfactory piano-playing had been heard in New-York [*sic*] in this generation." With this statement, the review then compared Joseffy's "grace and elegance" to that of Thalberg, and his technical accuracy to Bülow, "without that artist's coldness."<sup>10</sup> With these two concerts finished, the young virtuoso completed the demanding feat of performing four different works for piano and orchestra in seventy-two hours. Although such presentations were not

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> On 2 October 1879 the *Zion Herald* announced the recent publication by Oliver Ditson & Co. of the Martini *Gavotte* arranged by Joseffy. The timely publication predated the pianist's American debut by almost two weeks.

<sup>10</sup> *Times*, 17 October 1879, 5.



unheard of in New York, they were unusual for the time, especially in the context of a debut series.

Two days later, the pianist's returned to Chickering Hall for a succession of piano recitals; two Friday evening concerts on 17 October and 24 October, with matinées the following afternoons, and another appearance with orchestra squeezed in on Tuesday, October 21. If concertgoers were impressed with Joseffy's concerto performances, his appearances as recitalist were no less appealing. With each event, the audiences seemed to multiply in numbers. For his third concert (October 17) Chickering Hall was overflowing and by the fourth concert (October 21) the venue was, "uncomfortably full, and good standing-room was hard to find."<sup>11</sup>

### THIRD CONCERT<sup>12</sup>

(Friday, 17 October 1879)

Assisted by Isabella McClintock (McCilloch), soprano

<i>Variations Sérieuses</i> , Op. 54	Mendelssohn
Allegro	Handel
Novellette in D Major, Op. 21, No. 2	Schumann
<i>Moment Musical No. 6, in A-Flat Major</i> , D.780	Schubert
<i>Auf Dem Wasser Zu Singen</i> , S. 558	Schubert/Liszt
Three Etudes	Chopin
Nocturne in B Major, Op. 32, No. 1	Chopin
Waltz in E Major, Op. posth.	Chopin
<i>Tanz Arabesque</i>	Joseffy
Tarantella (Venezia e Napoli)	Liszt
Nocturne in E-Flat Major (encore)	Field
Polonaise in E-Flat Major, Op. 22 (encore)	Chopin

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<sup>11</sup> "Joseffy's Fourth Concert," *Times*, 22 October 1879, 5.

<sup>12</sup> Program reproduced from: "Joseffy's Third Concert," *Times*, 18 October 1879, 5.

FIRST MATINÉE<sup>13</sup>

(Saturday, 18 October 1879)

Assisted by Isabella McClintock (McCilloch), soprano

Fantasy and Fugue	Bach
?	Bach
Aria	Pergolesi/Joseffy
Menuet (trans.)	Boccherini/Joseffy
Etude on Chopin's Waltz in D-Flat Major	Chopin/Joseffy
Etude in C Major, Op. 12, No. 1	Chopin
Etude in C minor	Chopin
Etude in F minor	Chopin
Prelude in D-Flat Major, Op. 28, No. 15	Chopin
Mazurka in A Minor, Op. 68, No. 2	Chopin
<i>Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise</i> , Op. 22	Chopin
<i>Polka Noble</i>	Joseffy
Valse Caprice	Schubert/Liszt
Spinnerlied from <i>Der fliegende Holländer</i>	Wagner/Liszt

FOURTH CONCERT<sup>14</sup>

(Friday, 24 October 1879)

This was a solo recital and Joseffy presented 17 works. Likely the same or very similar program presented the following day.

Piano Sonata in C Major, Op. 53	Beethoven
Various	Chopin
Various	Liszt
Various	Schumann
?	Haydn

SECOND MATINÉE<sup>15</sup>

(Saturday, 25 October 1879)

Piano Sonata in C Major, Op. 53	Beethoven
Two Sonatas	Scarlatti/Tausig
Allegro and Passagaille	Handel
Three selections	Schumann
Two Mazurkas	Chopin
Nocturne in F Minor, Op. 55, No. 1	Chopin
Etude	Chopin

<sup>13</sup> Program reproduced from: "The Joseffy Matinée," *Times*, 19 October 1879, 7.

<sup>14</sup> Program reproduced from: "Joseffy's Recitals," *Times*, 26 October 1879, 7.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

Selection  
*Soirees de Vienne*  
Three selections  
*Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*

Liszt  
Tausig  
Joseffy  
Liszt

In the recital performances, Joseffy was also recognized for his “faultless technique and elegance of style.”<sup>16</sup> Following the final concert/matinée series (October 24 and 25), the reviewer for the *Times* expressed in succinct fashion Joseffy’s impact on New York audiences: “Indeed, at the close of his recitals the people have seemed loath to leave the hall, and have rewarded him with unstinted applause of the sort that is evidently genuine.” The pianist’s performance style struck a chord with concertgoers as the *Times* again cited: “No pianist now before the public has ever kept such a steady hold on his audiences, and has had the attention of so many persons of musical cultivation and taste.”

The pianist’s approach to programming and his choice of repertoire were also likely contributing factors to Joseffy’s popularity. For his first recital series, Joseffy presented very attractive repertoire, which effectively showcased his personality and performance style. Both concerts and matinées followed a similar structure, which were peculiar to the virtuoso and likely appealed to New York audiences. The programs consisted of fourteen to seventeen pieces respectively, beginning with a work of relative depth and substance, such as Mendelssohn’s *Variations Sérieuses*, Op. 54 (October 17 concert) or Beethoven’s Piano Sonata, op. 53, *Waldstein* (October 24 concert). After the decidedly classical or perhaps formal introductory work, the pianist continued with repertoire showcasing his delicate, colorful elegance, and flawless technique. Each section included pieces by Chopin, Liszt, and Schumann, and his own transcriptions, which offered flights of fancy as they fleshed out the programs. To conclude each

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<sup>16</sup> “Joseffy’s Third Concert,” *Times*, 18 October 1879, 5.

recital, Joseffy played his warhorse “Spinnerlied” from *Der fliegende Holländer* or Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, which the *Tribune* declared should have been announced on the program as “an arrangement by Joseffy” since the pianist added so much of his own material.<sup>17</sup>

On 21 October 1879, Joseffy made his final appearance with Damrosch and his orchestra. With this performance, the pianist revisited the repertoire he had presented the previous week, playing three of the four concertos he had offered for his first two programs. The writer for the *Times* suggested that the “more strictly musical” nature of the program (the solo pieces were omitted) coupled with the fact that Chickering Hall was once again packed to the rafters, demonstrated more than anything else the public’s fascination with Joseffy: “As was predicted in THE TIMES, those who have heard Joseffy once will not be satisfied till they have heard him again.”<sup>18</sup>

Following his successful debut series, Joseffy took a brief excursion into surrounding locales, which included first appearances in Brooklyn, north to Boston, and as far south as Baltimore. The mini-tour lasted through the month of November, with the pianist returning to New York in December. Joseffy’s first concert in Boston took place on 30 October 1879 to a “hearty welcome from one of Boston’s most critical audiences.”<sup>19</sup> According to the correspondent for the *Times*, the New Englanders refused to leave the hall until Joseffy had given a final encore. The pianist’s initial reception in Baltimore, however, was less enthusiastic as a reporter for the *Times* found irresistibly amusing:

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<sup>17</sup> See “Mr. Joseffy’s Recital,” *Tribune*, 27 October 1879, 5: “in the Rhapsodie Hongroise (No. 2) of Liszt it seemed as if the limit of the capabilities of the human hand for agility had become quite reached. Not content with the difficulties that Liszt himself had written—they are of no common order—he had gone on adding to them till he had produced a work which it seemed incredible that anyone could perform. And yet it was done without a sign of effort, with an ease and unconcern almost miraculous.

<sup>18</sup> “Joseffy’s Fourth Concert,” *Times*, 22 October 1879, 5.

<sup>19</sup> “Joseffy’s Reception in Boston,” *Times*, 31 October 1879, 3.

It will grieve the musical public of New York to know that Joseffy does not satisfy the critical taste of Baltimore. One writer in the daily paper of that city informs a listening world that “there are no passages in his interpretations which touch the mysterious chords of our organism and create perception of the sublime.” It is to be hoped that Joseffy will soon return to the New-York and Boston barbarians whose chords of organism are not so mysterious as the Baltimore chords.<sup>20</sup>

By December, Joseffy had returned to conclude his debut season in New York. In the remaining six months, he performed at a feverish pace, giving over thirty more concerts in the city alone. Short excursions to Albany and Boston rounded out his schedule, with a final concert in Brooklyn to wrap up the pianist’s first year in the United States. New developments were also on the immediate horizon. A highly-publicized hand injury surfaced shortly after his return, which initially impeded Joseffy’s performance activities. Collaboration with another orchestra and conductor kicked off the remainder of the season’s concerto performances, while his all-Chopin and all-Liszt programs became high-profile events. The pianist also presented himself as a chamber player, adding another facet to his growing reputation, while the close of the season brought an end to Joseffy’s relationship with the Chickering piano firm.

Joseffy began his second series with four scheduled concerts and four matinées, which brought the calendar year to a close. The first performance was announced in the *Tribune* for 6 December and billed as a “Grand Joseffy Concert” and the pianist’s “first reappearance in New York.”<sup>21</sup> This event took place at the Madison Avenue Church of the Disciples, located at the corner of 45<sup>th</sup> St. and Madison. The pianist was assisted by the contralto, Miss Anna Drasdil. That the performance was held at another venue, not Chickering Hall, suggests it was an event

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<sup>20</sup> *Times*, 7 November 1879, 5. See also *The Fort Wayne Sentinel* (Indiana), 29 November 1879, 3: “Joseffy, spent Sunday last in New York on his way to the western tour. He likes that city and Boston, but he does not speak in very flattering terms of Baltimore. But then, you see, they did not treat him very nicely in the Monumental City.”

<sup>21</sup> *Tribune*, 1 December 1879, 3.

that lay outside any agreement Joseffy had contracted with his management. Surprisingly, the performance does not appear to have been reviewed in the local press.

By 10 December, the local press announced a series of performances beginning with a concert scheduled for Monday, 15 December that Joseffy ultimately cancelled due to illness.<sup>22</sup> The *Times* boldly advertised the upcoming events as the pianist's "Return to New York after a triumphant tour through the west." *The Independent* also chimed in on 18 December, announcing that the virtuoso, "who recently took New York by storm, and has lately returned from storming the West," had given his first concert of the second series three days prior, calling the performance a "phenomenal success."<sup>23</sup> The virtuoso was only absent from New York stages for just over a month, with correspondents for the local press only mentioning performances in Brooklyn, Boston, and Baltimore. Joseffy, however, did make an impressively quick tour that included several western locales. Between 4 November and 3 December 1879 the pianist gave concerts in Washington D. C., Delaware, Philadelphia, Milwaukee, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Chicago, St. Louis, and Cincinnati.

Joseffy's next appearance at Chickering Hall was a matinée on 17 December. The Wednesday afternoon performance was not as well attended as the critics had hoped, and according to the *Times*, Joseffy was still suffering from the illness that caused him to cancel the first return concert. Regardless, Joseffy did not disappoint. His program still consisted of seventeen pieces (much the same repertoire he presented in October), and the audience was just as receptive. The review in the *Times* was positive as the writer cited the same "grace and

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<sup>22</sup> See "The Joseffy Concert," *Tribune*, 16 December 1879, 4. The reason for cancellation was a "sudden and severe attack of neuralgia." Ticket-holders were guaranteed a full refund the following morning.

<sup>23</sup> Apparently, the writer for *The Independent* was unaware that Joseffy's concert scheduled for 15 December 1879 was cancelled.

evenness” in Joseffy’s playing but noticed “less spirit and vigor.”<sup>24</sup> Circumstances being what they were, critics understood: “Though he did not play in his best manner, it may be said that the same performance from any other artist would have been esteemed supremely good.”<sup>25</sup>

The second scheduled concert and following matinée were only mildly discussed in the press; however, the final advertised concert that took place on the evening of 22 December resulted in Joseffy’s first negative review from a local critic.<sup>26</sup> The writer for the *Times* began by stating that the “meagre attendance” at Chickering Hall was apparently due in part to inclement weather.

After the superficial reference to heavy precipitation, the critic launched his tirade. According to the reviewer, the real reason for low turnout was the repetitious nature of the program. The critic complained that Joseffy’s concert consisted of virtually the same repertoire he had performed the previous week, and that he was relying too frequently on the same core pieces: “The continual repetition of certain works in which Joseffy has over and over again shown his phenomenal skill, must necessarily become somewhat tiresome.” Citing other prominent pianists, the critic flatly stated: “neither Rubinstein, Von Bülow, nor Rummel could

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<sup>24</sup> “The Joseffy Concert,” *Times*, 18 December 1879, 5.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> The *Times* (“Herr Joseffy’s Concerts,” 21 December 1879) did review the concert on 19 December and the matinée the following day. Beyond Joseffy’s performance of Bach’s *Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue*, his repertoire was not discussed. Rather, an interesting and informative comparison between Joseffy, Rubinstein, and von Bülow was the centerpiece of the article: “The delicacy of his touch and the absolutely faultless execution which are his chief characteristics seemed yesterday to be supplemented by a graceful and poetic spirit. His playing was not cold or merely mechanical, though it was severely exact. No other pianist has been heard in New-York who combines so many qualities that make it a delight to listen to his performance. Rubinstein was full of fire, and often played as if inspired. His inaccuracies counted for nothing in view of his genius and the grand artistic spirit he displayed. Von Bülow was almost painfully correct, and never allowed himself to be carried away by any impulse or to infuse any warmth in his perfectly accurate performance. He vented his nervousness on his fellow performers or his audience, and seldom went through a concert without making himself appear disagreeable and offensive. Herr Joseffy, however, has succeeded in combining in a perfectly natural way the utmost technical finish with a power and grace not before heard, and play, withal, so perfectly that the most cultivated pianists become his warmest admirers. His manners are quiet and gentlemanly, and the success he invariably wins is wholly due to his overpowering ability. It is simply impossible to resist the effect which his self-possessed manner and superb performance carry.”

be expected to draw an audience of sufficient size to fill Chickering Hall without some variety in the performance.” Next, the critic spoke perhaps prematurely, when he demanded that the pianist be heard in more concertos and even chamber music (two genres Joseffy frequently performed for the remainder of the season). To conclude, the reviewer touched on an area that would unfortunately become a source of frequent criticism, when the critic cited the pianist’s performance of Beethoven’s Piano Sonata in C Major, Op. 53, *Waldstein* as “not the most felicitous selection of Herr Joseffy,” furthermore, “the character of the latter part, as he plays it, has not the flavor of the composer.” Although the comments concerning Joseffy’s reading of the sonata were mild, they were a significant sign of things to come.<sup>27</sup>

The pianist’s first appearance for the 1880 calendar year took place on Saturday, 3 January and was billed as “his last concert at present at Chickering Hall.” Following the tirade from two weeks prior, the writer for the *Times* was particularly eager to hear Joseffy perform in the concerto realm once again:

The programme is one of decided interest, and chiefly so from the fact that it affords Herr Joseffy an opportunity to be heard again with orchestra. Piano recitals are well enough in their way, but an artist of Joseffy’s brilliant talents cannot be heard in solos only with entire justice to himself.<sup>28</sup>

Similar to his concert on 21 October 1879, the virtuoso again took on the unusual and daunting task of performing three works for piano and orchestra in a single evening. On this occasion,

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<sup>27</sup> “The Joseffy Concerts,” *Times*, 23 December 1879, 5. See also *Times*, 19 October 1924: “Benno Lewinson Reviews Many Years of City Life.” In this article, the veteran lawyer claimed to have drawn up the original contract for Joseffy’s debut season. His account provides an interesting and plausible explanation for Joseffy’s repetitive programs: “According to his contract, his manager paid him \$75 an evening . . . Even then Joseffy realized that his \$75 compared poorly with the receipts. He asked for more, but the manager stood firm . . . But there was a clause in the contract allowing Joseffy to arrange his own programs. He decided to offer the same one until his pay was increased. Even the best artist cannot give the same program night after night, with never a change, and get away with it for long . . . The foreseen happened. After a while attendance at the concerts began to fall off, and Joseffy and his manager made a new financial agreement.”

<sup>28</sup> *Times*, 3 January 1880, 4.



Joseffy programmed both Chopin's Piano Concerto in E Minor and the Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21 (a first performance by Joseffy in the latter piece) and the *Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise*, Op. 22. The concert also marked the beginning of a short-lived collaborative relationship between Joseffy and the German-born conductor, Gotthold Carlberg (1837-1881).<sup>29</sup>

Pleased by the opportunity to finally hear Joseffy again as soloist, the writer for the *Times* declared the performance "brilliant" and "one of the most pronounced successes of Herr Joseffy's career in the City." Earlier in the season, Joseffy already demonstrated an affinity with Chopin's first concerto, but his performance of the second received considerable attention from the critic, who recognized in the Larghetto movement, "a gracefulness and quiet repose" reminiscent of Thaberg, while the pianist's rendition of the Allegro vivace (third movement) was "a brilliant and powerful performance . . . in which his crisp touch and faultless technique were fully illustrated."<sup>30</sup> The performance was so enthusiastically received that Joseffy responded with both Chopin's Prelude in F Major, Op. 28, No. 23 and the Waltz in F major, Op. 34, No. 3 as encores. The *Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise* concluded the evening, with the audience once again refusing to leave the hall until Joseffy offered a final encore. The *Times* review concluded by calling the concert "one of the most brilliant triumphs any pianist has enjoyed in this City."

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<sup>29</sup> Gotthold Carlberg (b. Berlin, 12 June 1837; d. New York, 27 April 1881) Youthful studies in both music and education at German universities enabled Carlberg to pursue active careers both as conductor and music critic. In 1857 he came to New York and soon became the musical editor for the *New York Staats-Zeitung*. During that time he continued his musical training with Carl Anschütz, then the director of German opera in NYC. By 1861 Carlberg returned to Europe, where he became active as a conductor. In 1871 he was back in New York and by 1877 was musical editor for the *Musical Trade Review*. By 1878 Carlberg was named musical director for the Symphony Concert Series at Chickering Hall, a position he held until the end of the 1879-80 season. Within a year Carlberg suffered an aneurism of the heart. At the time of his death he was also associate editor of the *Boston Musical Herald*. See *Times*, 13 October 1878; see also: *Times*, 28 April 1881; E. Douglas Bomberger, ed. *Brainard's Biographies of American Musicians* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), 60-64.

<sup>30</sup> "Herr Joseffy's Concert," *Times*, 4 January 1880, 7.

The review in the *Tribune* began with introductory remarks about Chickering Hall being completely full, as the audience seemed to occupy “nearly every available inch of standing-room.” The article seemed to reiterate observations in the *Times*, citing the pianist’s delicate and exquisite touch, perfect finish, and brilliance. The writer also commented on the formidable task of playing three concertos with only a few moments rest in between, and how Joseffy went through all of it “without the slightest indication of fatigue.” In conclusion, the Polonaise was “brilliant” and, “As a display of virtuosity it was extraordinary; but it was little more.”<sup>31</sup> The final back-handed compliment represents a facet of negative criticism that would eventually creep into reviews as Joseffy would be recognized more for his virtuosity and less for the depth of his performances.

Following the success of his all-Chopin concert, Joseffy was scheduled to make his first performance with Theodore Thomas and the New York Philharmonic Society on 24 January, but this appearance was cancelled due to his hand injury. Instead of hearing the popular virtuoso in Beethoven’s *Emperor*, the Society called upon a young American pianist, Herman Rietzel (1862-1882) to perform Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major, Op. 58.<sup>32</sup> Concerts in Utica,

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<sup>31</sup> “The Joseffy Concert,” *Tribune*, 4 January 1880, 7.

<sup>32</sup> Herman A. Rietzel (b. New York, 24 January 1863; d. Chesterfield, New Hampshire 26 May 1882). He was a talented young American pianist and the son of Frederick J. Rietzel (b. Neu Gersdorf, Saxony, 27 February 1825; d. New York, 12 December 1895). The pianist’s father was an accomplished flutist with the New York Philharmonic Society (1849-83) and also served as an assistant director (1866-68); as a director (1869-1880); and vice-president (1880-95) (*Tribune*, 5 January 1896, 20). The young pianist was a student of Sebastian Bach Mills and at age twelve Rietzel gave his New York debut on 19 April 1875, playing the first movement of Beethoven’s Piano Trio in C Minor. His teacher also performed a *Hungarian Rhapsody* by Liszt on the same program. (See “Mr. Bergner’s Concert,” *Tribune*, 12 April 1875, 6.) Rietzel eventually was sent to Stuttgart to study and returned to the United States in 1880, beginning a performing and teaching career. In 1882, the pianist was contracted with a concert troupe organized by Miss Clara Louise Kellogg and began a tour of New England. The troupe arrived early for a performance on 27 May in Brattleboro, Vermont. On 26 May, Rietzel and the distinguished basso George A. Conly, went fishing on Lake Spofford, a nearby resort destination, where the two musicians tragically drowned. Upon hearing the news, Joseffy stated that he did not “believe there is another American boy so chock full of talent.” (“George Conly’s Sad Fate,” *Times*, 28 May 1882, 7). A final testimony to Rietzel and a statement of true admiration for the young pianist, Joseffy published and dedicated his *Second Concert Study After Chopin* (a double note extravaganza on Op. 10, No. 5 “Black Keys” etude) in 1882: “Composed for Herman Rietzel and dedicated to his memory.”

Syracuse, Ithaca, Buffalo, and Rochester were also scheduled, along with appearances in Boston. Many, if not all of these performances were cancelled due to an inflamed finger.<sup>33</sup> The February 1880 edition of *The Art Amateur* cited “nervous exhaustion” (likely referring to the pianist’s bout with neuralgia in December), coupled with the inflammation of his finger, which the journal suggested was due to over-practicing. The *Tribune* reported on 8 February that Joseffy was expected to play three concerts in Boston that week; however, the *Times* announced four days later (4 February 1880) that the pianist canceled the entire series due to his injury.<sup>34</sup>

By the end of February, Joseffy seems to have made a sufficient recovery and concert activity resumed. An announcement for his first actual performance with the New York Philharmonic Society appeared in the *Times* on 15 February 1880, stating that the pianist would play Chopin’s Concerto in E-flat [*sic*] and Liszt’s *Hungarian Fantasy*.<sup>35</sup> Following the open dress rehearsal on 20 February, the concert took place the next evening at the Academy of Music. With Thomas conducting, Joseffy was the soloist in Chopin’s Piano Concerto in F Minor. The *Times* claimed the pianist had “never made a more brilliant success than in this concerto,” though he had not yet recovered from his injury.<sup>36</sup> The *Tribune* agreed, stating that Joseffy played exquisitely: “His inimitable touch, his poetical feeling, his clear phrasing, his fine sense of symmetry and rhythm, and—in the last movement especially—his astonishing brilliancy

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<sup>33</sup> “Joseffy’s Performances,” *Tribune*, 6 January 1880, 4.

<sup>34</sup> Apparently Joseffy made a full recovery. The press, however, continued reporting on his injury for the remainder of the season. *The Art Amateur* (March 1880) disclosed the source of his malady was the forefinger on his right hand and that the pianist wasted no time working out two pieces for left hand alone: Bach’s Chaconne arranged by Brahms and the Gavotte from the same composer’s Sixth Violin Sonata arranged by Joseffy. Both pieces became regular inclusions in Joseffy’s current programs. By the end of the season, the *Times* (27 May 1880) reported once more that the pianist had made a complete recovery. On 27 June 1880 the *Times* again made special mention of the pianist’s full recovery from the hand injury of the previous season, when Joseffy had to play wearing a “kid glove.”

<sup>35</sup> Since Chopin did not write a piano concerto in “E-Flat,” the writer for the *Times* was undoubtedly referring to the Piano Concerto in E minor. Ultimately, Joseffy played Chopin’s Piano Concerto in F minor.

<sup>36</sup> “The Philharmonic Concert,” *Times*, 22 February 1880, 7.

were displayed, as it seemed to us, with even more effect than usual.”<sup>37</sup> Concluding the review, the *Tribune* cited the orchestra’s “rich, sympathetic and well-managed accompaniment.”<sup>38</sup> According to the *Tribune*, Joseffy responded to his enthusiastic audience with an encore reading of Liszt’s *Hungarian Fantasy* with the orchestra, while the *Times* reported that the pianist returned to the stage with the same composer’s *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 3*.

As winter drew to a close, Joseffy presented an all-Chopin concert at Chickering Hall on 1 March (with a repeat performance on 6 March), followed by an all-Liszt concert on 8 March (with a repeat performance on 15 March). For the Chopin evenings, he again performed both piano concertos and the *Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise*, with Carlberg conducting. The reviews in the *Times* continued citing the pianist’s “marvelous technique, perfect accuracy, and freedom of display.”<sup>39</sup> Following the second Chopin concert, the *Times* began with a brief mention of the upcoming all-Liszt event, and concluded with their typical praise:

No artist ever received more flattering tributes from the musical public than Herr Joseffy, and it is equally certain that no pianist ever deserved them more fully than he has. His most enthusiastic hearers have been among the members of his profession, who cannot fail to recognize the superb talents of this remarkable virtuoso.<sup>40</sup>

The review in the *Tribune* echoed the sentiment of the *Times*, stating the pianist displayed “the same exquisite beauty of touch, elegance of execution and richness of light and color which marked his previous performances.”<sup>41</sup> This time the critic concluded with a more direct criticism of the conductor: “An accompaniment, far less sympathetic than the audience was furnished by

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<sup>37</sup> “The New-York Philharmonic Society,” *Tribune*, 22 February 1880, 7.

<sup>38</sup> This reference regarding the level of play by the orchestra is likely the first of several subtle criticisms toward Carlberg and his orchestra, which became more pronounced as the season advanced. As Joseffy’s appearances with Thomas and his orchestra became more frequent, the press made noted contrasts concerning the performance level of both orchestras and the competency of both conductors.

<sup>39</sup> “Joseffy’s Chopin Concert,” *Times*, 2 March 1880, 4.

<sup>40</sup> “The Joseffy Concert,” *Times*, 7 March 1880, 7.

<sup>41</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s Concerts,” *Tribune*, 2 March 1880, 4.

an orchestra under the direction of Mr. Carlberg.” By the end of the season, underlying friction between conductor and pianist would climax with an open dispute in the press.

The first all-Liszt concert took place on 8 March 1880 and was received as one of the pianist’s most brilliant performances yet, with the *Times* declaring:

No artist, not excepting Rubinstein, Von Bülow, or, to go back to a former generation, Thalberg, Jaëll, and Gottschalk, has ever excited so much enthusiasm among musicians as this young Hungarian, whose faultless technique, remarkable memory, and modest confidence makes his performance a constant delight.<sup>42</sup>

Joseffy played Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major, S. 124, the *Hungarian Fantasy*, five solo pieces, and concluded with the Fantasy on Themes from Beethoven’s “Ruins of Athens,” S. 122. The compositions for piano and orchestra were praised just as enthusiastically as before. The *Tribune* suggested that the *Hungarian Fantasy* “came from his hands all aglow with life and splendor,” while the *Times* stated the “Ruins of Athens” arrangement was “fully equal to the best of his performances in brilliancy and effect.” Joseffy’s rendering of Liszt’s solo pieces, however, was “as remarkable as anything that this artist had done in public.”<sup>43</sup> The pianist was recalled five times after concluding the solo set with *La Campanella*. The *Tribune* suggested that the audience was “almost carried away with enthusiasm” and that Joseffy is “unquestionably one of the best players of Liszt we have ever heard.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> “Joseffy’s Liszt Concert,” *Times*, 9 March 1880, 5.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> “Joseffy—A Liszt Night,” *Tribune*, 9 March 1880, 5.

ALL LISZT CONCERT<sup>45</sup>  
(Monday, 8 March 1880 at Chickering Hall)

Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major  
*Hungarian Fantasy*  
*Soirée de Vienne*  
*Au bord d'une Source*, S. 160  
*Consolation*  
*Gnomenreigen*, S. 145/2  
*La Campanella*, S. 141  
Fantasy on Beethoven's "Ruins of Athens"

After a three-concert excursion in Boston, the pianist returned to give a repeat performance of the all-Liszt program on 15 March. Since the program was the same and likely received a similar response from Joseffy's devoted audience, it was apparently not reviewed in the press. Rather, the critics seemed content in waiting forty-eight hours for the pianist's first local chamber music appearance.

Apart from a concert in Albany (25 March), three concerts in Boston, and a concerto performance with Carlberg for a Grand Easter Festival at Madison Square Garden (30 March), Joseffy dedicated the remainder of the month to chamber music.<sup>46</sup> Squeezed in between his hectic concerto performances, and the all-Chopin, and all-Liszt programs, the *Times* excitedly announced Joseffy would appear on 3 March for his first local chamber music concert. The repertoire for the evening included Schubert's Trio in E-flat, Op. 100; Carl Reinecke's Impromptu on a Theme from Schumann's *Manfred* in A Major, Op. 66, performed with Emile Guyon (a pupil of Thalberg) at the second piano; Beethoven's Violin Sonata in A Major, No. 9,

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<sup>45</sup> Program reproduced from the *Times*, 9 March 1880.

<sup>46</sup> Joseffy's scheduled chamber concert for 10 March 1880 at Chickering Hall was postponed to 17 March and was ultimately cancelled because the pianist had a severe cold. Arrangements were also made for a joint performance with another popular pianist, Julia Rivé-King (1854-1937). The two Liszt students were to play a series of concerts; however, King's prior engagements in Baltimore and Washington DC made this impossible.

Op. 47, *Kreutzer*; and two arrangements for left hand alone: Bach's Chaconne from the Partita in D Minor, BWV 1004 arranged by Brahms and Joseffy's own arrangement of a Gavotte by Bach.

The *Times* apparently did not review the concert, but an account of the evening did appear in the *Tribune*. The writer was positive but not overly star-struck with the pianist, unlike most reviews to this point. According to the critic, Joseffy's piano parts were the initial short-coming, being too dominant and eclipsing the strings during the beginning of the trio. As their performance went on, the balance improved with a "closer and closer sympathy" between the players and "the execution of the work became more and more delicate and beautiful."<sup>47</sup> The *Kreutzer* Sonata, performed with Mr. Brandt on violin, was "still better" as the soloist's playing coupled with Joseffy's "inimitable touch and brilliant yet thoroughly well considered interpretation" resulted in an effective performance. The two-piano work was "finely played," while Joseffy's ability to overcome the enormous difficulties of the Bach/Brahms transcription greatly excited the audience. The critic was least satisfied with the pianist's own transcription of the Gavotte, calling the arrangement "clumsy and obscure" and stating: "Such exhibitions are well enough once in a while perhaps, as curiosities, but they hardly belong to the domain of art."

A series of four more chamber concerts opened on 19 March and concluded with a final event on 3 April 1880. For unknown reasons, a performance on 19 March, at which Joseffy played Hummel's well-known Septet in D Minor, Op. 74, and another on 27 March were apparently not reviewed by the local press. The third concert in the series took place at Chickering Hall on 31 March and according to the *Times* was a disappointment. Bach's Triple Concerto in D Minor, BWV 1063 performed by the American pianist Miss Florence Copleston, Guyon, and Joseffy, opened the evening and was undoubtedly the featured event. Initially

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<sup>47</sup> "Joseffy's Chamber Concerts," *Tribune*, 4 March 1880, 4.

concerned with the poor audience turn out, the critic for the *Times* was further annoyed by an inexcusable delay of thirty minutes. Obviously in preparation for the triple concerto, the writer noted how “an absurd moving about of pianos on the stage caused impatience and irritation in the audience.”<sup>48</sup>

When the performance was finally underway, things did not improve. The critic found the triple concerto uninteresting and condemned the effort as a “scratch performance,” citing “insufficient rehearsal or inability in *ensemble* playing.” Ultimately, the *Times* suggested the keyboards were simply too loud: “If the pianos had been covered, and it had been possible to hear the strings, it may be suggested that the effect would have been better.” The critic, however, was much more satisfied with the remainder of the concert. Joseffy and Mr. Muller performed Beethoven’s Cello Sonata No. 3 in A major, Op. 69, which the critic stated was “beautifully performed,” while the pianist’s solo numbers received their typical enthusiasm.

The month of April concluded with six more scheduled performances: the fourth chamber concert at Chickering Hall on 3 April, two all-Liszt concerts on 2 April and 9 April, two more chamber events on 7 April and 10 April, and an appearance in a Sacred Concert at the Academy of Music on 25 April. The only event reviewed in the local press was the chamber concert on 3 April. Whether the remaining events actually took place is not clear. They were all advertised or mentioned in the *Times*, with the Sacred Concert being the only one to give an actual program.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> “Joseffy’s Concerts,” *Times*, 1 April 1880, 5.

<sup>49</sup> The review in the *Times* on 4 April 1880 concluded with: “The public will regret to learn that this phenomenal artist has left the City for a brief visit to the provinces.” This statement confirms that Joseffy was absent for some unspecified duration of time. This information coupled with an apparent lack of reviews in the local press would suggest that some combination of the chamber events and the Liszt concerts may not have taken place.



The fourth and final chamber concert took place on Saturday afternoon, 3 April 1880. After less than positive reviews for his third chamber event, Joseffy returned to a large audience and delivered a successful performance. The highlight of the evening was the *Kreutzer* Sonata performed again with Brandt. This time, the performance bore “exceedingly good taste and expression.” The critic for the *Times* further opined that the Andante and Variations were “the perfection of art, and both the violin and piano were handled with consummate skill.”<sup>50</sup> The writer took this opportunity to compare the duo’s reading with other memorable performances of the famous sonata, specifically Henryk Wieniawski (1835-1880) and Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894), but more recently, August Wilhelmj (1845-1908) and Mme. Teresa Carreño (1853-1917). Compared with other notable performances, the current duo’s rendering was called “as full of the spirit of the composer as that of any of his predecessors.”<sup>51</sup> Joseffy’s solo pieces were also praised, especially a set of three *Songs Without Words* by Mendelssohn. The final selection was the famous *Spinnerlied*, played with “marvelous rapidity and delicacy,” which likely impressed his audience; however, the writer for the *Times* cited Joseffy for sacrificing the composer’s desires simply to demonstrate how “brilliantly and rapidly he could play.”

To conclude his first season in America, the pianist scheduled four local performances: two matinées (1 May and 12 May) and two concerts (14 May and 26 May), with a final matinée in Brooklyn on 29 May.<sup>52</sup> For the matinée on 12 May and the first concert, Joseffy delivered perhaps the most impressive recitals of the season. They were potentially the pianist’s final solo

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<sup>50</sup> “Herr Joseffy’s Matinée,” *Times*, 4 April 1880, 7.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> The first matinée (1 May) was postponed for unknown reasons: “It will not surprise anyone to learn that the matinée recital announced for Herr Joseffy at Chickering Hall on Saturday has been postponed. It is much regretted that this great artist is prevented by circumstances, presumably beyond his control from keeping his engagements as advertised.” (*Times* 30 April 1880). The lack of “surprise” expressed by the critic may suggest the scheduled and mentioned concerts in April that seem to have escaped review in the local press, were also cancelled.

appearances in New York, and for these he pulled out all the stops. The programs were large, consisting of eighteen and twenty-eight pieces respectively, with no repetitions between the two events.<sup>53</sup> The repertoire ranged from Bach to Rubinstein, with significant and expected representation of Chopin and Liszt. Many selections were also debut performances for Joseffy, while his rendering of Schumann's *Kreislarian*, Op. 16 was New York's first hearing of the entire work. On 12 May, the pianist was recalled five times, finally giving Liszt's paraphrase of Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream" (S. 410) as an encore. The *Times* concluded: "No performer without any aid could have more completely swayed an entire audience and held them for two hours in rapt attention than this remarkable artist."

#### MATINÉE AT CHICKERING HALL<sup>54</sup>

(Wednesday, 12 May 1880)

18 works programmed

Barcarolle	Joseffy
Melodie	Joseffy
Polka Noble	Joseffy
Prelude from English Suite in A Minor, BWV 807	Bach
Sonata	Scarlatti/Tausig
Piano Sonata in F Minor, Op. 57	Beethoven
<i>Träumerei</i>	Schumann
Minuet	Mozart/Schuloff
Etude	Henselt
Gavotte	Kernberger
<i>Valse-Caprice</i>	Liszt
<i>Consolation</i>	Liszt
<i>Gnomenreigen</i>	Liszt
<i>La Campanella</i>	Liszt
Three other works by Schumann, Joseffy, and Liszt mentioned without title.	
Midsummer Night's Dream (encore)	Mendelssohn/Liszt

<sup>53</sup> There were actually two small repetitions: Schumann's *Träumerei* was programmed on 12 May and used as an encore for the 14 May concert, while the Mendelssohn-Liszt "Midsummer Night's Dream" was the encore for the matinée, but was the last piece programmed for the concert.

<sup>54</sup> Program reproduced from: "The Joseffy Matinée," *Times*, 13 May 1880, 5.

CONCERT AT CHICKERING HALL<sup>55</sup>  
(Friday, 14 May 1880)  
28 works programmed

Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue	Bach
Gavotte	Bach
Piano Sonata in C Major, Op. 53	Beethoven
<i>Kreisleriana</i> , Op. 16	Schumann
Three “Songs Without Words”	Mendelssohn
Two Preludes	Heller
Prelude in D-Flat, Op. 28, No. 15	Chopin
Impromptu in A-Flat, Op. 29, No. 1	Chopin
Mazurka in A Minor	Chopin
Waltz in F Major, Op. 34, No. 3	Chopin
Four Etudes	Chopin
Minuet	Rubinstein
Serenade	Rubinstein
<i>Pres du Ruisseau</i>	Rubinstein
“Midsummer Night’s Dream”	Mendelssohn/Liszt
<i>Träumerei</i> (encore)	Schumann
Aria (encore)	Pergolesi/Joseffy

Joseffy’s final recital took place on 14 May and was heralded as “probably the most notable piano concert ever given in New York.”<sup>56</sup> The *Times* further declared: “If anything were necessary to establish this phenomenal artist’s reputation, his performance last night disposed of all questions as to his rank as a pianist.” Of the twenty-eight programmed works, nineteen were local premieres for the pianist. The critic for the *Times* was amazed at the absence of fatigue in his delivery, as Joseffy “assumed an amount of labor which would seem to tax the brain and physical powers almost beyond human endurance.”<sup>57</sup> The critic was not only impressed but also pleased to hear so much new music, as the writer again sang the praises of Joseffy’s “faultless accuracy” and “finished elegance.” Although the reviewer cited the virtuoso once again for his

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<sup>55</sup> Program reproduced from: “The Joseffy Recital,” *Times*, 15 May 1880, 5. Note: The local press considered the eight movements of Schumann’s *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16 as separate pieces.

<sup>56</sup> *Times*, 15 May 1880, 5.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

“lightning speed” performance of Mendelssohn’s *Spinnerlied*, the “Midsummer Night’s Dream” paraphrase served its purpose as the closer and “fairly carried the house by storm.” Concluding the two-hour performance, the audience would not leave, calling the pianist back to the stage four times. The *Times* declared the concert a triumph, stating that “the applause he received was, it is only just to say, never better deserved by any artist.”

On Wednesday 26 May 1880, the pianist completed his first season in New York City. The event was notable for several actual and presumed finalities. As far as the uninformed public knew, this was to be Joseffy’s last local concert, his final appearance with an orchestra of the city, and the last time he would collaborate with the conductor Carlberg. The program consisted of four works for piano and orchestra: the Piano Concerto in F Minor by Chopin, Beethoven’s *Emperor*, the “Scherzo” from Litolff’s *Concerto Symphonique*, and Liszt’s Fantasy on Beethoven’s “Ruins of Athens.” The critic for the *Times* called the Chopin concerto “the gem of the program,” stating that Joseffy was “at his best” in this repertoire, where he “finds an opportunity for that exquisite delicacy and marvelously finished style for which he is pre-eminent.”<sup>58</sup> According to the *Times*, Joseffy had never played more delightfully than in the Chopin. The audience was “carried away by enthusiasm and cruelly demanded an encore,” for which Joseffy responded with one of his own compositions.<sup>59</sup> The article made no mention of Litolff’s *Concerto Symphonique* or the Liszt arrangement; rather, the review concluded with a short yet significant account of the Beethoven concerto. The performance of the *Emperor* was called “a magnificent effort,” but was “marred . . . by some slovenly work of the orchestra,

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<sup>58</sup> “Herr Joseffy’s Concert,” *Times*, 27 May 1880, 5.

<sup>59</sup> The encore piece was Joseffy’s *Polka Noble*.

particularly in the Allegro, in which the conductor did not have his forces well at hand.”<sup>60</sup> The statement was telling in regard to Carlberg and an apparently growing discord between pianist and conductor. Concluding on a brighter note, the article provided New York’s concertgoers with what was certainly good news: “It will be a welcome piece of intelligence to the host of admirers of this remarkable pianist to learn that he has decided to remain in this country for another year.”



**Figure 4.1: Portrait of Rafael Joseffy (unknown photographer).  
Collection of the author.**

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

## Changes on the Horizon

Following the pianist's landmark debut season, the local press announced several important developments that would affect the coming season and ultimately shape the remainder of Joseffy's career. As was common with New York's social elite and artists alike, the summer months were generally spent at one of several East coast resort destinations. While these individuals found rest and relaxation, the press traditionally ran short articles in an effort to keep the public informed of their favorite celebrity's leisurely activities. On 13 June 1880, the *Times* printed an informative paragraph. Recapping the happy news that Joseffy had decided to remain in New York for another season, the article also made several informative statements linking the pianist to a different piano manufacturer and another conductor.

For the first time, the local press associated Joseffy with the name Steinway. The article confirmed the pianist was indeed located at some "quiet country retreat" and that he brought along a Steinway grand piano to prepare an extensive new repertoire for the upcoming season, when he would finally appear at Steinway Hall.<sup>61</sup> In 1879, the suave Berlin-born businessman Herman Colell (1826-1902) brought Joseffy to the United States under legal contract. Following unsuccessful negotiations with William Steinway, Colell made a financial agreement with the House of Chickering, which secured the virtuoso as an exclusive artist for the 1879-80 season.<sup>62</sup> Apparently, Steinway was understandably interested since the pianist's arrival, but Joseffy was already contracted with their rival manufacturer.<sup>63</sup> On 9 October 1879, five days before Joseffy's New York debut, Steinway was asked if the virtuoso could play a Chickering piano at Steinway Hall. The piano manufacturer understandably denied the request and the pianist's

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<sup>61</sup> According to the press, Joseffy was vacationing in Bridgeport, Connecticut (*Times*, 27 June 1880, 7).

<sup>62</sup> See *Musical America* (3 July 1915): 7.

<sup>63</sup> From William Steinway's personal diary, entry 25 September 1879: "Lovely cool day. Joseffy said to have arrived by steamer *Amerique* yesterday."

debut was held at Chickering Hall.<sup>64</sup> Clearly Joseffy's management desired to present their new pianist at Steinway Hall; however, the virtuoso was apparently only permitted to play Chickering pianos.<sup>65</sup>

Joseffy's agreement with Chickering presumably expired at the close of the 1879-80 season. Since the press only announced on 27 May that the pianist had decided to remain in the United States, initial arrangements with the piano manufacturer naturally would not have extended into the forthcoming season. Until the review of Joseffy's final concert, even Chickering was likely unaware of his intentions. Coincidentally, Steinway's diary entry of the same date documents a noontime meeting, discussing the virtuoso's desire to play Steinway pianos for the upcoming season. Nine days later, Steinway and Joseffy met again to arrange matters.

The 13 June article in the *Times* made another bold statement, suggesting the artistic relationship between Joseffy and Carlberg was not ideal and that the pianist "really never had a chance in his concerts to show his capabilities." The writer then leveled a direct assault on the conductor, who had appeared with Joseffy throughout most of the previous season: "It was quite evident on the occasion of his last concert that he was distracted and annoyed by the slovenly direction of the orchestra which hampered him through the programme."<sup>66</sup> Although the critic had made subtle references following earlier performances, this time, the accusation was direct and impossible to ignore.

Carlberg read the review and penned a rebuttal the following day, which appeared in the *Times* on 16 June 1880:

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<sup>64</sup> William Steinway, 9 October 1879.

<sup>65</sup> Mr. C. H. Dittman managed Joseffy throughout his debut season with Chickering.

<sup>66</sup> *Times*, 13 June 1880, 7.

I am sorry to learn from yesterday's issue of the *Times* that M. Joseffy was distracted and annoyed by the slovenly direction of the orchestra on the occasion of the last concert. Permit me to say that at least the annoyance has been mutual, for when an artist who only occasionally in Europe has played with orchestra comes to New York to experiment, and now and then jumps the track with two or three bars, even the most attentive conductor could not help him. I hope that you will do me justice by publishing these lines.<sup>67</sup>

At the very least, the conductor's response signaled the end of a professional relationship with Joseffy.<sup>68</sup> Adding insult to injury, the *Times* also remarked that the pianist, "for the first time will have an opportunity to do himself justice with an orchestra under the direction of Theodore Thomas." Although Joseffy seems to have never commented publicly on the issue, his immediate association with the American conductor further demonstrates how the pianist took his professional activities away from the Chickering camp—with whom Carlberg was associated—and allied with Steinway, where he stayed for the remainder of his career.

### **Joseffy vs. Rummel**

The summer months also invited what by now seemed like a time honored tradition: the press directly comparing one prominent musician to another. The frequent positioning of pianists against each other sometimes resulted in rivalries, and at the least, provided entertaining fodder to fill columns in journals and periodicals. In 1781, Mozart went head-to-head with Clementi in an actual contest, while a generation later, the keyboard proficiency of Joseph Wölffl (1773-1812) and Daniel Steibelt (1765-1823) were commonly compared with Beethoven's. In 1837, the Parisian press perpetuated the famous pianistic duel between Liszt and Thalberg, and the whole business came to a momentary climax. A decade later, the American press jumped on the

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<sup>67</sup> "A Conductor's Defense," *Times*, 16 June 1880, 4.

<sup>68</sup> Ten months later Carlberg died in New York on 27 April 1881.



opportunity to compare Leopold de Meyer (1816-1883) and Henri Herz (1803-1888) when the two celebrated virtuosos embarked upon their tours of the United States. By the 1860s, albeit on a much smaller scale, New York critics could not help comparing the playing styles of Richard Hoffman (1831-1909) and Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898), two of the city's most prominent resident pianists. Now, following a successful debut season, critics contrasted Joseffy's style and programming against that of Franz Rummel (1853-1901), whose performances during the previous season won admiration from New York's discerning listeners.

In context, the comparison of Joseffy and Rummel demonstrates how the American musical establishment was now grappling with an aesthetic shift, observed in repertoire and programming during the latter part of the nineteenth century that had already unfolded in Europe. Joseffy represented an earlier school of virtuosity that focused on technical display, while Rummel embodied a different approach: the virtuoso as interpretive artist. Attempting to define the boundaries between technician and artist, these two pianists presented a perfect storm, which contributed to the dialogue on developing musical aesthetics in the United States.

Rummel was born in London on 11 January 1853. By age fourteen, he was sent to the Brussels Conservatoire, where he studied with the Belgian pianist and pedagogue, Louis Brassin (1840-1884). In 1872, after winning that institution's top prize for piano, Rummel joined the faculty. The same year, on 22 December, the pianist made his formal debut at Antwerp playing a concerto by Adolf Henselt (1814-1889) and the following year Rummel performed Schumann's Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54 at London's Royal Albert Hall. Although Rummel remained a professor at the Brussels Conservatoire, an active performance schedule ensued. In 1876, upon the advice of Rubinstein, the pianist resigned his teaching position to pursue a career as a touring virtuoso.

The London-born German pianist arrived in New York on 25 September 1878 aboard the steamship *Pereire*. The following day, he met with Steinway and gave an introductory private performance at the manufacture's warerooms.<sup>69</sup> Following the apparently positive introduction with one of New York's leading piano suppliers, the pianist seems to have taken some time to settle into his new surroundings. Rather than mounting an immediate assault on audiences the way Joseffy would, the pianist modestly performed only in a few concerts for the remainder of the calendar year.<sup>70</sup> By 1879, however, Rummel quickly increased his activity, and remained fairly active for the duration of the season.

On 4 January 1879, Rummel made his first appearance with a local orchestra at Steinway Hall. With Damrosch conducting, the pianist played Grieg's Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16 and received a positive review in the *Times*: "The Grieg concerto was exactly suited to his taste and powers, and he gave a wonderful performance of the work . . . No such artistic and elegant piano-playing has been heard in New-York for a long time."<sup>71</sup> The pianist appeared with Damrosch again on 21 April, with Raff's Piano Concerto in C Major, Op. 185 and Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasy*. He also performed the Schumann's Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54 and the same Liszt work with Carlberg on 22 February.

Unlike Joseffy, who waited several months before appearing in chamber music settings, Rummel quickly became active in the genre. In February, the pianist made two appearances with the New York Philharmonic Club. Led by violinist Richard Arnold and populated with other members of the Philharmonic Society, the ensemble was one of the city's premiere

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<sup>69</sup> Steinway recorded in his personal diary that, "Franz Rummel plays splendidly."

<sup>70</sup> On 13 October 1878, Rummel performed with the singer Mlle. Alhaiza at Steinway Hall, followed by an appearance with the violinist, M. Reméyi at Booth's Theatre on 28 December. For the latter concert, Rummel played Chopin's Nocturne in D-Flat Major, Op. 27, No. 2; the Polonaise in A-flat Major, Op. 53; and Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 11*.

<sup>71</sup> "The Symphony Society Concert," *Times*, 5 January 1879, 7.

chamber groups throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century. On 4 February Rummel played Rubinstein's Octet in D Major, Op. 9 with the renowned ensemble.<sup>72</sup> The pianist's performance of the work that is like a piano concerto minus an orchestra was called "superb" with the writer for the *Times* suggesting: "The more this gentleman is heard the more certainly he establishes his claim to the highest respect of the lovers of music pure and undefiled."<sup>73</sup> The writer continued, stating that Rummel's execution "had the exactness of Von Bülow, with the spirit and power of Rubinstein" and that he played with "a power, skill, and tastefulness which have never been surpassed by any pianist who has appeared in New-York." This review demonstrates one of the first instances where a local performer was compared so favorably with the two renowned virtuosos.

As Rummel's debut season came to a close, his performances of piano concertos, chamber works, and the occasional addition of solo pieces demonstrated the various facets of his well-rounded training; however, the pianist had yet to display his ability as a recitalist. On 28 April 1879, the *Times* announced Rummel would return to Europe at the conclusion of the season, and that before his departure, the pianist had scheduled three matinées. The highly anticipated performances took place on 8, 15, and 22 May at Steinway Hall. The local musical establishment responded to the announcement with great curiosity. At this point, Rummel's return to America was uncertain, naturally creating a sense of urgency for concertgoers who were perhaps hearing the pianist for the last time. American critics (and likely audiences) had also speculated about Rummel's abilities in the recital format, which until this point was

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<sup>72</sup> Rummel appeared with the New York Philharmonic Club again on 15 February, performing Schumann's Piano Quintet in E-Flat Major, Op. 44 and a trio by Rubinstein. The pianist also performed Chopin's *Berceuse*, Op. 57 and the Polonaise in A-Flat Major, Op. 53: "Mr. Rummel is a pianist of such masterly force that he dominates every performance in which he engages... His training and knowledge enable him to play such concerted music as was demonstrated by the programme yesterday in an artistic manner, but the efforts of any other performers seem subordinate to him." (*Times*, 16 February 1879, 7).

<sup>73</sup> "The New York Philharmonic Club," *Times*, 5 February 1879, 5.

unknown. Finally, the pianist's approach to programming being much more focused on substantial repertoire and catering less to popular tastes was also a source of great intrigue.



**Figure 4.2: Portrait of Franz Rummel by Sarony.  
Collection of the author.**

Rummel's first matinée took place on 8 May 1879 at Steinway Hall. The writer for the *Times* began by reminding the reader how Rummel had come to the United States "unknown and unannounced" and that he "commanded by sheer force of genius and incomparable ability the

admiration of the musical public.”<sup>74</sup> The critic also commented on the severity of the task at hand and how Rummel’s performance was “phenomenal.” Beyond the pianist’s demonstration of Rubinstein-like vigor and a technical accuracy reminiscent of von Bülow, his programming was outstanding by contemporary standards:

#### FIRST RECITAL<sup>75</sup>

Prelude and Fugue in A Minor	Bach-Liszt
Suite in E Major	Handel
Piano Sonata in F Minor, Op. 57, <i>Appassionata</i>	Beethoven
<i>Variations Sérieuses</i> , Op. 54	Mendelssohn
<i>Faschingschwank</i>	Schumann
<i>Berceuse in D-flat Major</i> , Op. 57	Chopin
<i>Impromptu in A-flat Major</i> , Op. 29	Chopin
<i>Valse in D-flat Major</i> , Op. 64, no. 1	Chopin
<i>Polonaise in A Major</i> , Op. 40	Chopin

#### SECOND RECITAL<sup>76</sup>

Prelude and Fugue in C Major	Bach-Liszt
Sonata in C Sharp Minor, Op. 27, no. 2	Beethoven
Fantasy in F Sharp Minor, Op. 28	Mendelssohn
<i>Symphonic Etudes</i> , Op. 13	Schumann
<i>Nocturne in D-Flat Major</i> , Op. 27, no.2	Chopin
<i>Barcarolle in G Major</i>	Rubinstein
Paganini “Etude”	Liszt
<i>Waldesrauchen</i>	Liszt
<i>Le Rossignol</i>	Liszt
<i>Invitation à la Valse</i>	Weber-Tausig

#### THIRD RECITAL<sup>77</sup>

Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue	Bach
Sonata in C Major, Op. 53, <i>Waldstein</i>	Beethoven
Sonata in G Minor, Op. 22	Schumann
Andantino and Variations	Schubert-Tausig

<sup>74</sup> “Mr. Franz Rummel’s Recital,” *Times*, 9 May 1879, 5.

<sup>75</sup> Program reproduced from the *Times*, 28 April 1879, 4. The original announcement stated that Rummel would conclude with a selection of etudes instead of the Polonaise.

<sup>76</sup> Program reproduced from the *Times*, 28 April 1879, 4.

<sup>77</sup> Program reproduced from the *Times*, 28 April 1879, 4.

Rondo Capriccioso  
Gavotte  
Nocturne  
*Valse Wahlstimmen*, Op. 250  
*Hungarian Rhapsody*, No. 8

Mendelssohn  
Gotthard  
Louis Brassin  
Strauss-Tausig  
Liszt

Extensive recitals were uncommon but not new to local audiences. Although, frequently assisted by at least one supporting artist, Rubinstein and von Bülow had presented just as demanding, and in some cases, much more imposing programs earlier in the decade; however, Rummel's chronological/historical format, coupled with the relative absence of superficial display pieces was something New York's audiences had rarely experienced since. Not only was Rummel's series a demonstration of variety and depth, they represented an approach to concert programming that would become more or less the standard well into the twentieth century.<sup>78</sup>

The next season saw the return of Rummel and the arrival of Joseffy. Although other pianists came and went these two were the most active, celebrated, and frequently discussed in the press. In June 1880, the monthly journal *The Art Amateur* ran a paragraph penned by the composer and critic Caryl Florio in their "Musical Notes" column concerning the two pianists.<sup>79</sup> The entry followed a similarly short review of Rummel's recently concluded recital series, in which Florio praised the pianist's energy, fire, passion, and memory, while calling attention to his "hardness of attack" and "an over-velocity which frequently degenerates into unclearness and confusion." Ultimately, Florio credited the pianist for presenting to the public the span of piano

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<sup>78</sup> A similar programming strategy can be traced back to 1854 when William Mason (1829-1908) returned from studies abroad, gave his debut concerts, and his only American tour; however, the model did not become standard at that time.

<sup>79</sup> "Caryl Florio" is the pseudonym for the English-born American composer William James Robjohn (1843-1920). He was a fairly prolific composer; however, his most noted activity was that of music coordinator to George Washington Vanderbilt (1862-1914) at his Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina. The massive summer resort is emblematic of the American Gilded Age and remains one of the last monumental examples of the illustrious Vanderbilt fortune.

literature, from Bach to the present, and recognized Rummel's ability to hold his listener's "never-flagging attention," regardless of the length and "severely classical" nature of his programs.<sup>80</sup> A comparison of Joseffy and Rummel immediately followed:

As I write, Mr. Joseffy's two piano recitals are near at hand. Those who mistakenly insist upon making comparisons between this artist and Mr. Rummel have now an excellent opportunity for the exercise of their favorite amusement. It is useless to tell these well-meaning but misguided auditors that a comparison between two artists whose styles and whose aims are so different is impossible, because they will not believe it; but it is nevertheless true.<sup>81</sup>

Although Florio encouraged his readers to admire the individuality of both virtuosos, it is clear that the "favorite amusement" of comparison did not pass over Joseffy and Rummel. So long as both were active in New York, the press would contrast these two pianists, for better or worse.

Throughout the 1881 season, occasional commentary concerning Joseffy and Rummel continued to appear in local periodicals. On 26 February, *The Critic* ran a subtle yet telling review. The writer began with mention of Joseffy's recently concluded three-recital series, calling the programs "remarkable for variety... interpreted with that finish of execution and fine sentiment for which he is noted."<sup>82</sup> The reviewer continued by admitting surprise after hearing the pianist perform his paraphrase of Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore's *Columbia* on one of the programs. With no mention of a single other composition included in Joseffy's performance, initial praise for the pianist's playing was reduced to criticism, when the writer opined: "Though it was admirably played, the flimsiness of the composition was none the less apparent." Next, the writer reviewed Rummel's first recital in his current series, which was given two days earlier. Not only did the pianist perform to a large audience, the writer referenced works by "Bach,

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<sup>80</sup> *The Art Amateur*, June 1880, 21.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *The Critic*, 26 February 1881, 56.

Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin, Floersheim, and Liszt.”<sup>83</sup> The contrast was clear, citing Joseffy’s performance as a single piece of superficial fluff, while associating Rummel with a substantial list of high-ranking composers. Joseffy’s approach to programming seems to have enticed the public, while the critic clearly favored the depth and versatility of Rummel’s repertoire.

Florio chimed in a month later, guilty of the same “amusement” of comparison he so boldly accused auditors of the previous year. His column in the March 1881 edition of *The Art Amateur* is informative concerning the differences between New York’s two favorite pianists. The writer began by praising Joseffy’s technique: “Liszt as he stands, is not sufficiently difficult for him; he turns single note passages into sixths and thirds, and invents new cadenzas of fabulous impossibility.”<sup>84</sup> Florio then criticized the pianist for a lack of understanding the works of Schumann, while calling Joseffy’s rendition of Beethoven’s *Appassionata*, “almost funny.” Then he brought Rummel into the discussion, identifying the pianist as the “exact antipodes” of the former: “To Joseffy’s elaborate finish he opposes overpowering passion and fire; to Joseffy’s whispering pianissimo an almost orchestral power and largeness; while in grandeur and variety of conception he far surpasses his rival.” The critic continued, telling how Rummel’s style was reminiscent of Rubinstein, concluding with: “we are lucky in having here two men, each worthy of reigning in his own peculiar kingdom.” The article not only documents how different the two pianists were, but also demonstrates how keenly interested certain members of the New York establishment were in these two virtuosos.

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<sup>83</sup> Otto Floersheim (1853-1917) was a German-born American composer.

<sup>84</sup> *The Art Amateur*, March 1881, 88.



As the 1880-81 season came to a close and Rummel was preparing his departure, Florio made final observations. Again, Joseffy had recently finished his recital series, while Rummel was about to conclude his own. This time the writer immediately stated that regardless of Joseffy's impressive technical skills, the playing "became weary and dull." Although his repertoire was quite varied, including works by Handel, Beethoven, Schumann, and Liszt, Joseffy's "lack of personality," and "absolute lack of comprehension" (likely with regard to his Schumann and Beethoven), and a limited use of coloristic variety, induced Florio to label the pianist's performance "boring to the extreme."<sup>85</sup> By contrast, Rummel was lauded for his interesting representation of all the various styles of piano composition, with "the most thunderous power and the most delicate whisper." Florio continued, explaining how Joseffy was too focused on the perfect rendering of intricate passages as a "thing in itself to be studied," while Rummel approached such material as "simply a member of a great whole, and the manner of its execution must be subservient to the general effect." The critic concluded by contrasting Joseffy's constantly "beautiful, pure, [piano] tone" with Rummel's more orchestral sonorities.<sup>86</sup>

By comparing two completely different pianists who had separate goals in mind, Florio was guilty of the same complaint he made of other auditors the previous year. Although the critic's preoccupation with his subjects seems fruitless and shallow, his comparisons, nonetheless, are valuable for demonstrating musical tastes and programming differences at a time when the solo piano recital was far from standardized. Rummel championed a more orchestral approach, coupled with a desire and ability to carry his listeners away with fiery intensity and force, while Joseffy chose to caress his listeners with pianistic effects and

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<sup>85</sup> "The Rummel Recitals," *The Art Amateur*, April 1881, 108.

<sup>86</sup> See *Church's Musical Visitor*, April 1881, 188: "In the matter of repertoire Mr. Rummel is far ahead of Mr. Joseffy."

scintillating shades of color. Rummel's programs were balanced exhibitions of depth, substance, and virtuosity, representing each era and school of keyboard composition, an approach that became standard and almost formulaic in the twentieth century. Joseffy on the other hand, focused on popular appeal. Although he did seem inclined to include works of depth and substance, these played a subordinate role, as he populated programs with flashy display pieces and crowd pleasers that were more accessible to the average concertgoer.

Throughout the coming decade, certain aspects of Joseffy's playing, specifically his renditions of Beethoven and Schumann, would invite further criticism; however, lengthy comparisons with other pianists seemed to cease with the initial departure of Rummel. The British-born virtuoso returned to New York several times throughout the remainder of the century, but the coexistence of these two pianists never seemed to encourage further discourse in the press.<sup>87</sup> Since the comparison was made, there was likely nothing else to be gained through additional commentary. As the century progressed, numerous other pianists arrived, providing other topics for discussion, and Joseffy was never again paired off to the same extent.

### **Pianist and Orchestra**

With new management and the endorsement of Steinway, the next few years represent Joseffy's most active period. For much of the decade, he was one of the most frequently heard pianists in New York, often performing several times in a given week. Regular appearances in Brooklyn and New Jersey were practical and frequent, while short excursions to Boston, Milwaukee,

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<sup>87</sup> Rummel returned and performed during 1885-86, 1890-92, and 1898. The *Times* (12 February 1893) also documents his arrival in New York during the 1892-93 season but there are no references to performances given during that time.

Philadelphia, Washington D.C., and other regional locales were easily accomplished and allowed the pianist to flesh out his schedule without immediately embarking upon an actual concert tour.

The vibrant orchestral scene that was now established in New York enabled Joseffy to quickly achieve a dominant presence in the city. In previous decades, resident pianists like Hoffman and Mills made regular appearances with the New York Philharmonic and with the Brooklyn Society. Occasionally, amateur music groups such as the Arion Society or the German Liederkrantz might also choose to include a concerto during a given season, providing pianists further performance opportunities. If a virtuoso such as Thalberg or a celebrated singer like Jenny Lind toured, an orchestra was often assembled as needed, but these were also specific cases. Beyond the New York Philharmonic and Brooklyn Societies, there were no other ensembles giving pianists regular opportunities to perform concertos. By the time Joseffy arrived, however, there were no less than five active orchestras performing regularly in the metropolitan area, with a handful of other ensembles also providing concerto engagements. The sheer amount of symphonic activity in the city gave Joseffy an opportunity that was simply not available to pianists of previous generations.

Founded in 1842, The New York Philharmonic Society was the first orchestra in America to make concerto appearances available to pianists on an annual basis. Throughout the 1880s, Joseffy performed at least once every season with the Society. Fifteen years later, the Brooklyn Philharmonic was established (1857) and would also become a frequent collaborative ensemble for most of the pianist's career. The Symphony Society of New York was founded the year before Joseffy arrived, and the pianist gave his American debut under Leopold Damrosch's baton. Also in 1878, the Chickering piano company assembled a regular orchestra directed by Carlberg for an annual concert series. Except for one performance with the New York

Philharmonic Society on 21 February 1880, the remainder of Joseffy's local concerto appearances during his premiere season took place at Chickering Hall with Carlberg. Several other conductors, such as William G. Dietrich, Rudolph Bial (1834-1881), Heinrich Zöllner (1854-1941), and later Anton Seidl (1850-1898) and Walter Damrosch (1862-1950) were also associated with various ensembles with whom Joseffy gave concerto performances. The pianist made the majority of his appearances, however, under the direction of Theodore Thomas.

Thomas was born on 11 October 1835 in Germany, but by the time he was ten years old his family had immigrated to New York. Although his formal training was minimal, Thomas was a very talented violinist and quickly developed into a proficient ensemble player and soloist. After a short excursion to Norfolk, Virginia where the young musician and his father played with the navy band, Thomas ventured on a small-time yet self-promoted and self-sustained tour of the eastern and southern states.

By 1850, the violinist found himself back in New York City and quickly secured positions in several local ensembles. First, Thomas joined the violin section of the Germania Society as part of an orchestra that accompanied several operatic superstars, such as Jenny Lind, Henriette Sontag, Marietta Albani, Giovanni Matteo Mario, and Giulia Grisi. Next, Thomas was appointed as principal second violinist in Karl Eckert's orchestra and later joined the first violin section of Louis Antoine Jullien's orchestra. These engagements not only provided invaluable experience for Thomas, but he also came under the influence of two prominent conductors.

In 1854, at the age of nineteen, Thomas was elected a member of the New York Philharmonic Society and for the next twenty-five years he was associated with the Society mainly as a performer and eventually as its conductor. The same year, he met the pianist

William Mason (1829-1910), who became one of the violinist's closest, lifelong friends. With Joseph Mosenthal (1834-1896) on second violin, George Matzka (1825-1883) on viola, and the cellist Carl Bergmann (1814-1865), who was later replaced with Frederick Bergner, the five established one of New York's first regular chamber ensembles. Originally called the Mason and Bergmann Concerts and later renamed the Mason-Thomas Concerts, the ensemble gave their first performance on 27 November 1855. For the next twelve seasons the group was among the finest, if not the premiere, chamber ensemble in New York City.

By the end of the decade, under the direction of Carl Anschütz (1813-1870), the violinist became concertmaster for the opera orchestra at the Academy of Music. Working under the esteemed German conductor gave Thomas further insight into the multi-faceted role of a director. On 20 April 1858, Thomas replaced Anschütz at the last minute in a performance of Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*. The performance was not only a personal success; it earned Thomas further respect and revealed his potential as a conductor.

Without financial backing, Thomas assembled an orchestra of forty players and gave his formal debut as a symphonic conductor on 13 May 1862 at New York's Irving Hall. He repeated the endeavor four months later, this time with a larger orchestra and a newly-renovated venue. This success inspired Thomas, and also grabbed the attention of New York's musical establishment. For the 1862-63 season, he began conducting the Brooklyn Philharmonic, and in 1866 was appointed musical director of that ensemble, a position he maintained until relocating to Chicago. In 1891, Thomas would found the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.



**Figure 4.3: Theodore Thomas by Sarony.  
Collection of the author.**

By the time Joseffy arrived, Thomas was perhaps the most respected conductor in America and his ensemble, now called the Theodore Thomas Orchestra, was considered the best. They had toured extensively, and Thomas's soirées and other concert series not only gave New York audiences several opportunities each season to attend orchestral performances, but they also provided regular occasions for pianists to perform concertos. The conductor's recent association with the Cincinnati College of Music would provide future opportunities as well.

Thomas continued to direct the Brooklyn Philharmonic and also was recently elected to conduct the New York Philharmonic Society. By 1880, the conductor's simultaneous activities with three major ensembles created a dominant presence in the city's orchestral realm, eventually giving Thomas a virtual monopoly over New York's symphonic activity.<sup>88</sup> He also maintained a close working relationship with Steinway, who had recently embraced Joseffy. For the right pianist, association with this kind of establishment offered the potential for long-term success.

Joseffy quickly established himself as one of the most prominent concerto performers in New York. For his debut season (1879-80), the pianist gave an impressive ten local concerto performances.<sup>89</sup> The following year, however, Joseffy dwarfed the first year's activity with a total of twenty-four.<sup>90</sup> The pianist appeared with five different orchestras, under three different conductors, performing at least twelve different works. He played ten times with the Thomas Orchestra; twice with the New York Philharmonic Society (under Thomas), including two open rehearsals; twice with the Brooklyn Philharmonic society (with Thomas), including four open rehearsals; at least one engagement for Richard A. Saalfield's Popular Concert Series (six were scheduled), with Signor d'Auria (d. 1919) conducting; and three concerts under Rudolph Bial and his American Orchestra at Metropolitan Hall.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> In discussing the musical activity in New York, one Chicago journalist referred to Thomas as "the commander-in-chief of the army of classical musicians in New York" (*Chicago Daily Tribune*, 14 October 1877, 10).

<sup>89</sup> Total numbers for concerto performances include appearances in New York City only. Occasionally, the local press mentions concerts given in nearby locales such as Boston, upstate New York, and Philadelphia. Joseffy was also scheduled to give performances in several other regional venues; however, many were cancelled due to his hand injury. Some of these engagements may have been with orchestras.

<sup>90</sup> Since dress rehearsals with the New York and Brooklyn Philharmonic Societies were open to the public, they are also included in the totals. Matinéés with the Thomas orchestra are also included.

<sup>91</sup> Between 1879 and 1882, Richard A. Saalfield (1857-1912) organized concert series of a more popular flavor. His first effort was called the "Saalfield Ballad Concerts" (1879-80), later renaming the series "Saalfield's Popular Concerts (1880-81). He originally entered the musical production business in London before coming to the United States. In an effort to boost public attention and ticket sales he recruited local talent such as Joseffy and often called upon operatic stars who were also performing in the city to headline his concerts. Since the New York press did not review these concerts, it is difficult to know which concertos were performed, who the conductors were, and if specific orchestras were hired or simply assembled for each event. In the case of Joseffy, the *Times* (8 November

On 13 November 1880 the Philharmonic Society opened their season at the Academy of Music. It was the orchestra's 188<sup>th</sup> concert, Theodore Thomas's second term as director, Joseffy's second appearance with the Society, and his first public performance playing a Steinway grand piano.<sup>92</sup> Henselt's Piano Concerto in F Minor, Op. 16 was chosen for the occasion, which, according to the *Times*, had not been performed in New York since von Bülow played the work half a decade earlier. The writer also concluded that, "Even with the recollection of von Bülow's mathematical accuracy, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that it has not been heard before till Joseffy played it . . . It was the perfection of the pianist's art."<sup>93</sup> Pianist and conductor appeared again a week later and gave the same concerto with the Brooklyn Philharmonic, to similar success: "No other pianist who has ever been heard here has combined so many qualities of excellence, and certainly no one has ever held such complete mastery of his audience as does this remarkable young man."<sup>94</sup>

As the season quickly unfolded, Thomas and Joseffy performed together another fourteen times, and the partnership between conductor and pianist was soon recognized as something special. Following their first matinée on 16 December at Steinway Hall, the writer for

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1880) states that Saalfield had engaged the pianist for a total of six concerts for the 1880-81 season. Since specific dates were not given in the announcement and the performances were apparently not reviewed, it is difficult to know if the pianist gave recitals or concertos; it is also not possible to know if all engagements were fulfilled. Saalfield's concert series were short lived and he eventually entered the sheet music business, where his approach to wholesale marketing apparently earned him a fortune. Returning from retirement in England, the businessman attempted to revive the series in 1899, at Carnegie Hall. The effort was unsuccessful. Rudolph Bial (1834-1881) was a German violinist, composer, and conductor. He arrived in New York in 1879 and quickly secured a position directing the orchestra at Koster & Bial's (his relation to Albert Bial, the co-owner, is unknown), a German-style concert garden then known as the Hudson Metropole. In 1880, Bial became the conductor at the Thalia Theatre where he earned the respect of the New York establishment. Following his untimely death (23 November 1881), Theodore Thomas organized a benefit concert for Bial's family. The event took place on 18 December 1881 at Steinway Hall, with an orchestra of eighty performers, including the members of Bial's Thalia group.

<sup>92</sup>Joseffy actually began the 1880-81 season with a concert series in Boston during the first week of October. The *Tribune* (19 September 1880) announced that Thomas would open his season at Steinway Hall on 22 October with Joseffy as soloist. This concert was apparently not reviewed in the local press, which suggests that it did not take place or that the *Tribune* may have given the incorrect date.

<sup>93</sup>"The Philharmonic Society," *Times*, 14 November 1880, 7.

<sup>94</sup>"The Brooklyn Philharmonic," *Times*, 21 November 1880, 7.



the *Tribune* opined, concerning Thomas: “Indeed, so complete is his sympathy and so perfectly is the work of his hand blended with that of the pianist that one loses altogether that sense of ‘accompanying’ which one feels with most other conductors.”<sup>95</sup> The critic’s mention of “other conductors” was likely a subtle reference to the unhappy collaborative relationship between Joseffy and Carlberg. The writer’s final remarks make the notion even more probable: “it must have been a delight to Mr. Joseffy to play with such support, as it is a delight to us to listen to.”

Joseffy’s final concert of the season took place on 20 April 1881 at the Academy with Thomas conducting.<sup>96</sup> The review that appeared the following day in the *Times* demonstrates the level of admiration that Joseffy had earned from both critics and the public alike as he approached the zenith of his success:

It is difficult to speak calmly of Mr. Joseffy’s playing after hearing him in such a concert as that of last night. No other pianist could have drawn the throng of people to listen to him and have held them fascinated by the superb exhibition of his art. Great pianists are not unknown in New York. Jaëll, Thalberg, Gottschalk, Rubinstein, and Von Bulow [*sic*] have all been heard by many of those who were present last night. Each of these had his special merits and his special admirers, but this wonderful young man Joseffy shows powers that no other one artist has combined. He is manly and vigorous when occasion calls for an exhibition of strength against the powerful background of an orchestra of a hundred musicians, and plays with delicacy that no other pianist exhibits. His pianissimo is wonderfully clear and distinct, and for some magical reason is as audible in the remote parts of the house as on the stage. Added to the marvelous skill in handling the instrument, Joseffy’s accuracy and faultless memory are not to be forgotten.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> “The Thomas-Joseffy Concert,” *Tribune*, 17 December 1880, 4.

<sup>96</sup> The performance was billed as Joseffy’s “Farewell Concert.” Although there may have been some discussion about Joseffy returning to Europe at the close of the season, the notion of “farewell” was likely in reference to the pianist being absent for the first half of the following season, when he would embark upon his first American tour. According to Steinway’s personal diary, Joseffy departed for San Francisco on 29 September. The performance was also not Joseffy’s final local appearance for the season. On 23 April Joseffy appeared at the Academy of Music Shakespeare-Poe Festival. He also performed for Thomas’s own complimentary concert on 30 April. On 7 May, Joseffy contributed to a concert for the American composer Dudley Buck. Finally, the pianist would make his last appearance at Metropolitan Concert in a benefit concert for the conductor Rudolph Bial who had recently retired.

<sup>97</sup> “Joseffy’s Concert,” *Times*, 21 April 1881, 5.

## Touring America

Throughout his career, Joseffy made three continental tours of the United States and several other regional performance excursions throughout the East and Midwest. Although this research focuses primarily on the pianist's activities in New York City, a short discussion of his first tour provides further insight concerning Joseffy and the musical scene throughout the country.

The 1881-82 season was perhaps less exciting locally, because for the first half of the season Joseffy embarked upon his first official tour of the United States. According to Steinway's personal accounts, Joseffy departed for San Francisco on 29 September, where he began with twelve concerts: eight with orchestra and four solo recitals. Working his way east, the *Times* (25 December 1881) reported that Joseffy had returned and would resume local concert appearances at the New Philharmonic Society's open rehearsal on 13 January 1882.<sup>98</sup> The trajectory of his travels extended across the Mississippi River, the natural western border, beyond which few pianists at the time ventured. The tour also included uncommon destinations such as Kansas, Texas, Colorado, Utah, and California.<sup>99</sup>

According to his new manager, Mr. Henry Wolfson, the tour was an "excellent financial success," but not every audience recognized Joseffy's merits. One critic in San Francisco faulted the pianist for his superficial virtuosity and preoccupation with the technical side of his craft: "Splendid as are his technical powers, he gives us nothing else."<sup>100</sup> While acknowledging that he was the only pianist with "commanding ability" (besides Anna Mehlig) to have ever visited that

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<sup>98</sup> Steinway reports that Joseffy returned to New York on 22 December 1882.

<sup>99</sup> See *Music and Drama*, 1/1(7 January 1882). The article discusses Joseffy's recent tour. Mr. Henry Wolfson (manager) states that the pianist appeared in Denver, Vicksburg, Galveston, New Orleans, and Savannah and that "Joseffy met with excellent financial success." Wolfson also confirms concerts were given in San Francisco, Oakland, Salt Lake City, Denver, St. Joseph, Leavenworth, Kansas City, and Charleston. Joseffy toured again in 1884 and 1899-1900.

<sup>100</sup> *The Californian*, December 1881, 535.

city, the writer for the *Californian* was hesitant to call Joseffy a world-class pianist: “Mr. Joseffy is not a genius; he is simply a young man and a Jew.” The prejudice expressed toward the pianist’s age and ancestry is striking and seems unnecessary, but the writer later voiced an opinion likely shared by other critics if not so directly expressed: “He loves music less for its own sake, than as the means of showing off Joseffy.” A rebuttal, however, quickly appeared in the New York-based *Music, A Review* on 7 January 1882. In defense of the pianist, a San Francisco correspondent cited another Bay-area periodical, the *News Letter*, who quickly dismissed the writer for the *Californian*: “We do not know personally, or even by name, the musical critic for the *Californian*, but that he is a writer ignorant of musical sentiment is evident for the very extraordinary critique of Mr. Joseffy.”<sup>101</sup> The corresponding writer also indicated that Joseffy’s visit, coupled with the city’s new Symphony Society, were “about all that matters of interest in the musical world here.” The attack on Joseffy’s ancestry was seen as “unique and startling.” The West coast source continued:

To anyone who had the pleasure of meeting the pianist and knowing him, the imputation of ‘showing off Mr. Joseffy,’ is almost too absurd for notice, so marked is his modesty and lack of self-consciousness, and so sincere is his dislike of outward show. He is a quiet, thoughtful man . . . Ambitious he is, and earnest in his love for his art.<sup>102</sup>

The article concluded, calling Joseffy “a great virtuoso and an admirable artist,” and that his visit was “a great benefit to the musical people here, especially to those who have not been fortunate enough to hear other eminent pianists.”

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<sup>101</sup> *Music, A Review*, (7 January 1882): 11.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

A more comical event occurred during a concert in Salt Lake City, with a review of the performance appearing shortly thereafter in the *New York Tribune*. For his Utah audience, Joseffy presented a typical recital, which likely included some twenty selections and probably was intended to last upwards of two hours. The *Tribune* reported that the pianist played for an hour without rising for a bow or taking obvious breaks: “He *opened out* with a Beethoven *deal* and kept playing right along through Chopin, Schumann, Wagner, Gluck, and in fact nearly all the composers which the public so seldom hear, or care to.”<sup>103</sup> When Joseffy finally stood up to receive expected applause, the audience was confused and had no idea which part of the program he had concluded. Suddenly, a woman who, for one reason or another appeared to be musically educated rose from her seat and left the hall. The audience, believing the concert was finished, followed suit and the recital was prematurely ended. Joseffy apparently grinned with amusement, made no attempt to rectify the situation, and simply left the stage. Although the story is humorous, it perhaps documents the level of musical education and general unfamiliarity with piano repertoire in certain parts of the country as the final decades of the century approached.

### **Back in New York and More Concertos**

Upon his return to New York, Joseffy made a quick succession of six local concerto performances in January followed by two in April to conclude his abbreviated 1881-82 season. Joining already expected presentations of Chopin and Liszt, the pianist now included his own *Scherzo Fantastique* for piano and orchestra; Beethoven’s *Fantasia in C Minor, Op. 80 Choral Fantasy*; and *Piano Concerto in G Major, Op. 58*; Saint-Saëns’s *Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op.*

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<sup>103</sup> *Tribune*, 20 November 1881, 6.

22; and two concertos by Mozart. The works by Saint-Saëns and Mozart earned the pianist overwhelmingly positive reviews, while the Beethoven concerto became a frustration and a regular target of criticism.

On 14 January, Joseffy made his fourth scheduled concert appearance with the New York Philharmonic Society. For this event, the pianist gave his first public performance of Beethoven's fourth piano concerto, which the *Times* suggested Joseffy had recently added to his repertoire. The critic also opined that to this point, Joseffy lacked the "profundity of insight and breadth of style" required for the concerto (and Beethoven in general) and that his previous avoidance of programming such works in public attested to this fact. The review credited Joseffy with "exquisite delicacy and gracefulness" and that it was "impossible to over-estimate" his technical accomplishments; however, the performance "seemed narrowed in its dimensions" and that "some of the force and vigor and all of its passionate eloquence was gone."<sup>104</sup> Ultimately, the critic suggested the desire for a "higher manifestation of musical ability" was not lost upon auditors, who were so accustomed to the pianist's technical showmanship. Throughout the remainder of the decade, Joseffy performed this concerto locally at least five more times, seldom receiving positive reviews and normally being cited for the same artistic shortcomings.

Joseffy's next concerto appearance occurred seven days later with the Brooklyn Philharmonic and included another debut performance for the pianist. Occasionally, excursions away from the popular concertos of the "modern" school allowed performers to present the works of Mozart. For this event, Joseffy chose Piano Concerto in A major, K. 488 and received positive reviews. The writer for the *Times* suggested: "Mr. Joseffy is by nature fitted for such a work as this . . . Mr. Joseffy has derived his inspiration from the same Pierian spring that gave

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<sup>104</sup> "The Philharmonic Concert," *Times*, 15 January 1882, 7.

Mozart his place in the ranks of great composers.”<sup>105</sup> The pianist performed the concerto again a week later in Brooklyn, followed by a third performance with the Thomas Orchestra on 27 April.

The concert on 27 April was Joseffy’s final appearance of the season, which was an impressive affair.<sup>106</sup> Not only did he repeat K. 488, he also included the Piano Concerto in D Minor (K. 466), and Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto in G minor, Op. 22.<sup>107</sup> As if three concertos were not enough, the pianist fleshed out the program with Beethoven’s Op. 110, one of the composer’s challenging “late” sonatas; the Nocturne in D-Flat Major, Op. 27, No. 2 by Chopin; the Allegro vivace from Beethoven’s Op. 31, No. 3 sonata; and Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12*. The critic for the *Times* recognized “improvement” in Joseffy’s playing, especially in regards to his more “broad and finished” style, which was likely in reference to his rendering of the Beethoven sonata. The pianist was also praised for his “remarkable versatility and exceptional brilliancy,” with the critic calling the performance of the Chopin nocturne one of “uncommon poetic gracefulness of expression and delicacy that appealed to every one in the audience.” Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsody* was called “brilliant” as Joseffy “played the work with distinctness and more power than he has ever before exhibited.” Following the typically positive reviews of his playing, the writer for the *Times* concluded with a statement that likely was on the minds of many: “the only regret was that no one knows when Mr. Joseffy will play again in this City.”<sup>108</sup>

As the summer months approached, cause for alarm regarding Joseffy’s future performance status in New York seemed a legitimate concern with the local musical establishment. Although the press made no solid indication that the pianist would leave, still,

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<sup>105</sup> “The Brooklyn Philharmonic,” *Times* 22 January 1882, 7.

<sup>106</sup> On 29 April 1882 Joseffy gave a concert for the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society at Steinway Hall.

<sup>107</sup> Joseffy revived K. 488 on 18 February 1886 for one of Thomas’s Popular Concerts.

<sup>108</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s Concert,” *Times*, 28 April 1882, 4.

they did not confirm his plans to stay. Rumors of Joseffy becoming a U.S. citizen had been circulating in the press since the previous summer, but the fact remained that he was not a citizen, which naturally raised questions regarding his eventual return to Europe.<sup>109</sup> Several entries in the local press, however, seem to negate this concern altogether. On 11 June 1882, the *Times* reported on the funeral of the young pianist, Reitzel, who had replaced an ailing Joseffy in a concerto performance the previous season. The nineteen-year-old pianist had tragically perished in a boating accident two weeks earlier. Joseffy was among the mourners present at the internment, which took place on 10 June, placing the pianist in New York. On 10 August, the *Times* mentioned that Joseffy had spent most of the summer composing and had recently completed the orchestration of his own piano concerto, which would receive its debut during the following season. Although his whereabouts was unconfirmed, the pianist had likely retreated to Bridgeport, Connecticut, where he had spent previous summers. Finally, as the next concert season approached, the local press also confirmed that Joseffy would continue teaching at the New York College of Music. Apparently, the pianist had every intention of remaining in America.

To the delight of New York audiences, Joseffy did return for the 1882-83 season. Not only was the pianist back in the city, he also resumed the concerto activity concertgoers had come to expect following his first two seasons. While the previous year's touring naturally limited Joseffy to only seven local appearances in eight different concertos, he returned in 1882 and gave at least fifteen separate appearances, performing twelve different works for piano and

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<sup>109</sup> The first mention of Joseffy becoming a U.S. citizen appeared in the *Times* (10 July 1881). His intention appeared again in the *Times* on 15 April 1883, when the newspaper also stated that the pianist entered into a three-year agreement to rent a house No. 443 East Fifty-Seventh Street. The May 1883 issue of the *Musical Visitor* also cited Joseffy's intention of become a citizen and settling in New York City. On 21 May 1895, the *Times* ran a short entry, "Joseffy Asks for Citizenship." The article states that the pianist, accompanied by his lawyer, Benno Lowenson, "declared his intention of becoming a citizen of the United States and renouncing all allegiance to the Emperor of Austria, of whom he is a subject."

orchestra.<sup>110</sup> He also added to his repertoire the Piano Concerto in B-Flat Major, Op. 83 by Johannes Brahms, giving the American premiere; Beethoven's Piano Concerto in C Minor, Op. 37; and Rubinstein's Piano Concerto in D Minor, Op. 70, both firsts for Joseffy.<sup>111</sup> In response to local speculation, Joseffy also premiered his own piano concerto, *In Einem Satz*.

Throughout the first half of the season, Joseffy focused on the Saint-Saëns concerto, giving at least four local performances of the work.<sup>112</sup> He played the piece twice with the Brooklyn Philharmonic (25 November and 2 December, open rehearsals included) and once with the Thomas Orchestra on 14 December. Although the pianist was first heard in this work during his final concert of the previous season, the noteworthy performances of two Mozart concertos on the same program received more attention. A review following the 24 November open rehearsal of the Saint-Saëns expresses critical acclaim.

His playing yesterday was the complete illustration of the pianist's art. He was masculine and forcible in such portions as these qualities were necessary, and delicate and graceful to the point of ideal musical fancy. Throughout the concerto he was faultlessly accurate, and fascinated the audience by the marvelous brilliancy of his execution and the ease of perfection he shows in the thorough mastery of the piano... Any person of musical capability could not have breathed regularly yesterday while Mr. Joseffy was playing.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Totals include open rehearsals with the New York Philharmonic and Brooklyn Philharmonic Societies. The numbers do not include repeat performances of certain concertos. For example, in 1882-83 he performed Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto in G minor at least four times and works by Schumann and Henselt twice respectively. It was also not uncommon for Joseffy to perform multiple concertos for a single concert. On some occasions the local press advertised a performance but did not mention which or how many concertos Joseffy actually performed. For example, Joseffy performed at least five times with the Thomas Orchestra during the 1882-83 season. Since these performances were so frequent, the press apparently did not always review each concert.

<sup>111</sup> See *Times*, 12 November 1882, 8. Although Beethoven's third piano concerto is mentioned, he appears to have never performed the concerto locally. The Rubinstein concerto was not performed locally by Joseffy until 1884.

<sup>112</sup> See *The Critic*, 23 September 1882, 262. Joseffy's first performance of the season was announced for 9 November 1882 and was apparently not reviewed in the press. If the performance did take place, the Saint-Saëns concerto may have also been played at this time.

<sup>113</sup> "The Brooklyn Philharmonic," *Times*, 25 November 1882, 5.



The impressive review demonstrates the sort of praise that was by now expected following Joseffy's concerto performances. For the pianist who had excelled in works by Chopin and Liszt, the fleet-fingered passages found in the second and third movements of the Saint-Saëns, coupled with the broad yet controlled bravura of the opening *Andante sostenuto* may have been the ideal vehicle to display Joseffy's style.

### **Premiere Performances and Criticism**

One of the most important events of the year took place on 8 and 9 December 1882 at the Philharmonic's second concert of the season, when Joseffy gave the American premiere of Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-Flat Major, Op. 83. On 9 December the *Times* ran an extensive article following the open rehearsal. The writer for the periodical learned that although Brahms had completed the work in 1881, the composer retained the manuscript for his own performances in Vienna, Pesth, and Berlin. With recent publication, the composition was now available for performance in the United States.<sup>114</sup> The concerto's four-movement architecture, uncommon length, and compositional depth posed an immediate challenge to the pianist but even more so for an audience, which the writer for the *Times* clearly understood. The critic claimed the work was "too heavy for immediate appreciation on a first hearing, but possesses so much intrinsic merit that everyone after this first performance will wish to hear it at least a second time."

Following a fairly in-depth synopsis of the concerto and the circumstances surrounding its local premiere, the *Times* praised Joseffy's performance:

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<sup>114</sup> "The Philharmonic Society," *Times*, 9 December 1882, 4.

Mr. Joseffy has not before distinguished himself by a more elegant and graceful effort, if a perfectly smooth and easy performance may be called an effort. The strong passages of the allegro non troppo were given with power and faultless accuracy, the delicate work in the allegro appassionato and the andante were the expressions of poetry from the piano, which held the audience in a state of breathless attention, and the freedom and joyous expression of the allegretto grazioso were fully interpreted. It was a triumph for Mr. Joseffy.

Since the review of the open rehearsal included so much information about the concerto and thoroughly commented upon Joseffy's playing, the concert given the following evening was apparently not reported upon in the *Times*. Other local periodicals, however, did mention the premiere. The writer for *The Critic* suggested that with this new work Brahms "shows that, after all, he is able to speak directly to the heart," and that: "Its best qualities lost nothing in Mr. Joseffy's rendition of the piece last Saturday."<sup>115</sup> Joseffy gave another performance of the concerto with the Thomas Orchestra the following week, which encouraged more in-depth scrutiny.

On 14 December 1882, Joseffy appeared in the first of a four-concert series with Thomas and his orchestra. The pianist was scheduled to give another performance of the Saint-Saëns and premiere his own newly-composed piano concerto, which according to the *Times* (10 December 1882) was still in manuscript. By request, however, the pianist opted to delay the presentation of his own work in favor of a repeat performance of the Brahms.<sup>116</sup> This time, the eagerly-awaited second hearing was commented upon by several members of the local press. The *Times* began with a bold assertion concerning the work's long-term durability with audiences: "Familiarity with the composition is not likely to breed contempt, but leads to the conclusion that Brahms has

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<sup>115</sup> "The Philharmonic Society," *The Critic*, 16 December 1882, 349.

<sup>116</sup> See *The Independent*, 21 December 1882, 11. The review for the concert suggests that Joseffy programmed the Brahms concerto. To fulfill this request, one of the previously scheduled concertos had to be dropped from the program. Also see *Times* 14 December 1882, 5. The advertisement for the concert does mention the program change. Also see "Mr. Joseffy's First Concert," *Times* 15 December 1882, 5. The review of the concert states that the inclusion of the Brahms concerto was "by special request" and was stated as such in the printed program.

not written a work which will command enduring fame, notwithstanding its strong points.”<sup>117</sup>

The critic also suggested that Brahms had been “absurdly flattered by the coterie of admirers” in an effort to transform him into a second Beethoven, resulting in the composer “striving for the unattainable.” The review also suggested that the previous week’s performance by the Philharmonic was far superior, stating that Thomas and his orchestra lacked precision and finish that “more than suggested carelessness.”<sup>118</sup>

Reviews printed in other sources were far less critical. The writer for the *Tribune* suggested that Joseffy’s “entire powers were doubtless best displayed in the admirable Brahms concerto, which gains attractiveness with every hearing.”<sup>119</sup> *The Independent* called the concerto: “a most fascinating work . . . we catch in its consummate score the utterance of the only man who might not be afraid to complete the ‘Unfinished Symphony’ of Schubert or utilize some of those undecipherable memoranda in the last sketchbooks of Beethoven himself.”<sup>120</sup> Concluding with high praise, *The Independent* stated that both concertos were “rendered with all that delightful union of virtuosity and intelligent grasp of the meaning of a composition which only ‘and artist by divine right’ possesses.” Following overall positive yet mixed reception, Joseffy would put the concerto aside until 1887, when he performed the work again with the Philharmonic.

Another premiere that might have been among the highlights of the season took place on 11 January 1883 when Joseffy gave the first and perhaps only public performance of his own

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<sup>117</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s First Concert,” *Times*, 15 December 1882, 5.

<sup>118</sup> Joseffy’s performance of the Saint-Saëns concerto received positive remarks. The other major work on the program was Liszt’s *Réminiscences de Don Juan*, S. 418, which the critic for the *Times* condemned as “a trashy piece of musical rubbish, unworthy of Liszt and sacrilegious when the pure artistic characteristic of Mozart is considered . . . It is a vulgar mass of piano pyrotechnics without merit, and disgraces Mr. Joseffy or anyone else who bangs through it.”

<sup>119</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s Concert,” *Tribune*, 15 December 1882, 5.

<sup>120</sup> *The Independent*, 21 December 1882, 11.

newly-composed piano concerto. According to the local press, he completed *In Einem Satz* immediately prior to the start of the current season and was prepared to unveil it at the first Joseffy-Thomas concert on 14 December. The premiere was, however, delayed in favor of a repeat performance of the Brahms and rescheduled for the second concert of the series.

Joseffy's piano concerto was naturally received with great curiosity. He was among the city's most popular pianists, a virtuoso with a commanding technique, who for the last five years was considered one of the best New York audiences had ever encountered. He was also the most active concerto performer the city had known, giving more local renderings of Chopin's and Liszt's works for piano and orchestra than any pianist before him. Joseffy had also proven his compositional competence the previous season at the inaugural performance of the New York Chorus Society.<sup>121</sup>

On 28 January 1882, the newly-formed Chorus Society consumed the stage at Steinway Hall with a total of nearly 600 singers and a full orchestra. Their impressive program included Handel's *Utrecht Jubilate*; Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy*, with Joseffy as soloist; the chorus "Wake! The Dawning Day is Near" by Wagner; *Oedipus Tyrannus*, op. 35 by John Knowles Paine (1839-1906); and Joseffy's *Scherzo Fantastique* for piano and orchestra. The writer for the *Tribune* seemed justifiably more concerned with Paine's *Oedipus*, calling the work, "by all means the most interesting and valuable contribution to musical literature made by a native musician in a long time."<sup>122</sup> With focus on the featured American composition, Beethoven's fantasy and the *Scherzo Fantastique* were "nevertheless overshadowed in significance by a work which had in it so much promise for the future." The *Times*, however, saw merit in Joseffy's

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<sup>121</sup> The "New York Chorus Society" was the nucleus of a huge chorus assembled for a massive three-city festival that took place in May of 1882. Organized by Thomas, the three week-long events were held consecutively in New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago, drawing from local singers and instrumentalists who performed at all three events.

<sup>122</sup> "The New-York Chorus Society," *Tribune*, 29 January 1882, 7.

efforts, giving encouragement to the composer. The *Scherzo* was called “graceful, delicate, and a most charming composition . . . It was delightfully played, and is destined to be a favorite work on the concert stage.”<sup>123</sup> In the critic’s opinion, this work successfully demonstrated the pianist’s ability to write for orchestra.<sup>124</sup>

The overall positive reception of *Scherzo fantastique*, likely gave the composer a measure of confidence as he prepared the premiere of his new work for piano and orchestra. Although Joseffy was a celebrated concerto soloist, his own compositional efforts in the genre proved disappointing. The premiere of *In Einem Satz* took place on 11 January 1883 with the Thomas Orchestra at Steinway Hall. The program included Chopin’s Piano Concerto in E Minor (by request), Joseffy’s warhorse and a work he frequently performed with unfailing success. He also presented a group of his own solo compositions, with the *Times* calling his *Novelle Mélodie*, “a perfect gem.” His piano concerto, however, met with disapproval, as critics all seemed to agree the work displayed little more than the pianist’s technical prowess:

When, however, Mr. Joseffy appears as a composer of a concerto, he challenges comparisons which are not to his credit. His work of last night, in manuscript, is not likely to receive any attention. It is one thing to be a composer and another to interpret the thoughts of other minds, and Mr. Joseffy’s great success in the latter capacity has led him to essay work for which he is evidently not fitted in the writing of a piano concerto. His composition is a mere series of arpeggios, brilliant passages which have only the merit of displaying the technical skill of the performer and little or nothing of any value. A calm consideration will probably lead the composer not to play his concerto again. It has no value as a musical work.<sup>125</sup>

Echoing the *Times*, the writer for *The Critic* made similar observations, calling Joseffy’s concerto “a series of florid arpeggio passages, astonishing runs in thirds, sixths, and octaves, and

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<sup>123</sup> “The New-York Chorus Society,” *Times*, 29 January 1882, 7.

<sup>124</sup> Regardless of its initial positive reception, Joseffy seems to have only given one more local performance of *Scherzo Fantastique* (“*Maerchen*”) on 28 February 1884, with the Thomas Orchestra.

<sup>125</sup> “Steinway Hall,” *Times*, 12 January 1883, 4.

other break-neck difficulties, which afford him the opportunity of displaying his wonderful technique. It has no intrinsic merit.”<sup>126</sup> The review printed in *The Independent* recommended that Joseffy “quietly lock it away in his desk and think no more about it, much less again inflict it upon his very good friends, the public.”<sup>127</sup>

Following the unfortunate reception of his own composition, Joseffy picked himself up, perhaps patching a bruised ego, and resumed his active schedule as concerto performer *par excellence*. An article that appeared in *The Musical Visitor* illustrates the extent of Joseffy’s reputation and contrasts his formidable repertoire with what was perhaps typical of other pianists:

As an illustration of the prodigiously retentive memory of Joseffy, it is stated that among other elaborate compositions he plays Beethoven’s C minor, Beethoven’s G major, Beethoven’s E Flat, Chopin’s E minor, Chopin’s F minor, Henselt’s concerto, Hiller’s concerto, Liszt’s E flat, Liszt’s in A, Hungarian Fantasia, Liszt’s “Ruins of Athens,” Rubinstein’s D minor and Saint Saens’ in G minor. One or two, or at most three, compositions of such magnitude are considered by the majority of pianists as a sufficiency for one season.<sup>128</sup>

The citation suggests that Joseffy’s active concerto repertoire was more extensive than other resident pianist and likely more so than most visiting European virtuosos at the time. This perspective is based on the constant activity he sustained with the three major local orchestras under Thomas’s direction. This may have been a result of Thomas wanting to frequently program concertos coupled with Joseffy’s ability to meet the demand. Whatever the circumstances, Joseffy was the most active concerto pianist in New York City until the 1890s.

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<sup>126</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s Second Concert,” *The Critic*, 20 January 1883, 26.

<sup>127</sup> *The Independent*, 18 January 1883, 9.

<sup>128</sup> *The Musical Visitor*, January 1884, 13.

Following the cool reception of his piano concerto, criticism of Joseffy took on a more prominent place. On 17 February 1883, *The Critic* printed an article, questioning the value of the pianist's technical merits in light of his perceived lack of artistic growth. With a bold opening statement, *The Critic* went directly to the point: "Mr. Joseffy is a clever pianist, so clever that it is a pity his friends and admirers, who are many, have persuaded him, or allowed him to persuade himself, that he is a great artist."<sup>129</sup> The writer then posed a question addressing the issue at hand: "To what end is all this marvelous mechanical dexterity, this power of manipulating an instrument at will, if there be not with it and using it merely as a means, an artist's soul and intelligence?" The critic continued with an indictment, echoing the complaints made of Louis Moreau Gottschalk's playing twenty years earlier:

Mr. Joseffy made an excellent, and indeed a surprising impression, when he first came before the American musical world, and it was the charitably thought that his artifices and tricks, his appeal to the popular in place of the cultivated ear, were due chiefly to his youth and want of public experience. Time has shown us, though, that he has strengthened these faults and failed to improve in any other particular. That he will always be popular goes without saying, but to the thinking musician it must be a source of pain to see such great physical gifts wantonly thrown away, and by the absence of any poetic development made of no avail.<sup>130</sup>

For Joseffy, taking full advantage of technical prowess to dazzle audiences, he apparently placed slightly more emphasis upon popular appeal rather than striving for musical depth. This approach naturally elicited favor with the average concertgoer, but inevitably earned disapproval from the press, which supposedly reflected the opinions of the musical elite. Similar criticisms were initially leveled against his recitals; however, they did not remain solely aimed at his choice of solo repertoire. Negative reviews now came in quick succession following performances of Beethoven and Schumann concertos.

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<sup>129</sup> "Mr. Joseffy's Performance," *The Critic*, 17 February 1883, 76.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

As critics come to favor artistic interpretation over virtuosic display, even works that previously earned Joseffy highest praise were now targeted as demonstrating the pianist's lack of musical growth. Beginning in spring of 1883 until the end of the decade, the press delivered as many negative reviews as positive ones. Following a performance on 8 March 1883 of Beethoven's *Emperor* Concerto with the Thomas Orchestra, *The Critic* called out the pianist for his lack of understanding of the work: "Mr. Joseffy was hopelessly out of his element . . . His rendering of Beethoven's broad and deep-stirring effects was little short of a parody on the great master."<sup>131</sup> Although the pianist had received positive reviews following his first performance of this work back in 1879, critical reception of current performances of Beethoven's piano concertos was nothing new.<sup>132</sup> Now, several years later, the pianist was expected to have gained a certain amount of musical depth, which apparently was still not present.

Joseffy fared no better with Beethoven's Piano Concerto in G Major, which he decided to revisit. He first performed the work in 1882 receiving cold reviews, which remained unchanged two years later. On 28 February 1884, Joseffy gave the second of a four-concert series at Steinway Hall. The program included several solo pieces by Bach, Chopin, and Schumann; a second performance of his *Scherzo Fantastique*; and the G major concerto by Beethoven. The writer for the *Times* determined the concert "a success" but reserved criticism for the concerto, calling Joseffy's rendering, "as anticipated, a performance distinguished by technical facility and refinement, but no high qualities of thought, and little breadth or vigor."<sup>133</sup> A performance on 1 December 1885 for the Thomas Popular Concert Series had a better reception, while a performance with the New York Philharmonic Society on 10 April 1886 seems to have escaped

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<sup>131</sup> "Mr. Joseffy's Last Concert," *The Critic*, 17 March 1883, 124.

<sup>132</sup> See "Joseffy at Chickering Hall," *Times*, 17 October 1879, 5. Following his second concert on 15 October 1879, the *Times* said the concerto was "exquisitely played . . . and any doubts as to his ability to interpret the great masters with the dignity and artistic conception of a natural-born and well-trained musician were set to rest."

<sup>133</sup> "Mr. Joseffy's Concert," *Times*, 29 February 1884, 4.



review. A final local performance on 23 November 1888 with the Brooklyn Philharmonic left critics in a stalemate.<sup>134</sup> The review in the *Tribune* stated, “Mr. Joseffy has not changed his conception of this work, and he played it very much as he has played it in this city heretofore.”<sup>135</sup> The critic’s tone suggests a certain acceptance that Joseffy would never quite deliver the desired interpretation and that concertgoers would have to be content with the pianist’s “distant perspective” and his “purely sensuous beauty of tone,” for which “Mr. Joseffy is still without peer.” The high regard for Beethoven’s music in general, coupled with the memory of performances by Rubinstein, von Bülow, and more recently, Rummel, made it difficult for any pianist to live up to such high standards. In the case of Joseffy, the critic’s seemed convinced and decided he could not.

Rubinstein’s Piano Concerto in D minor was another work Joseffy programmed at least four times locally between 1884 and 1886, opening the door to further criticism.<sup>136</sup> He first performed this work with the New York Philharmonic Society on 15 March 1884. Following the open rehearsal on 14 March, the *Times* again cited the pianist’s deficiencies. Critical perspective suggested that this concerto called for “imagination, warmth of feeling, breadth and freedom of style, and power and brilliancy, together with a faultless technique.”<sup>137</sup> Joseffy received usual praise for his stellar technique, while being cited for lacking the other qualities. This led the *Times* to rate the performance’s success as only “relative.” The review continued with an in-

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<sup>134</sup> Joseffy did perform this concerto locally one more time. Following his hiatus of roughly five years (1890-95) and upon the return of Thomas with his Chicago Orchestra, Joseffy appeared on 23 March 1896 in New York. See *Times*, 29 March 1896, 10. Reviewing the orchestral activity of the week, the *Times* flatly stated: “Perhaps the greatest disappointment of the past week of orchestral concerts was Mr. Joseffy’s performance of Beethoven’s G major concerto . . . He dallied with the concerto. He gently stroked its scale passages, and made them tickle the ears of women who find it so difficult to pass the thumb under the fingers without a jump. He made a sherbet of the whole thing—cold and sweet and thin. It was dispiriting.”

<sup>135</sup> “Brooklyn Philharmonic Society,” *Tribune*, 24 November 1888, 6.

<sup>136</sup> Joseffy performed the concerto on 15 March 1884 with the New York Philharmonic Society. He also performed the work with the Thomas Orchestra three times: 10 April 1884, 12 January 1886, and 26 October 1886.

<sup>137</sup> “Philharmonic Concerts,” *Times*, 15 March 1884, 4.

depth statement, suggesting the overall perspective held by several critics concerning Joseffy's motivation in choosing such repertoire and why his performances failed to meet expectations:

Throughout this season Mr. Joseffy's friends, with more enthusiasm than discretion, have encouraged him in undertakings wholly beyond his intellectual and physical grasp. They have inspired him with the belief that a pianist of nervous rather than masculine physique, and possessed of a marvelous technique and a touch of exquisite fluency and delicacy, and gifted with a bright and playful fancy, can transform himself by force of will and study into an efficient interpreter of Beethoven and Schumann.<sup>138</sup>

Regardless of the writer's lack of enthusiasm, Joseffy's overall performance was well-received with loud and persistent, and according to the *Times*, "unreasonable" applause. The pianist was recalled five times, delivering an encore before the enthusiastic audience retreated from the Academy of Music Concert Hall. The overly positive response of the crowd for performances that critics hardly considered acceptable seems to be an underlying theme with Joseffy, especially when larger concerto repertoire was involved. That Joseffy's success went beyond the narrow-minded expectations of the critics suggests that the pianist delivered effective performances that not only appealed to audiences, but were accessible to listeners.

The *Times* held steadfast with their opinions following the actual concert on 15 March. After stating that the concerto was "quite beyond his physical grasp, and we are not sure, if his strength were greater than it is, that the pianist would kindle to the impassioned moods of portions of the score," the critic flatly opined: "It is high time that Mr. Joseffy realized the injury he is doing himself by undertaking tasks to which he is emotionally and physically unequal."<sup>139</sup> *The Independent* shared a similar perspective: "Rubinstein's Fourth Concerto is not one to

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> "The Philharmonic Concert," *Times*, 16 March 1884, 8.

exhibit him in his best light. His delicate effects and rippling, brilliant touch needed the reinforcement of more bodily force and manual strength than he possesses.”<sup>140</sup>

Regardless of critical response, Joseffy continued to program the Rubinstein concerto. Following a performance on 10 April 1884 with the Thomas Orchestra, the writer for the *Times* was willing to credit Joseffy with a “very decidedly gain in dynamic force,” but regarding matters of breadth and imagination, the writer concluded, “the virtuoso’s deficiencies were, of course, the same as ever.”<sup>141</sup> Following his final local presentation of the concerto, which occurred on 26 October 1886, the *Times* reluctantly gave Joseffy some positive remarks; however, the critic retained strong convictions concerning the pianist’s ability to perform this work:

Mr. Joseffy has often interpreted Rubinstein’s D minor concerto—a lovely work, original, melodious, and musically in the fullest sense of the words—and in respect of sustained excellence and cleanness and vigor of execution he rendered it last night more felicitously than ever before. There was occasional evidence, unfortunately, that something of quality of tone had been sacrificed in the virtuoso’s gain of strength, and there was more of the staccato touch in his clear giving out some of the themes than was desirable. It would be a pity if an artist, who, in his line is simply matchless, were to lose the smallest particle of his special powers in an endeavor to emulate performers whose intellectual gasp he could never rival, even if his strengthened muscularity enabled him to cope with their achievements as interpreters.<sup>142</sup>

Clearly the critics were seldom satisfied with Joseffy’s interpretations of Beethoven and Rubinstein. If we accept the reports in the press, then Joseffy’s scope of artistic depth fell short of Beethoven, while his physical strength was insufficient for Rubinstein. That the pianist continued programming these concertos amidst such disapproval is curious. Why should Joseffy

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<sup>140</sup> *The Independent*, 20 March 1884, 10.

<sup>141</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s Concert,” *Times*, 11 April 1884, 5.

<sup>142</sup> “Thomas Concerts,” *Times*, 27 October 1886, 5.

submit himself to continued negativity? His repertoire in the genre was considerable, and he was still extremely successful both in public and critical reception of works by Chopin, Liszt, Saint-Saëns, and others. He did not need to rely on concertos by Beethoven, Schumann, or Rubinstein for success; however, had Joseffy shied away from these works, the critics likely would have faulted him for not venturing into this repertoire. Was the pianist driven to prove greater artistic achievement? Were these works so popular with audiences that Joseffy believed he needed to perform them to retain favor with concertgoers? According to the press, his “friends” persuaded the pianist to continue programming these concertos, regardless of a perceived inability to perform them. If not mentioned by name, Thomas was possibly at the top of any such list of individuals encouraging Joseffy, and his opinion certainly carried more weight than the critics. Yet, the performances themselves were successful with audiences. Had it been otherwise, Thomas undoubtedly would have suggested other options. Perhaps the critics were comparing Joseffy with von Bülow and Rubinstein himself, whose performances were still recent enough to remember. Maybe the critics were right, but that still does not explain why Joseffy continued programming concertos for which he would seldom if ever find critical approval. That Joseffy was being encouraged by “friends,” —in other words, concertgoers who bought tickets— financial success seems a plausible explanation.

The works for piano and orchestra by Chopin and Liszt continued to be staples of Joseffy’s concerto repertoire during and after his excursions into less successful territory. Critics considered his rendering of Chopin’s E minor unrivaled, while performances of the F minor concerto and the *Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise* continually received positive

reviews.<sup>143</sup> While Liszt's concertos and other works such as the *Hungarian Fantasy* and the "Ruins of Athens" fantasy also remained reliable for Joseffy, they too eventually became targets. Although Joseffy had been successful with Liszt since his debut season, he eventually was cited for the same deficiencies found in his performances of other repertoire.

### **Performance Strategies and Program Architecture**

Throughout his career, Joseffy gave surprisingly few local appearances strictly as a recitalist. His debut season included at least fifteen such performances (including matinées), but the number quickly diminished to a series of only three during 1880-81. For the remainder of the 1880s, Joseffy scheduled no more than two local recitals for any given season. For 1881-82 he gave one, while New York audiences only heard two in 1883-84. Most other years, Joseffy simply did not schedule such performances, but when he did, they were usually for benefit or local charity. When touring, however, the scenario was likely different. For example, during his first American tour (fall of 1881), the San Francisco press confirms Joseffy gave a total of twelve performances in that city: eight concerto appearances and four recitals. Similar performance approaches likely took place in other cities with capable orchestras, while smaller locales and ones without orchestras meant the pianist likely gave more recitals. Local performances, however, presented different circumstances.

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<sup>143</sup> By this time, Joseffy was performing Tausig's arrangement of the E minor and Karl Klindworth's version of the F minor concerto. Tausig's legendary virtuosity, his close association with Liszt, and that Joseffy had studied with both placed a certain appeal on this version of the E minor concerto. Klindworth's connections to Liszt gave his arrangement of the F minor concerto a similar intrigue. By modern standards, both adaptations are considered unnecessary and perhaps unacceptable re-workings of Chopin's originals. They are seldom, if ever, performed today. See also "Steinway Hall," *Times*, 22 December 1880, 4. Following a performance of Chopin's second piano concerto (with Klindworth's instrumentation), Joseffy received the sort of positive review that was so common following his rendition of the Chopin concertos: "It would seem as though Chopin was born to write music for Joseffy, or that Joseffy was born to play Chopin's works."

Joseffy's lack of recital appearances in New York City is curious; however, several factors such as repertoire choices, performance scenarios, and current performance practices may provide plausible explanations. Although not a new phenomenon, the piano recital was far from standardized in America during the 1880s. By this point in the century, several pianists were giving actual solo recitals; however, the notion of supplementing a program with various singers or other instrumentalists remained popular and commonplace. Following the example of Thalberg twenty years earlier, most recitals were still offered as afternoon or morning matinées. Evening concert entertainments may have showcased a pianist, but the bill frequently still included an orchestra and/or singers or other instrumentalists. During the late 1870s and 1880s, however, the boundaries and expectations that existed between matinée and concert performance became less pronounced, and actual piano recitals were more prominent as evening entertainments. Although the solo recital was now a popular concert event, pianists like Joseffy found themselves in an environment that still embraced the variety approach.

With solo recitals not yet being the norm and the boundaries with other forms of presentation not fully established, Joseffy apparently preferred a sort of hybrid approach to concertizing. Beginning with his New York debut, Joseffy presented two piano concertos and a set of three solo pieces, while the orchestra involved also contributed a couple of symphonic numbers. Moving forward, the format remained flexible. Joseffy might play one, two, or even three concertos, often supplementing with one or two sets of solo pieces. Clearly, more concertos usually meant fewer solo pieces and vice-versa. The presentation of supplementary symphonic works also depended on the number of concertos and other solo numbers the pianist programmed. The balance was also determined by the nature of the concert. For example, if Joseffy presented a benefit concert, the program might consist of two or three concertos and a set

or two of piano solos. If on the other hand, the Thomas Orchestra was presenting one of their “Popular Concerts,” Joseffy might play only one concerto and perhaps a set of solo pieces, while symphonic works filled out more positions in the program. In light of previous performance practices, the hybrid approach likely appealed to concertgoers who still embraced the notion of a variety concert. In the case of Joseffy, he often provided the variety that in earlier times would have been accomplished by multiple performers.

Joseffy previously presented this hybrid approach with orchestras under Damrosch and Carlberg; however, the Thomas orchestra was also very active throughout this shift in concert programming and was likely the ideal outlet for a pianist like Joseffy to sustain his performance format. Beyond Thomas’s involvement with the New York and Brooklyn Philharmonic Societies, his own orchestra was the most active ensemble in the city. By contrast, Thomas did not conform to the Philharmonic Society’s model of a four or five concert series; rather, his scheduling was varied and usually included several more performances per season. He also did not require the approval of others regarding matters of programming. This made choosing repertoire flexible, allowing for the inclusion of various forms and combinations of piano music. More significant still, the Thomas concerts were also self-funded, relying on the success of each performance to meet financial obligations. In this dynamic, not only did Thomas desire to appeal to the artistically-minded, but perhaps more importantly, he needed to secure popular support as well. Thus, his concerts not only included serious and popular orchestral repertoire, but he also programmed locally-favorite soloists like Joseffy. The formula was likely attractive to the typical concertgoer while also appealing to Joseffy, whose repertoire was well-suited for such scenarios.

The works Joseffy chose to present in public may also explain his activity in the recital realm. His concerto repertoire for the time was extensive. Between his debut and 1890, Joseffy performed locally a total of twenty-four different works for piano and orchestra, many receiving multiple performances from year to year. By contrast, he only programmed three complete Beethoven piano sonatas in public. With the exception of Schumann's *Kreisleriana* and a couple of Liszt's bigger fantasies and transcriptions, Joseffy's solo repertoire focused almost exclusively on shorter character pieces, which he presented in groups.<sup>144</sup> In general, his repertoire included few large-scale solo works, around which the pianist might have built a recital program. In a sense, concertos fulfilled the function of more substantial repertoire, while Joseffy supplemented with handfuls of smaller pieces. This approach was not new and was used by other performers; however, audiences heard Joseffy in this hybrid scenario much more frequently.

A concert on 8 February 1883 at Steinway Hall with the Thomas Orchestra demonstrates the concert format audiences most frequently heard from Joseffy, while also addressing critical opinion of his strengths as recitalist. Three works for piano and orchestra were the main attraction: Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasy*; the Piano Concerto in F Minor, Op. 16 by Henselt; and the "Scherzo" from Litolff's *Concerto Symphonique*. Orchestral selections included Wagner's Overture to *The Flying Dutchman*; the ballet music from Rubinstein's *Demon*; and the ball scene from Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet*. Nestled in between, Joseffy included a set of six character pieces. The writer for the *Times* gave an overall positive review of the entire concert, while being particularly interested in Joseffy's solo selections:

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<sup>144</sup> On 14 May 1880 Joseffy gave New York's first complete performance of *Kreisleriana*.



No doubt Mr. Joseffy, with credible ambition, likes to play with orchestra, but the truth is that he is not most felicitous in such compositions. He is wonderfully brilliant, accurate, and effective, as was shown in both concerted works above named, but the exquisite fascination of his execution and the delicacy and grace of his playing are best exhibited in piano solos.<sup>145</sup>

Although Joseffy gave three concertos for this event, the character pieces were called “his greatest successes.” The selections included “Des Abends” from Schumann’s *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12, which the *Times* described as “very beautifully rendered, and indeed, was one of the best efforts Joseffy has ever made.” His performance of Mendelssohn’s “Spinning Song” won the enthusiasm of the audience, for which the *Times* reported: “Mr. Joseffy essayed to play it with a rapidity beyond the limit of human powers.” The *Tribune* also reviewed the concert, stating: “Mr. Joseffy’s performance throughout was extraordinary.”<sup>146</sup> Thus, for some critics, the pianist’s ability as a solo performer was his true strength.

On rare occasions when Joseffy did present matinées or recitals, they consistently received rave reviews and carried the same popular appeal as his concerto performances. For these, his approach to programming usually followed the architecture he established during his debut season. He generally began with a selection or two by Bach or Handel, followed by one of three Beethoven piano sonatas (Op. 53, Op. 57, or Op. 110); a set of Schumann or Mendelssohn; a handful of Chopin, followed with some of Liszt’s shorter pieces; his own or Tausig’s virtuosic transcriptions; and concluding with a *Hungarian Rhapsody* or another big Lisztian showpiece. Occasionally, works by Haydn, Rubinstein, Henselt, or others were inserted in the appropriate positions. In all, Joseffy’s recitals normally included from fourteen to almost thirty different

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<sup>145</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s Concert,” *Times*, 9 February 1883, 4. Joseffy programmed solo pieces by Schumann, Chopin, Mendelssohn, two of his own arrangements, and one by Tausig.

<sup>146</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s Concert,” *Tribune*, 9 February 1883, 5. Much of this article is deteriorated and undecipherable.

pieces and lasted upwards of two hours.<sup>147</sup> Contrasted with the more balanced and substantive approach of later pianists (Rummel included), Joseffy placed more emphasis on the multiple groups of smaller works, giving less prominence to heftier works like sonatas, which were by this point in the century, becoming canonic.

Although Joseffy became less active with each successive season, he sustained a fairly consistent concerto schedule for the remainder of the decade. Between 1883 and 1889, the breakneck rate of performance he sustained throughout his first few years in America was eventually curtailed. Now, he would only appear once a season with the New York Philharmonic and usually once or twice with the Brooklyn Philharmonic, while giving a few appearances with the Thomas Orchestra.<sup>148</sup> The Chopin, Henselt, and Liszt concertos continued to be popular and successful, while Beethoven and Rubinstein remained elusive. In 1887 Joseffy revived Brahms's second piano concerto and gave one performance of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-Flat Minor, Op. 23 in 1888. During 1889-90 he appeared once with the Brooklyn Philharmonic and three times with Thomas. These performances, except on one occasion, included only one concerto and no additional sets of character pieces except encores.<sup>149</sup> Although Joseffy gave a performance on 21 March 1886 of Schumann's Piano Quintet, Op. 44, which also included seven solo pieces, the pianist had not given a bona fide local piano recital

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<sup>147</sup> See "Mr. Joseffy's Recital," *Times*, 30 March 1884, 8. For a recital on 29 March 1884 Joseffy included "no less than twenty-seven compositions, representing Beethoven, Handel, Bach, Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, Boccherini, Gluck, Schubert, Martini, Eargiel, and Heyman."

<sup>148</sup> Between 1883 and 1887 Joseffy seems to have not performed with the Brooklyn Philharmonic; however, he did pick up other engagements with the German Liederkrantz (perhaps under Thomas) in 1883 and 1885. He also appeared with Thomas in Cincinnati (1885). The local press also occasionally mentions concerts in other regional locales, such as upstate New York and New England.

<sup>149</sup> On 7 October 1889 Joseffy took part in a Brooklyn testimonial concert for Thomas. This concert was the only one to include solo repertoire. Beyond Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasy*, Joseffy included Chopin's *Berceuse*, his own *Valse-Improptu*, and the Tausig arrangement of Schubert's *Marche Militaire*.

since 29 March 1884.<sup>150</sup> The spring of 1889, however, brought the pianist momentarily back to the recital platform under unusual circumstances.

### **Réconnaissance: A Former Student Takes New York By Storm**

On 13 November 1888, the Polish pianist Moritz Rosenthal (1862-1946), a former student of Joseffy gave his New York debut at Steinway Hall with the assistance of Anton Seidl and the Metropolitan Orchestra.<sup>151</sup> The new pianist caused perhaps the greatest commotion since the arrival of Joseffy himself, leaving the local press in hysterics. Rosenthal's program was "well calculated to illustrate his astonishing powers." The performance included Liszt's Piano Concerto in E-Flat Major, three pieces by Chopin (including the *Barcarolle*, Op. 60), two by Schumann, a piece by Henselt, and Liszt's *Don Juan Fantasy* to bring down the house. The 22 November issue of *The Christian Union* observed a style similar to Joseffy, but with "not even as much sentiment and sympathy . . . while so far excelling Joseffy in his mechanical dexterity that it has to be said that what Joseffy does in single notes, Moritz Rosenthal does in octaves."<sup>152</sup> The *Times* called his technique, "something like absolute perfection. He throws off the most appalling difficulties with an ease and abandon that are simply bewildering."<sup>153</sup> The review, on the one hand, said that Rosenthal was "the most equipped pianist that has ever visited these much-visited shores," while on the other, was reluctant to call the pianist a great musician. For all his technical ability, the *Times* conceded that he "did not penetrate the mind and soul of the

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<sup>150</sup> See "Steinway Hall," *Times*, 22 March 1886, 4. The concert was given in aid of the relief of the German Press Club. The Schumann quartet was performed with the Standard Quartet Club. He also played the piano part to Brahms's "Liebeslieder" for vocal quartet and piano, and Reinecke's duet for two pianos on themes from Schumann's *Manfred* with the local pianist and teacher, Adèle Margulies. Joseffy's solo pieces included (unspecified) works by Brahms, Chopin, Liszt, Rubinstein, and Liszt.

<sup>151</sup> The New York press consistently called Rosenthal a "Roumanian pianist."

<sup>152</sup> *The Christian Union*, 22 November 1888, 586.

<sup>153</sup> "Herr Moriz Rosenthal," *Times*, 14 November 1888, 5.

music of Schumann and Chopin.” The writer for *The Independent* was less concerned with artistic depth and even more dazzled by the pianist’s ability, calling him “Rosen-thalberg,” and stating that his skill “quite outstrips Joseffy.”<sup>154</sup> These reviews suggested, at least for the moment, that Rosenthal was the hot virtuoso on the scene, and the most impressive technician since Joseffy. Now, the components for a rivalry were in place, with the press fanning the flames. Whether a legitimate showdown between these two virtuosos could have ever taken place is unlikely for a number of reasons; however, any sort of competitiveness encouraged by comparison of Rosenthal and Joseffy was handled by the two virtuosos in the most positive, non-confrontational, and likely, the most clever and entertaining way imaginable.

On 15 March 1889, Joseffy and Rosenthal appeared together at the open rehearsal for the Brooklyn Philharmonic. The great public draw for such a “unique musical combination” was observed by the *Times* who stated: “The Brooklyn Academy of Music never held a larger audience than that which gathered yesterday afternoon.”<sup>155</sup> The *Tribune* called the event, “a sensation of extraordinary magnitude,” and confirmed that hundreds were turned away. The appearance of the virtuosos, coupled with a late acknowledgement in the press that Joseffy was indeed Rosenthal’s first master teacher, quickly diffused any potential rivalry, which the press seemed eager to perpetuate following Rosenthal’s debut.<sup>156</sup> Interest in the orchestra’s performance of Tchaikovsky’s Suite, Op. 43 and Schumann’s Symphony in C Major No. 2, Op. 61 was almost completely over-shadowed by intrigue over the virtuosic duo.

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<sup>154</sup> *The Independent*, 22 November 1888, 9.

<sup>155</sup> “Rosenthal and Joseffy,” *Times*, 16 March 1889, 4.

<sup>156</sup> See “Brooklyn Philharmonic Society,” *Tribune*, 16 March 1889, 10. The writer for the *Tribune* addressed the situation most directly: “Naturally, there were many who thought the occasion a capital one for comparing the two, but this ambition was not encouraged by the artists themselves, neither of whom showed any desire to outdo the other.”

The pianists presented two standards for duo pianos: Reinecke's Impromptu on a Theme from Schumann's *Manfred*, Op. 66 and Saint-Saëns's Variations on a Theme by Beethoven, Op. 35. Both works were well-received, with the *Times* stating that the Saint-Saëns was "performed with beautiful unanimity of feeling, with a wide and rich variety of gradations, with magnificent tone color, and with a good Beethoven style." The "variation, written in repetitions" was called, "simply astonishing as a display of technical clearness and precision."<sup>157</sup> The *Tribune* took note of the similarities of both artists and stated: "the technical skills of both borders on the inconceivable."<sup>158</sup> The duo was enthusiastically called back to the stage half a dozen times. In response, the virtuosos gave a simultaneous note-for-note rendition of Mendelssohn's "Spinning Song" on two pianos. As a solo, the short character piece is a formative challenge but to hear both pianists rattle off this perpetual motion extravaganza together was "absolutely marvelous in its exquisite delicacy, clearness, and exactness of execution."<sup>159</sup> The *Tribune* called the display, "a more remarkable performance than the duets . . . It was so perfect, indeed, that it was difficult to believe that it was not a single player at the instrument."<sup>160</sup> Their success created a short-lived sensation, which encouraged a repeat performance two weeks later.

In response to popular demand Joseffy and Rosenthal gave a second concert on 29 March 1889. This time the duo appeared at Steinway Hall, which was packed, and, according to the press, hundreds of people found standing room only. The program included the same duo pieces previously performed in Brooklyn, but the main attractions were the selections performed in unison. In addition to Mendelssohn's *Spinning Song*, concertgoers heard Chopin's Etude Op. 10, No. 5 ("Black Keys") and Tausig's arrangement of Schubert's *Marche Militaire*. The two

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<sup>157</sup>*Times*, 16 March 1889, 4.

<sup>158</sup>*Tribune*, 16 March 1889, 10.

<sup>159</sup>*Times*, 16 March 1889, 4.

<sup>160</sup>*Tribune*, 16 March 1889, 10.

additional pieces are challenging enough as solos, not to mention performed in unison.

According to the *Tribune*, the effect was “bewildering and pleurably exciting.”<sup>161</sup> Following a storm of applause, the duo gave another Chopin etude (F Minor) in unison for an encore.<sup>162</sup>

Another review called the performances “interesting and entertaining, but one cannot help feeling that there is something sensational about it.”<sup>163</sup> The “sensation” seems to have been short-lived, for there is no evidence that the two virtuosos made any attempt to expand their efforts into a touring scenario or at the least, give joint performances in other locales.

Joseffy concluded the season with another performance of the Chopin E Minor concerto with the New York Philharmonic Society, and a final appearance playing Liszt’s *Hungarian Fantasy* and the “Ruins of Athens” fantasy with the Thomas Orchestra. The following season was also fairly active for Joseffy. He began on 7 October 1889 as the soloist with Thomas for his testimonial tour, which began in Brooklyn and included twenty-five concerts in twenty-two cities, concluding in New York on 6 November. Joseffy also played Schumann’s Piano Concerto on 13 November with Thomas and another performance of Liszt’s second concerto in Brooklyn on 14 December. Following these performances, on 20 December the pianist took part in an inaugural concert for the newly-constructed Lincoln Hall in Washington D. C. with the proceeds going toward the benefit of the Children’s Hospital. It is unclear whether Joseffy performed a concerto or played solo repertoire; however, the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Arthur Nikisch (1855-1922) was the ensemble for the event. There was, however, a follow-up appearance with Nikisch and the Boston orchestra in New York on 11 February 1890. Joseffy’s

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<sup>161</sup> *Tribune*, 30 March 1889, 6.

<sup>162</sup> Reviews fail to mention if the pianists played Op. 10, No. 9 or Op. 25, No. 2.

<sup>163</sup> “The Combination System,” *The Critic*, 6 April 1889, 170.

final local concerto performance with Thomas and the New York Philharmonic took place on 8 March 1890, when he played Henselt's F Minor, Op. 16.<sup>164</sup>

### **The Virtuoso Vanishes**

Beginning with the 1890-91 season, Joseffy took a hiatus, which endured for most of the next five seasons. For over a decade he had been one of the most active virtuosos in New York, but now the pianist almost completely distanced himself from the local musical sphere. Since Joseffy remained relatively silent concerning the circumstances, it is impossible to know what motivated such a drastic decision. Several factors do suggest his reasons, while a few commentaries also give plausible explanations.

On 7 November 1890, the local press dropped a bombshell on New York, announcing an impending agreement that would make Thomas the conductor of a newly-organized orchestra in Chicago. The conductor's decision came after years of unrealized expectations in New York. Thomas desired a first-class orchestra, employed full-time, and solely under his direction. Since the New York and Brooklyn ensembles only gave six concerts respectfully each season, players had to secure outside engagements, which, according to Thomas, ultimately affected the integrity of their product and limited the artistic goals he envisioned. According to Thomas, the Chicago Orchestra would perform three or four times weekly throughout an eight-month season, securing finances for its members and expanding the ensemble's artistic potential. Weary of constant travel, Thomas had also disbanded his own orchestra in hopes that New York would provide him

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<sup>164</sup> Joseffy gave two other performances of note. On 28 February 1890 he appeared in a benefit for Dr. Felix Adler's Workingman's School and Free Kindergarden. He likely contributed solo pieces. He also performed with the composer, pianist, and Liszt student Conrad Ansoerge (1862-1930) on 15 April 1890 at Steinway Hall. For this concert, Joseffy joined the pianist in Schumann's Andante and Variations for Two Pianos, Op. 46.

one of similar caliber on a permanent basis. New York never came through, but Chicago gave the conductor everything he desired.<sup>165</sup>

Thomas's removal from New York had a direct impact on Joseffy. For almost a decade the pianist had performed almost exclusively with orchestras led by Thomas. A certain artistic bond likely existed between the conductor and pianist, who performed together well over a hundred times. Although Joseffy eventually reappeared on a limited basis with other local conductors such as Walter Damrosch (1862-1950), Anton Seidl (1850-1898), and Heinrich Zöllner (1854-1941), the relationship he established with Thomas was never duplicated. The few concerto appearances Joseffy did make during his absence were with Thomas but were not presented in New York.<sup>166</sup>

The arrival of several new pianists perhaps also contributed to Joseffy stepping away from the concert scene. Throughout his tenure as the most active performer in New York other pianists came and went; this was nothing new and Joseffy remained a popular favorite. At the time of his own debut, the resident pianist Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898) was the most celebrated local virtuoso, holding a similar position in the New York music scene, which Joseffy would assume by 1880. Although Mills did not retire entirely from the concert stage, the dominant presence of Joseffy compelled the elder pianist to curtail his own performance activity. By the late-1880s, however, Joseffy found himself in a similar situation, but now things were slightly different.

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<sup>165</sup> See "Theodore Thomas's Plans. To Shake the Dust of New-York from His Feet and Settle in Chicago," *Times*, 7 November 1890, 1.

<sup>166</sup> Joseffy's most important appearance with Thomas during this time occurred on 16 and 17 October 1891, when he performed Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 for the Chicago Orchestra's inaugural concert.



In 1916, the American pianist Edwin Hughes (1884-1965), who studied with Joseffy, published an article discussing the virtuoso's biography, performance, teaching approach, and his work editing the piano music of Chopin and Liszt. Hughes simply quotes Joseffy—"to give the youngsters a chance, as he humorously put it"—as the reason for the pianist's retirement from regular performing.<sup>167</sup> Although Joseffy's statement may be true, it hardly explains the state of piano performance in New York during the final decade of the nineteenth century.

Beginning in 1888, new pianists seemed to arrive in droves. The assault began with Joseffy's former student Rosenthal, who created a sensation, but he was not alone. The same year saw the arrival of three other Liszt students: Karl Klindworth (1830-1916), Conrad Ansoerge (1862-1930), and Adele aus der Ohe (1861-1937). The following year produced Eugene d'Albert (1864-1932). Called the "young" or "little giant," d'Albert was also a Liszt disciple, and following his New York debut (18 November 1889) the writer for the *Times* declared, "he was von Bülow, Rosenthal, and Joseffy rolled into one."<sup>168</sup> The pianist Edwin Kluhre also arrived in 1889, playing enormous programs, while von Bülow returned to present his Beethoven Sonata Cycle. As if these were not enough, Rummel also came back. The year 1890 saw the debut of a Chopin specialist, Vladimir de Pachman (1848-1933), and Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler (1863-1927), who was another of Liszt's star female pupils. Finally, in 1891, Arthur Friedheim (1859-1932), another Liszt student, debuted, and the whole business culminated with the landmark arrival of the famous Polish pianist Ignace Jan Paderewski (1860-1941). The presence

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<sup>167</sup> See Edwin Hughes, "Rafael Joseffy's Contribution to Piano Technic," *The Musical Quarterly* 2/3 (July 1916): 349-364.

<sup>168</sup> "Eugen D'Albert's Recitals," *Times*, 14 January 1890, 4.

of so many talented young pianists caused *The Musical Visitor* to declare: “Foreign musicians, male and female, vocal and instrumental, are landing in this country by the wholesale.”<sup>169</sup>

Joseffy quickly found himself in the company of several world-class virtuosos, many who would become the most celebrated pianists of the early twentieth century. Although only a few would settle in New York as fixtures of the musical landscape, it did not matter. Steamship travel across the Atlantic was now regular and easier than earlier in the century, while railroads made touring the entire continent practical. Although Joseffy initially took advantage of these developments, it was only a matter of time before other visiting artists capitalized on the accessibility of performance in America as well. After one pianist arrived and toured for a year, another quickly followed, further minimalizing the dominance of resident pianists, or at the very least, limiting their impact on the local scene. In the case of Joseffy, he was giving multiple performances of several concertos each season. By the 1890s concertgoers could experience a variety of different virtuosos annually, playing the same repertoire at a similar caliber as Joseffy. The absence of Thomas, coupled with many new virtuosos may have created an uncomfortable scenario for Joseffy. It is possible that the pianist opted to retreat into obscurity, rather than actively compete.

Joseffy’s absence, however, did not go unnoticed. For the next five years the New York press was consistently inquiring and speculating about reasons for his departure, while remaining hopeful of the virtuoso’s return. As the 1891-92 season came to a close, the *Times* ran a short article that originally appeared in the *Musical Courier*:

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<sup>169</sup> *The Musical Visitor*, November 1891, 289.

Mr. Rafael Joseffy, a pianist of renown, who believes in hiding his technic under the bushel of modesty, was in the city last week. With pleasure one learns that next season he will be to the fore, and as he has been studying hard for the past two years, interest of an unusual degree is already awakened at his re-entrance into the concert hall. At his first orchestral concert Mr. Joseffy will play Martucci's difficult B-flat minor concerto and probably Sinding's concerto.<sup>170</sup>

The article seems to follow a personal interview with the pianist; however, speculation that Joseffy would return for the next season, and that he would perform concertos by the Italian composer Giuseppe Martucci (1856-1909) and the Norwegian, Christian Sinding (1856-1941) did not come to fruition. In June, the *Times* followed up with an announcement that the pianist had been practicing "very hard" and that he would appear with Damrosch in a series of ten concerts.<sup>171</sup> Later that summer, the *Times* again suggested, "that the reappearance of Rafael Joseffy, the pianist, in the coming season will stir the musical waters deeply."<sup>172</sup> As the 1892-93 season was underway, hopeful concertgoers would ultimately be disappointed when *The Independent* confirmed Joseffy's return would be postponed for another year.<sup>173</sup>

By 1893, the pianist's return remained an uncertainty, with the press gradually shifting its opinion from concern to decided frustration. Still holding out hope, on 26 February the *Times* stated: "Rafael Joseffy may not play in New York this season after all. Every lover of fine piano playing will be sincerely sorry if he does not."<sup>174</sup> The following month, the *Times* reported a rumor that the pianist intended to found a school for piano students, that he would "devote his

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<sup>170</sup> *Times*, 15 May 1892, 12.

<sup>171</sup> *Times*, 26 June 1892, 12. Joseffy did make a certain number of appearances with Damrosch, which included a concerto performance at the Cincinnati School of Music, on 4 May 1893. He did not, however, appear in New York.

<sup>172</sup> *Times*, 4 September 1892, 13.

<sup>173</sup> *The Independent*, 10 November 1892, 9.

<sup>174</sup> *Times*, 26 February 1893, 13.

energies in the future solely to.”<sup>175</sup> The article concludes with another explanation for pianist’s absence: “Strangely enough, Mr. Joseffy’s aversion to public performance is wholly due to unconquerable and torturing nervousness. It seems as if so great an artist should have no fear of either public or critics.” By summer, the *Times* revealed to the “distinct loss of the musical world,” that, “Rafael Joseffy has decided not to play in public again for any consideration.”<sup>176</sup>

Over the next two seasons, the pianist’s name appeared less and less in print as Joseffy’s return seemed more unlikely. At the start of each season, however, the local press would entertain the possibilities. One final appeal appeared in the *Times* on 15 October 1893:

Why does not Joseffy emerge from his retirement and play the piano for the world? He can do it. His intimate friends who have heard him in private report that he has gained greatly in depth and nobility of style. What is it they say about birds that can sing and won’t?<sup>177</sup>

The article not only speaks to the public’s sustained desire to hear Joseffy again, but it also points to another potential reason why Joseffy initially left the concert arena. Prior to the pianist’s retirement he had received increased negative reviews concerning a lack of strength, power, and depth of interpretation. Perhaps, the five-year hiatus was Joseffy’s way of expressing his disapproval of critical reception towards certain repertoire, such as Beethoven’s and Rubinstein’s concertos. If the article is accurate suggesting the pianist’s improvements, then maybe the pianist took time away from the concert stage to consider seriously certain aspects of

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<sup>175</sup> *Times*, 12 March 1893, 13. The notion of Joseffy “founding a school” is likely a misunderstanding. The writer was probably referring to the pianist’s efforts towards a method book entitled, *School for Advanced Piano Playing*, which Joseffy was working on at this time (*Times*, 3 December 1893). The volume was first published in 1902 by G. Schirmer.

<sup>176</sup> *Times*, 4 June 1893, 13.

<sup>177</sup> *Times*, 15 October 1893, 19. See also *The Lewiston Evening Journal* (17 April 1893). The periodical announced that Walter Damrosch and the Symphony Orchestra would begin their second annual festival and concert tour on 19 April 1893. The article mentions that Joseffy was to join the tour but the pianist declined due to his delicate health.

his style and interpretations. Whatever the case may be, it is also possible that Joseffy took the article as an encouraging gesture.

Joseffy's years of retirement were filled with other personal issues, especially financial concerns. According to Steinway, the pianist was regularly borrowing money and struggled to pay back outstanding debts. Although there is no way to know the extent of Joseffy's financial situation, the piano manufacturer seems to have been regularly loaning him money. According to Steinway's personal diary, lending to the pianist began on 7 December 1892, when the businessman documents giving him \$12,000. The brief journal entry also suggests Steinway's frustration with Joseffy for not giving public performances in three years and that the pianist promised to give a testimonial concert. Another entry on 19 December the following year, documents a "serious talk" between the two men, stating that Joseffy had not worked in a year and still owed \$18,000. A short entry on 3 April 1894 confirms: "Joseffy continues his borrowing without paying." On 17 April 1895, Steinway writes: "Rafael Joseffy said to be furious that we want him to work off his indebtedness." A final entry from 31 May 1895 states that Steinway gave the pianist another \$1600. It is unclear why Joseffy needed to borrow from Steinway; however, the request for substantial funds raises questions regarding how lucrative the pianist's concerts actually were. Did Joseffy experience circumstances that necessitated large sums of money immediately or was the pianist simply financially irresponsible? Unfortunately, Steinway left no explanations in his diary entries and the press never alluded to Joseffy's finances.

One personal tragedy concerning the pianist did receive attention in the press, but did not coincide with Joseffy's main requests for loans from Steinway. On 23 April 1895 the *Times* reported that Joseffy's house was completely destroyed by fire on Monday, 22 April. The

*Tribune* confirmed the story on 24 April. At the time, Joseffy was living in a villa on Prospect Hill, in Tarrytown, New York. Beyond confirming that the chimney had fallen on a fireman and that total losses in furniture and the house itself were about \$9,000., the *Tribune* offered little information. The *Times* suggested that Joseffy owned “many rare musical works” and that all were thought to be lost. Naturally, Joseffy was in possession of correspondences with important musical figures such as Liszt and it was also common knowledge that the pianist owned certain manuscripts of Liszt’s compositions. How many of these were actually destroyed is unknown.<sup>178</sup>

## **The Return**

The first indication that Joseffy would reenter the concert scene came in the Chicago press. On 30 December 1894, the *Chicago Tribune* alluded to a “projected” tour in the spring of 1895 and that the pianist’s return was “due solely to his desire to play in concert with the Chicago Orchestra.”<sup>179</sup> According to the 3 March 1895 issue of the *Chicago Tribune*, Joseffy appeared with Thomas and the Chicago Orchestra “in last week’s orchestra program” (actual date was not given). For what appears to be Joseffy’s official reentry to the concert scene, he performed Brahms’s Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-Flat Major, Op. 83. The pianist was enthusiastically received with very positive reviews. The *Tribune* suggested the pianist’s absence, “served to increase rather than diminish his hold on the public,” and that: “The sympathy between pianist, conductor, and orchestra, preeminently necessary in this later concerto of Brahms through

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<sup>178</sup> See “Joseffy’s House Said to be Burned,” *Times*, 23 April 1895, 1; and “Joseffy’s Villa Destroyed,” *Tribune*, 24 April 1895, 12. Steinway’s personal diary also alludes to the catastrophe, referring to the pianist being unable to perform for the opening of New Steinway Hall Chicago on 10 May 1895. Steinway’s entry on 25 April 1895 states, “Joseffy’s refusal has resulted in the engagement of Madame Bloomfield Zeisler.” The following week (1 May 1895), Steinway writes, “Joseffy being burnt out, and Bloomfield-Zeisler sick.” See also *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 9 May 1895, 8. Ultimately, Arthur Friedheim (1859-1932) performed for the inaugural event.

<sup>179</sup> *Chicago Tribune*, 30 December 1894, 37.

manner of its writing, was notable.”<sup>180</sup> The article expressed uncertainty regarding the extent of Joseffy’s future plans, but does confirm his appearance with the Chicago Orchestra in Pittsburgh during their upcoming tour. On 21 March, *The Independent* also mentioned the recent performance and suggested that the pianist would perform in New York before the conclusion of the current season. The New York press documents no local performances, while the Chicago press suggested that Joseffy had contracted a tour of thirty concerts for the spring of 1896.<sup>181</sup>

With the opening of the 1895-96 season, references to upcoming performances began appearing in the New York press. On 6 October 1895, the *Times* announced that Joseffy would perform locally with Thomas and his Chicago Orchestra during the following spring. *Harper’s Bazaar* mentioned that the pianist would join Damrosch and the Symphony Society, while *The Outlook* (November 1895) and the 3 October edition of *The Independent* also confirmed the pianist’s reappearance in spring 1896.

On 23 February 1896, the *Times* heralded the pianist’s long-awaited return. Calling Joseffy the “piano priest of the brave days of old in the consulship of Thomas,” the writer speculated, however, on his ability to “awaken the public from its Paderewskian hypnotic state.” Confirming the dominant place established by the Polish virtuoso during Joseffy’s hiatus, the *Times* questioned whether any pianist, especially one who now lacked the mystical charm of being a visiting superstar, could possibly regain the public appeal. Beyond these speculations, the critic succinctly recalled Joseffy’s technical strengths, while addressing the pianist’s perceived former weaknesses:

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<sup>180</sup> “Joseffy is Popular,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3 March 1895, 37.

<sup>181</sup> *Chicago Tribune*, 5 May 1895, 39.

Mr. Joseffy used to be a genuinely fine artist. His playing was notable for its wonderful purity of tone, its clear and crystalline touch, and its poetic delicacy. Just before he retired from public gaze he began to aim at a broader style, and some of his admirers thought that he was sacrificing the essential charms of his work. It is said by some who have heard him play recently that he has succeeded in broadening his utterance without injuring the familiar crispness and frosty clearness of his sparkling touch. Let us hope at any rate that he has grown, for to stand still in art is to go backwards.<sup>182</sup>

Joseffy had always been praised for his technical prowess and even with the recent arrival of so many other virtuosos his ability in that arena had not been overshadowed or forgotten. Now, the New York establishment waited with anticipation to see whether Joseffy would emerge as the great interpretive force they imagined.

Joseffy's highly-publicized return to the New York concert scene came in two performances on 28 and 29 February 1896 with the Symphony Society, under Walter Damrosch at Carnegie Hall.<sup>183</sup> It seemed a fitting scenario that Joseffy returned under the baton of a Damrosch, son of the conductor who directed the pianist's New York debut almost two decades prior. The program included a performance of Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony and Liszt's symphonic poem, *Tasso*. In between the two significant orchestral works, Joseffy was the soloist in Brahms's second piano concerto, which the pianist had resurrected the previous season and had been performing with the Chicago Orchestra. *The Independent* declared anticipation for the upcoming local performances:

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<sup>182</sup> *Times*, 23 February 1896, 11.

<sup>183</sup> See *Times*, 23 February 1896, 11. The article confirmed that Joseffy had already given several concerts in other eastern cities although specific locales were not mentioned. Likely this is reference to the tour earlier in the season with Thomas and the Chicago Orchestra. See also *Musical Times*, 1 March 1896, 190. The periodical also reported that the pianist had given concerts in Philadelphia and Baltimore with the Boston Orchestra. See also *Musical Visitor*, February 1896, 52. Earlier in the season, the journal advertised that Joseffy was to appear with the Symphony Society on 7 and 8 February, but this was likely a misprint or misunderstanding of the periodical's editorial staff.



Even were this bill of music less inviting, a large and tolerably excited audience could be predicted, for Mr. Joseffy's sake. No favorite of a day or a year has taken his place with us. He is still not outrivaled, however splendidly rivaled. His withdrawal from public work seems to have been only a *reculement pour mieux sauter* – with every essential element of a consummate virtuoso's art and power. In this expectation no one is likely to be disappointed.<sup>184</sup>

The review that appeared in the *Tribune* on 1 March (apparently the *Times* did not review the concert) began by citing how Joseffy's retirement in the "heyday of his popularity has frequently been deplored in public and in private." Initially, the writer seemed more interested in the pianist's refusal to offer an encore following the concerto. Although Joseffy obliged at the performance on 28 February, giving Schubert's *Moment Musical in A-flat*, Op. 94, No. 2, he refrained the following evening, with the critic suggesting: "It is his conviction that the list of solos for the pianoforte contains few works that can be made appropriately to follow Brahms's concerto."<sup>185</sup> Finally, the writer for the *Tribune* discussed the performance, calling Joseffy's rendition of the concerto, "masterly from every point of view—even more fascinating and authoritative than it used to be years ago, because riper, broader and more reposeful." Although Joseffy received positive remarks regarding his interpretive approach, the *Tribune* seemed slightly less inspired than other members of the local press.

In Contrast to the *Tribune*, *The Independent* and *Peterson Magazine* devoted entire page-long entries, which presented a more enthusiastic review of the concert, while giving a decidedly more elaborate account of the performer's reception. Calling Joseffy, "a pianist of the highest musical quality and of consummate virtuosity—perhaps the most complete virtuoso on the stage

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<sup>184</sup> *The Independent*, 27 February 1896, 11.

<sup>185</sup> See *Times*, 1 March 1896, 11. Apparently the critic was relaying Joseffy's perspective concerning the significance of the concerto. The writer also mentions that during a previous performance in Chicago, Joseffy responded with a repeat of the entire last movement of the concerto when an encore was requested. See also *The Musical Visitor*, March 1896, 88: "Much has been said about Joseffy's refusal to give an encore number after his playing in the Brahms concerto at a recent Symphony Concert. He was quite right. Anything but a repetition of the concerto was inappropriate, and that was impossible. The encore business is very much overdone, anyway."

of our time,” *The Independent* recounted the curiosity and speculation surrounding his long absence. Now, the pianist’s long-awaited return and his reception were noteworthy:

And what a welcome, what enthusiasm! And all so heartily due and so deserved! For Joseffy is the same Joseffy. No, he is not. He is—slightly—even a greater, a better, a more exceptional and extraordinary Joseffy than ever . . . His reception was more than any personal tribute. Was not each one of those fourteen or fifteen overwhelming recalls deserved? Surely. How about the interpretation of that Concert—not merely the playing, the interpretation of it. . . . Could anybody surpass him? No. Does anybody playing about the world today dwarf his intelligence, his peculiar, Joseff-ish quality of tone, his dazzling technic, his refinement and breadth of style, his absolute taste, his phrasing, which makes eloquent so much that need not be eloquent? . . . Comparisons are in every sense impertinent. Let us be glad that Mr. Joseffy has returned to us, that he fills and more than fills the place he left—that his splendid superiority entitles him to more artistic room than ever.<sup>186</sup>

The review not only documents a successful performance and overwhelming appreciation, but it also demonstrates the popularity Joseffy retained even throughout his absence.

The review that appeared in the “Musical World” section of *Peterson Magazine* took a similar, albeit slightly less flamboyant approach, documenting what the periodical called “one of the most interesting musical events of the season.” The article begins, as expected, questioning the circumstances behind Joseffy’s retirement. Then, resisting the understandable urge of comparing the pianist with Paderewski, who had recently “so completely turned the heads of a large portion of the concert-going public,” the writer gave a glowing account of the recent performance. According to the critic, Joseffy’s reappearance “proved he is now a greater pianist than he ever was.” The writer concluded with a statement regarding the concerto performance:

It would be difficult to imagine a more masterly and superb rendering of the Brahms concerto in B flat major than Joseffy gave. The finish of style and the perfect ease as well as his beautiful intonation, was breathlessly listened to by all those present, and at the end of the number the applause was deafening.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> *The Independent*, 5 March 1896, 19.

<sup>187</sup> *Peterson Magazine*, April 1896, 388.

Joseffy's return was a success and perhaps spoke of things to come. While the pianist retained the technical command for which he was always revered, he seems to have addressed, at least to a certain degree, the interpretive shortcomings previously associated with his playing. The overwhelmingly positive reception also suggested that Joseffy would be able to successfully re-enter the New York concert scene regardless of numerous other virtuosos now present.

Joseffy concluded the 1895-96 season making local appearances with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. During the fourth week in March, Thomas returned to New York for a week-long concert series, which included two performances at the Brooklyn Academy on 20 and 26 March, two matinées (24 and 27 March) and three evening concerts (23, 25, 28 March) at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City. For the first Brooklyn concert, Joseffy performed Liszt's second piano concerto. On 23 March he played Beethoven's fourth piano concerto, and for the matinée on 27 March, he repeated the Liszt.

The *Times* reviewed the first concert at the Metropolitan, which was apparently not ideal for piano performances, as the *Times* declared: "No mortal man can make a piano sound full-toned in that auditorium." Beyond the unsympathetic acoustics, Joseffy's performance of the Beethoven was mildly well received. The *Times* cited the pianist's playing of the slow movement with "lovely tone . . . and the crisp, delicate clearness of all the runs."<sup>188</sup> Joseffy was further credited for his understanding of Beethoven; however, the rest of the concerto only convinced the critic that the pianist did not possess "uncommon eloquence" when performing this music. The *Tribune* was no more impressed, stating that he played the slow movement "with a dreamy delicacy and tonal loveliness . . . that suggested incense shaken from strings that

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<sup>188</sup> "The Thomas Concert," *Times*, 24 March 1896, 5.

quivered with sweet emotion, but also with a pitiful lack of breadth and depth in the first movement.”<sup>189</sup> The writer seemed more impressed with Joseffy’s rendition of the second movement of Brahms’s Piano Sonata in F Minor, Op. 5, which the pianist gave as an encore. The *Tribune* stated that he played the piece, “a hundred percent better than he played the G major concerto.” Joseffy’s inclusion of pieces by Brahms as encores became the rule, not the exception, for his remaining concerto appearances.

Shortly after giving what would ultimately be his final local performance of a Beethoven concerto, Joseffy played Liszt’s second piano concerto twice before the 1895-96 season closed.<sup>190</sup> The first performance was part of the Chicago Orchestra’s final local concert on 27 March 1896 and the pianist’s last appearance in New York under Thomas’s direction. The second, a concert on 2 May, was Joseffy’s final appearance of the season and the beginning of a short-lived partnership with the conductor, Anton Seidl, who died almost exactly two years later on 28 March 1898. Strong disapproval of Thomas’s interpretation of Dvorak’s “New World Symphony” consumed the critic’s attention, leaving less space to account of Joseffy’s performance on 27 March.<sup>191</sup> The *Times*, however, praised Joseffy’s playing for its “crispness, a clearness of enunciation, and a nervous energy which was altogether fascinating.” The concert with Seidl on 2 May was called a “triumph,” eliciting strong praise from the *Times*:

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<sup>189</sup> “Mr. Thomas’s Third Concert,” *Tribune*, 24 March 1896, 6.

<sup>190</sup> 23 March 1896 seems to be the last time Joseffy gave a public performance of a Beethoven piano concerto.

<sup>191</sup> See “Theodore Thomas and the Chicago Orchestra Play with Rafael Joseffy,” *Times*, 28 March 1896, 4. Thomas’s reading of the symphony was called, “remarkable for its utter feebleness and failure to reveal the true spirit of the work . . . Mr. Thomas’s reading showed ignorance of the correct tempi, a lack of understanding of the relative value of the climaxes, a total misconception of the spirit of the second movement—heightened in its results by the vulgar tone of the English horn and the woolly quality of the strings—and a general failure to grasp the romanticism of the work. The performance lacked breadth, and, above all things, rhythm.”

His touch was more elastic and his tone more entrancing than ever, and the technical difficulties were mastered with an ease that showed that he has not neglected the piano during his absence from the concert stage. He is a greater virtuoso than ever, and the connoisseurs expressed their rapture by saying “Es Giebt Nur Ein Joseffy.”<sup>192</sup>

For the next three seasons Joseffy remained selectively active in a variety of scenarios. On 7 January 1897, he performed the A major concerto by Liszt for the German Liederkranz Fiftieth Anniversary festival concert at Carnegie Hall, under Heinrich Zöllner.<sup>193</sup> An article appeared in the *Times* on 17 January, where the writer recalled the performance, is more informative than the actual review, which appeared on 8 January:

I had heard Rafael Joseffy play Liszt’s first concerto as I never heard it played before. The little master was aflame with the vital fire that night, and he made that blessed old show piece thunder like a Miltonic Areopagitica of the pianoforte. Oh, why is there not some power to handcuff Joseffy and drag him into the concert room? What right has such an artist to bury his talents?<sup>194</sup>

The pianist gave the same concerto later that season on 23 April for violinist/conductor Nahan Franko’s Farewell Concert at Carnegie Hall. Joseffy’s performance was received with “unbridled enthusiasm,” while the critic questioned why the virtuoso should “waste so much of his sweetness on the desert airs of Liszt.”<sup>195</sup> Clearly, Joseffy still commanded favor with the public and his powers as a performer remained. Although his appearances were fewer, he found success.

Joseffy’s final season as an active concerto performer on the New York scene was 1897-98. He appeared on six occasions under three different conductors. The season began on 11

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<sup>192</sup> *Times*, 3 May 1896, 5.

<sup>193</sup> The performance was also a memorial of sorts for William Steinway. The members of the chorus stood with heads bowed as the orchestra also played the “Funeral March” from Wagner’s *Götterdämmerung*.

<sup>194</sup> *Times*, 17 January 1897, 10.

<sup>195</sup> “Mr. Franko’s Concert,” *Times*, 24 April 1897, 6.

November with a performance of Schumann's Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, under Emil Pauer (1855-1932). Although this was only Joseffy's first appearance of the season, it received considerable attention in the press. With this performance, the writer for the *Times* finally found complete approval in all aspects of Joseffy's style:

The soloist of the evening was Mr. Joseffy, whose performance of his part of the Schumann work was simply that of a master of his art. A performance more beautiful in its clarity and quality of tone, its perfect comprehension of the composer's meaning, its exquisite and unfailingly correct adjustment of the technics of piano playing to the revelation of that meaning, and its respect for the character of the solo instrument it would be hard to imagine. Mr. Joseffy's style has lost none of its clean crispness of touch or its delicate shadings, yet it has gained immensely in breadth and authority. Where there was formerly only beauty, there is now added strength. Mr. Joseffy stands easily in the front rank of living pianists.<sup>196</sup>

The solid endorsement of the *Times* was, however, was not shared by other members of the press who seemed unconvinced of the pianist's growth and new depth. The review in the *Tribune* speaks just as strongly in opposition:

He played the Schumann concerto, but not in a way to satisfy all the expectations which the announcement of his purpose awakened. That he is thoroughly in sympathy with the work is open to very serious question. If he were, his performance would surely have been broader and more poetical. There was an intimation in the intermezzo that the feeling of disappointment left by the first movement would be dissipated in the finale, but his treatment of its principal melody was singularly incomprehensive, coming from so sincere and experienced a musician. Here, as in the preceding portions of his work, the clarity of his chords and the crispness of his finger work were admirable, but the chivalresque puissance of the music was not brought to the consciousness of the listener. Plainly, his heart was not in it; or, if so, not to the fraction of the extent that it was in the intermezzo from Brahms's Opus no. 116, which he played on the recall. Here we had not only Brahms in all his loveliness, but also Joseffy, with all his delicacy, all his poetry, all his knowledge of the effects possible to the pianoforte. It provided a moment of supreme delight.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> "The Boston Orchestra," *Times*, 12 November 1897, 5.

<sup>197</sup> "The Boston Orchestra," *Tribune*, 12 November 1897, 7.

Reviews in *The Critic* (20 November) and *Harper's Bazaar* (27 November) echoed the opinions offered in the *Tribune*. Perhaps more interesting, all three sources concluded with remarks about Joseffy's inclusion of the Brahms intermezzo from Op. 116 as an encore. *The Critic* opined: "He was heard to much higher advantage in the little intermezzo," while *Harper's* generously claimed, "Mr. Joseffy is at present in full sympathy with Brahms . . . it is when interpreting the writings of this great master . . . that he shows the extent of his mature power and rises beyond criticism."<sup>198</sup> Perhaps the pianist was moved to pay homage to the composer, who died earlier that year. Stemming from previous success with the composer's second concerto, his performances of the smaller works quickly established Joseffy as a leading interpreter of Brahms.

A performance of note occurred on 22 January 1898, when Joseffy played Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto, No. 1 in B-Flat Minor, Op. 23 at Carnegie Hall with Damrosch and the New York Symphony Society. Joseffy had performed the work a decade earlier with the New York Philharmonic Society (almost exactly ten years to the date) on 14 January 1888. The concerto was not a local favorite and had only been given one other rendering since its New York premiere on 22 November 1875, when von Bülow took the stage at Chickering Hall. Following this performance, the *Times* opined: "The themes are melodious but trivial, and the vigorous writing . . . is more eccentric than tuneful and powerful."<sup>199</sup> Rummel was the next pianist to wrestle with the formidable composition. Announcing his performance with the New York Philharmonic Society on 21 and 22 November 1879, the *Times* suggested that the score had not arrived in America, and that the work was "entirely unknown" to Thomas, who conducted the

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<sup>198</sup> *Harper's Bazaar*, 27 November 1897, 982.

<sup>199</sup> "The Von Bulow Concerts," *Times*, 23 November 1875, 4.

orchestra.<sup>200</sup> Following Joseffy's first performance of the concerto, the *Times* again stated, "There are some fluent themes in it, but they are wholly beneath the dignity of a concerto."<sup>201</sup> Thus, one of the most emblematic concertos in the repertoire remained surprisingly unpopular locally, and the critics questioned its compositional merits.

When Joseffy gave his final local performance of the Tchaikovsky, it was received with fresh ears and measurable curiosity. The pianist's technical ability to play the piece was not in question, but auditors were not convinced that Joseffy possessed the level of strength and power required. The *Tribune*, who reviewed the open rehearsal on 21 January, immediately addressed this speculation, stating that Joseffy "played it in a manner which again made his friends wonder when he would reach the end of his stock of surprises." To the critic's delight, Joseffy's performance was surprisingly effective:

Imagine the Joseffy who fifteen years ago was wont to delight his devotees with the daintiest of devices disclosing himself as the prince of heroic players, a veritable Achilles of the pianoforte, whirling the people off their feet with the impetuosity of his playing in the first and last movements, and charming them with the gentlest of caresses in the middle section. Yet so Joseffy appeared yesterday.<sup>202</sup>

The *Times* reviewed the actual concert (22 January) and was complimentary, but not totally convinced. The writer prefaced his critique by stating the piece was "not Mr. Joseffy's happiest medium for the display of his powers." After affirming the virtuoso's technical abilities, the review claimed that the pianist "fell quite short" of what was required in the first movement, and that the demands of the opening were "not within the player's grasp." The second movement was more successful, as Joseffy's "crisp cleanness of enunciation, his marvelous delicacy of

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<sup>200</sup> "Mr. Theodore Thomas's Labors," *Times*, 1 October 1879, 5.

<sup>201</sup> "The Philharmonic Society," *Times*, 14 January 1888, 5.

<sup>202</sup> "The Symphony Society," *Tribune*, 22 January 1898, 7.



nuancing [*sic*], and his varied tone color were made the instruments of an adequate exposition of the composer's thought." The *Times* concluded positively: "Unquestionably, Mr. Joseffy has grown. The resources of his technic are larger than they were, and his appreciation of intensely forceful music is broader."<sup>203</sup> The reviews demonstrate that, at least for some, the pianist had expanded his scope beyond technical dazzle and had taken on a broader and deeper musical approach; however, in terms of sheer power, he perhaps lacked the physical constitution required of the concerto.

The remainder of the season saw Joseffy under the baton of Seidl for three concerts. The first took place on 30 November 1897 for the third concert of the Astoria Hotel Series, while the second was with the Seidl Society at the Academy of Music, on 5 February 1898. Joseffy's final appearance with the conductor was on 26 February 1898 at the Metropolitan Opera House as a benefit for the Workingmen's School. All three concerts included Tausig's re-worked version of Chopin's Piano Concerto in E Minor, while Joseffy also included Liszt's A major for the final two concerts. Since these were Joseffy's most frequently performed concertos, reviews are slim and offer little insight beyond the typical praise the pianist usually received for these staples of his repertory.<sup>204</sup>

### **A Little Chamber Music**

Between 1896 and 1898, Joseffy also made several appearances with the Kneisel Quartet.

Beyond a series of four concerts at Chickering Hall during his debut season (1880), the pianist

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<sup>203</sup> "The Symphony Society," *Times*, 23 January 1898, 16.

<sup>204</sup> See *The Critic*, 11 December 1897, 369. The article briefly reviews the 30 November performance and provides useful commentary on the validity of Tausig's arrangement of Chopin's Piano Concerto in E minor.

seems to have largely neglected public performances of chamber music.<sup>205</sup> On 31 March 1896, Joseffy joined the Boston-based group in a performance of Schubert's Piano Quintet in A Major, D. 667, *Die Forelle* (The Trout). The *Times* praised Joseffy's efforts as being of "great value." Although his part was reportedly rendered too loud (the writer indicated that the piano lid should have been closed), the critic suggested that Joseffy played with "great discretion . . . and with a touch that was simply exquisite in its delicacy and clearness."<sup>206</sup> The *Tribune*, on the other hand, opined that the pianist was not well suited for "that fragrant and fragile form of art." He also complained that Joseffy's natural tendency of projection while performing with an orchestra hindered his ability to play sympathetically with a quartet. The *Tribune* agreed, stating that the piano was frequently too loud and was "almost always of a hardness and brittleness of quality that refused to mingle with the tone of the strings."<sup>207</sup> Coupled with a disagreeable tone, apparently Joseffy's tempi were also inconsistent, ultimately hindering the ensemble and overall performance. A writer for the *The Independent* also reviewed the concert, suggesting that Joseffy brought too much virtuosity to the performance, causing the piano part to assume "a prominence and individuality which overpowered the strings and had its own way more than once as to dynamics and tempo."<sup>208</sup> A lack of experience with chamber music may explain Joseffy's apparently unsympathetic playing. If the critics were correct, then perhaps, Joseffy simply was not suited for this sort of ensemble; however, later performances would suggest otherwise.

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<sup>205</sup> On 21 March 1886 Joseffy gave a concert in aid to the relief fund for the German Press Club. The program consisted of mainly solo pieces by Brahms, Chopin, Liszt, Rubinstein, and Schumann; however, the pianist did perform Schumann's Piano Quintet, Op. 44 and also the Duet for two pianos on Schumann's *Manfred* by Reinecke with the pianist Adele Margulies.

<sup>206</sup> "The Kneisel Quartet," *Times*, 1 April 1896, 4.

<sup>207</sup> "The Kneisel Quartet," *Tribune*, 1 April 1896, 7.

<sup>208</sup> *The Independent*, 9 April 1896, 9.

On 2 March 1897, Joseffy appeared again with the Kneisel Quartet at Mendelssohn Glee Club Hall. As before, enthusiasm over the appearance of the popular pianist likely had a significant influence toward filling the concert hall. This time, the group performed Brahms's Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 32, yielding entirely different results. The critic for the *Times* was concise in evaluation of the performance:

The quintet was played in a masterly manner. Mr. Joseffy long ago demonstrated how complete a master he was of Brahms, and he did not have to make known last night how thoroughly he understands the requirements of ensemble performance. He was not as soloist, but part of a quintet. He played nobly, and so did his associates. The result was an artistic triumph.<sup>209</sup>

It would seem that one of three possible scenarios might explain the success of the second appearance. Perhaps, the pianist adjusted his strategy towards ensemble playing. Maybe Joseffy was more familiar with his collaborators upon a second performance. It is also possible that he simply was more sympathetic with the music of Brahms than with Schubert. Regardless, on 17 February 1898 Joseffy would have a chance to redeem himself in another reading of the "Trout" Quintet.

The pianist's penultimate appearance with the Kneisel Quartet came on 17 December 1897 when the group gave the second concert of its sixth season in New York, at Mendelssohn Hall. The program consisted of three works: the Quartet in F major, Op. 22 by Tchaikovsky; the Sonata in A Major for Cello and Piano No. 3 in A Major, Op. 69 by Beethoven; and Schumann's Piano Quintet in E-Flat Major, Op. 44. The critic for the *Times* suggested that Joseffy's best efforts were in the Beethoven sonata, where, "his tone was wooing in its tenderness and his

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<sup>209</sup> "The Kneisel Quartet," *Times*, 3 March 1897, 6.

lovely phrasing was vocal.”<sup>210</sup> The Schumann quintet concluded the program and according to the *Times*, “the five artists covered themselves in glory, and treated the audience to a most inspiring performance of one of the loveliest of all works in the domain of chamber music.” Unfortunately, the writer did not give a more direct description of Joseffy’s handling of the piano part, while the *Tribune* dedicated all its efforts to discussing the compositions themselves. Beyond documenting the performance, *The Critic* simply declared, “It is needless to say more than that the whole concert was one of the purest exhibitions of high art.”<sup>211</sup>

On 17 February 1898 Joseffy made his final appearance with the Kneisel Quartet and likely his last publicized chamber performance in New York. The concert was the second of a three-afternoon series at Mendelssohn Hall. The program included Haydn’s Quartet in D major, Op. 64, No. 5; Brahms’s Trio in E-Flat Major, Op. 40 for horn, violin, and piano; and Schubert’s Piano Quintet in A Major, D. 667. This time, the writer for the *Times* called Joseffy’s performance in the quintet “exquisite in its variety of tone color and the delicacy of its lights and shades. Furthermore, he seemed particularly en rapport with his associates yesterday, and the results were, therefore, unusually delightful.”<sup>212</sup> The writer for *Tribune*, however, did not share the opinions of his fellow critic and was unwilling to give praise:

Mr. Joseffy’s defects of style as an ensemble player were brought into unpleasant prominence – his disarticulated phrasing of certain passages, his occasional tendency to hurry the time, the tone color that sometimes refuses to blend with the strings on account of its coldness, the detachment of feeling in certain passages that puts ‘ensemble’ out of the question.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> “The Kneisel Quartet,” *Times*, 18 December 1897, 7.

<sup>211</sup> *The Critic*, 25 December 1897, 406.

<sup>212</sup> “The Kneisel Quartet,” *Times*, 18 February 1898, 6.

<sup>213</sup> “Kneisel Quartet Matinee,” *Tribune*, 18 February 1898, 6.

It is difficult to ascertain Joseffy's abilities as a chamber artist based on such contradictions. On the one hand, the pianist's ability to produce delicate tones with a vast array of colors and shades, coupled with almost countless hours performing with orchestras, suggests that he should have been successful in other forms of ensemble playing. On the other hand, performing concertos, where the pianist's main concern is communication with the conductor who is leading the orchestra is much different than a simultaneous dialogue with three or four other players, while balancing the piano's timbre with the limited number of strings. Joseffy's own performance record is perhaps more telling than the reviews themselves. That the pianist gave comparatively so few chamber appearances throughout his career suggests that he was not comfortable performing in such scenarios.

### **Concluding With Recitals**

On 2 January 1898, following impressive concerto appearances and a more or less successful series of chamber concerts, the writer for the *Times* made a telling statement and a none-too-subtle request for the pianist to enter the recital room once again:

Rafael Joseffy has appeared in public with enormous success this season. It seems strange that he does not give one or two recitals. He is the only pianist before this public today whose name has attractive power. People will go to hear Joseffy whenever and wherever he plays, and they always come away pleased. He is a great artist.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> *Times*, 2 January 1898, 29.

Whether he was moved by the sincerity of the statement or had already calculated the next and perhaps final excursion of his public career, Joseffy surfaced from a virtually silent 1898-99 season to give his only highly-publicized local appearance: a recital at Carnegie Hall.<sup>215</sup>

On 27 April 1899 Joseffy gave his first recital in New York since 29 March 1884, almost fifteen years earlier. The performance was greatly anticipated and the program was formidable:

CARNEGIE HALL CONCERT<sup>216</sup>  
(Thursday, 27 April 1899)

Piano Sonata No. 3, in F Minor, Op. 5	Brahms
<i>Intermezzi</i> from Opp. 117 and 118	Brahms
<i>Ballade No. 4, in F Minor</i> , Op. 52	Chopin
<i>Mazurka in F-Sharp Minor</i> , Op. 6, No. 1	Chopin
<i>Berceuse</i> , Op. 13, No. 1	Henselt
<i>Etude No. 12 in B-Flat Minor</i> , Op. 2	Henselt
<i>Ballade</i>	Liszt
Menuet	Rubinstein
<i>Polonaise-Fantaisie</i> , Op. 61	Chopin
Sonata in G Major, Op. 37	Tchaikovsky

Members of the local press were impressed and thankful for the individuality of Joseffy's program. The most unusual feature was the placement of two relatively recent sonatas as the bookends, which the *Tribune* called "two compositions of rare interest." He also included two of Chopin's larger pieces, one of Liszt's more substantive works, and then surrounded these with a selection of smaller pieces. Recognizing and appreciating Joseffy's unusual approach, the *Times* noted: "He demonstrated that it was possible to make a thoroughly interesting programme

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<sup>215</sup> Joseffy did make a few minor appearances throughout the remainder of the 1897-98 and for the first half of the 1898-99 season. On 17 March 1898 the pianist was one of several artists who took part in a miscellaneous concert at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. He was also a soloist for Anton Seidl's memorial at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on 2 May 1898. On 13 December 1898 Joseffy performed at the Astoria Charity Concert, celebrating the first anniversary of the hotel's opening. He also gave a certain number of concerts in surrounding locales that included a week of recitals in New England during the first week in April.

<sup>216</sup> Program reproduced from: "Mr. Joseffy's Recital," *Tribune*, 29 April 1899, 8.

without traveling the paths of convention.”<sup>217</sup> The program did not conform to what was by now the prototypical structure of a piano recital: a Liszt arrangement of a Bach organ fugue to begin, then positioning a Beethoven sonata as the centerpiece, inserting various character pieces to flesh out the program, and ultimately closing with a *Hungarian Rhapsody*. Removed from “conventional lines,” the *Tribune* asserted that Joseffy’s approach was designed “to give the artist’s own predilections free play.”<sup>218</sup>

Joseffy had already established his reputation as a preeminent interpreter of Brahms; thus, the opening sonata was naturally the item of greatest interest, commanding high praise in the press. Although the sonata had turned up with some frequency on other programs throughout the season, the *Times* proclaimed that all others “faded into a very dim obscurity as soon as that of Mr. Joseffy had been heard last night.”<sup>219</sup> The pianist’s rendition of the sonata was recognized as a “revelation of interpretative art” and “beyond description,” convincing the *Times* of Joseffy’s complete understanding of the work compared with the “partial discoveries” made by other pianists. Coupled with his rendition of two intermezzi from Op. 117 and 118, the writer for the *Times* claimed that Joseffy’s tone coloring and “wealth of delicate tinting” was “something to be treasured in the memory.” The *Tribune*, calling the sonata, “one of the most splendid utterances of Brahms’s earlier years,” stated the pianist interpreted the work “with an eloquence that matched the composer’s intent.”<sup>220</sup> As for the intermezzi, the critic was also convinced that

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<sup>217</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s Recital,” *Times*, 28 April 1899, 6.

<sup>218</sup> “Mr. Joseffy’s Recital,” *Tribune*, 29 April 1899, 8: “He gave it scope on this occasion in a programme quite removed from conventional lines . . . not bound as to its beginning, middle and end to comprise a Liszt arrangement of an organ fugue by Bach, a sonata by Beethoven, and a Hungarian Rhapsody by Liszt—a fact for which the audience was doubtless truly thankful.”

<sup>219</sup> *Times*, 28 April 1899, 6.

<sup>220</sup> *Tribune*, 29 April 1899, 8.

Joseffy's performance "seems as perfect a reflex and recreation of the composer's mood as is possible in interpretative art."

Although the press recognized Tchaikovsky's genius, they received his sonata with far less enthusiasm. The *Times* simply suggested that the piece was not the best vehicle for Joseffy to demonstrate his powers, yet the writer could not name another pianist able to render the work more successfully. The *Tribune*, on the other hand, faulted the sonata for its redundancy and stated that the themes and their treatment "cannot be said to be among the finest he produced," and that the composer "never reached his highest level of writing for the pianoforte alone."<sup>221</sup> The thematic material of the first movement was called "most impressive in its total effect," while there was "much beauty" in the slow movement. The scherzo was labeled "least important," but in Joseffy's hands "became a gossamer web of dazzling brilliancy."

The *Tribune* concluded with limited commentary of the Chopin numbers, stating that Joseffy's ability to interpret the Polish composer was already well known. The writer, however, referenced the pianist's tonal palette and suggested that his playing of Chopin was seldom surpassed. The *Times* made similar claims regarding the pianist's renderings, and that the time Joseffy had spent studying Brahms had also contributed to a deeper rendering of this music. In conclusion, the *Times* paid the pianist an impressive compliment: "Mr. Joseffy's one great fault: he does not play often enough. If he would keep himself more before the public there would not be any necessity of importing pianists from abroad to play to us. Furthermore, it would be very unprofitable."<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> *Times*, 28 April 1899.



The reviews revealed several details concerning the current state of Joseffy's career. The pianist was clearly recognized as a leading interpreter of Brahms in America and was interested in promoting that composer's music. He also seemed uninterested in what appeared to be conventional recital programming, discarding an approach that was more or less customary at the time. Joseffy's style also seemed to be unduplicated by other virtuosos, while his popularity was not overly affected by infrequent performances and the presence of other pianists. Finally, the reviews suggest that his playing remained highly proficient and affirmed recent opinions regarding greater depth in Joseffy's interpretations.

On 2 July 1899 the "Musical Matters At Home" section of the *Times* showcased Joseffy's announcement of an extended American tour for the upcoming season. The article stated that the pianist would begin in November with an itinerary of fifty concerts, stopping in the principal cities of the country but not going west beyond Kansas City. The tour began in November and was expected to conclude in New York City in April 1900. Joseffy would only present recitals and his programs would cover classics as well as novelties, and also include pieces that had not been performed in America by any other pianist to date. Judging from the nature of the tour and the fact that Joseffy performed so infrequently after the turn of the century, the effort may have been considered a farewell, although the tour was not publicized as such.

Joseffy's final tour began on 14 November 1899 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. The date commemorated the twentieth anniversary of his first performance in Brooklyn. Although the *Times* had announced the inclusion of new and unheard repertoire, the program largely resembled the one Joseffy gave to conclude the following season:

BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC CONCERT<sup>223</sup>  
(Tuesday, 14 November 1899)

Piano Sonata No. 3, in F Minor, Op. 5	Brahms
Piano Sonata in A Minor, D. 845	Schubert
II. Andante poco moto	
<i>Liebesbotschaft</i> , D. 957, No. 1	Schubert/Liszt
<i>Ballade No. 4</i> , in F Minor, Op. 52	Chopin
<i>Mazurka in F-Sharp Minor</i> , Op. 6, No. 1	Chopin
<i>Berceuse</i> , Op. 13, No. 1	Henselt
<i>Etude No. 12 in B-Flat Minor</i> , Op. 2	Henselt
Menuet	Rubinstein
<i>Valse</i>	Tchaikovsky
<i>Poloniase-Fantasie</i> , Op. 61	Chopin
Sonata Op. 37 in G Minor	Tchaikovsky

Perhaps the many similarities between the two programs induced the *Times* not to review the recital. The *Tribune*, however, did run a column following the concert, but the writer seemed more interested in the fact that the concert was an anniversary for Joseffy than the actual performance. Giving much more effort to discussing the pianist's mysterious absence and how it seemingly did not affect his popularity, the review includes very little about Joseffy's playing.

As the century came to a close, Joseffy apparently entered retirement once again.

Although the pianist made occasional appearances for various charities and benefits, took part in a few music festivals, and was heard a couple of times in Chicago (and likely other regional locales), the 1899-1900 tour signaled the pianist's final efforts, as he never returned to any sort of regular performing. The presence of so many young virtuosos is perhaps the main reason. The New York scene had become crowded as students of Liszt and Theodore Leschetizky (1830-1915) paraded across the Atlantic, each in turn seizing the spotlight. By the 1904-05 season, speculated pianistic activity caused the *Times* to boldly proclaim, "The visiting virtuosos will be

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<sup>223</sup> Program reproduced from the *Times*, 12 November 1899, 20.

legion.”<sup>224</sup> Names like Josef Hofmann (1876-1957), Josef Lhevinne (1874-1944), Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943), Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924), Harold Bauer (1873-1951), Ossip Gabrilowitsch (1878-1936), Leopold Godowsky (1870-1938), and many others comprise a roster of superstars who now saturated the New York scene. Whether Joseffy ever anticipated establishing his former position, as his performance activity between 1895 and 1899 perhaps suggested, the current state of local activity likely caused Joseffy to shift his energies to other endeavors.

### **The Virtuoso’s Final Bow**

Amidst all the pianistic activity at the turn of the century and following another hiatus of almost five years, Joseffy returned. He appeared on 19 March 1904 under Wilhelm Gericke (1845-1925) and the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. Joseffy played Liszt’s Piano Concerto in A Major, which prior to his second hiatus had become one of his standards. Huneker’s review for the *Times* was filled with his typical praise of Joseffy’s “crystal clear, delicately articulated, . . . cool half tints and subtle shadings,” while the technical display and superficial brilliancy often associated with Liszt were not a part of Joseffy’s performance.<sup>225</sup>

The review in *Tribune* was a special testament to Joseffy’s enduring popularity:

He was rapturously greeted when he appeared on the platform, and called back a dozen times to see and hear the signs of enthusiastic delight evoked by his performance of Liszt’s second pianoforte concerto. If he needed to learn how sadly he has curtailed the enjoyment of the music lovers of New York by his self-imposed retirement, the lesson must have been taught to him yesterday... but the memory of

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<sup>224</sup> “More Music This Season Than New York Ever Has Had,” *Times*, 30 October 1904, 4. See also *Times*, 1 April 1913. Following the New York debut of Pasquale Talerico, an Italian pianist and former student of Joseffy, the critic made an amusing and telling statement concerning the pianistic activity in the city: “Piano recitals have been numberless this year and have become weariness to the flesh.”

<sup>225</sup> *Times*, 20 March 1904, 8.

his art, unique and marvelous, had not been permitted to grow dim, and if he chooses now to resume the activity which signalized his labors in our concert rooms twenty years ago, he will not want opportunities. His public is ever ready, ever appreciative, ever grateful.<sup>226</sup>

On 12 January 1905 Joseffy gave his final local performance of Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 2 and likely his last with the Boston Symphony. The concert was a memorial for Thomas, who had died eight days earlier. A final performance of the Chopin E Minor and Liszt's A Major concertos with Damrosch and the New York Symphony Orchestra on 2 April at Carnegie Hall closed out the season. Both were performed so frequently by Joseffy it must have been a challenge for critics to write fresh, informative, and interesting reviews. This performance was no exception. The pianist played admirably and the critics responded as expected; the Chopin being all that the composer himself must have envisioned, while the Liszt was reserved and less imposing than he likely imagined. Huneker's final remarks, however, are suggestive:

Mr. Joseffy's piano playing is to-day an almost isolated phenomenon in that world. Its fascination can scarcely be denied even by those who cannot accept it as convincing. And it is not only fascinating in its way, but also not without its value as a wholesome corrective to much piano playing of a different sort.<sup>227</sup>

The critic recognized Joseffy's individuality and seemed to underscore the pianist's importance as a sort of counterbalance against the more extroverted and perhaps overly-flamboyant performances given by other currently popular virtuosos.

On 4 and 6 March 1906, Joseffy made his last New York concerto performances.<sup>228</sup> The series was also his final appearances under Damrosch and the New York Symphony. Joseffy chose to play Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 15, which made these events

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<sup>226</sup> "The Boston Orchestra and Mr. Joseffy," *Tribune*, 20 March 1904, 11.

<sup>227</sup> "Rafael Joseffy Plays," *Times*, 3 April 1905, 9.

<sup>228</sup> In January 1906 Joseffy performed in Chicago with Damrosch and the New York Symphony.

noteworthy. The performance on 4 March was the last Sunday Concert of the Symphony's schedule and the pianist's first and penultimate appearance of the season. There was uncommon interest in the program that included the seldom heard and popular Joseffy, playing a concerto that had only been performed twice before in New York, coupled with the inclusion of *Two Fragments after the Song of Roland*, Op. 30, "The Saracens," and "The Lovely Alda" by Edward MacDowell (1860-1908). This resulted in a packed Carnegie Hall for a Sunday event.<sup>229</sup>

Once again, Joseffy was welcomed by his devoted audience. The *Times* credited the pianist as "doing a service for Brahms's first concerto similar to the one he did for the second in making it familiar to the public."<sup>230</sup> The critic also praised Joseffy for an unselfish interpretation, which demonstrated his "whole-hearted devotion" to the concerto. Yet, even at this point, the pianist's style was called "small . . . deficient in the breadth and energy that above all things else belong to this work." After waxing lyrical about the concerto's performance history and a fanciful unspoken testimony, the critic stated: "'Johannes Brahms made me' is stamped upon every measure of the work; 'he made me out of strong conviction and in truest love,' is echoed by every phrase," the *Tribune* gave the pianist a positive review. Krehbiel further determined:

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<sup>229</sup> According to the local press, Conrad Ansoerge (1862-1930) gave the local premiere of Brahms's Piano Concerto in D Minor at Steinway Hall, in 1890. Actually, the concerto received its New York debut on 13 November 1875, when Mme. Nannetta Falk-Auerbach (a student of Clara Schumann) performed the work at the Academy of Music under Carl Bergmann and the New York Philharmonic Society. The press, however, suggested that Joseffy's performance was only the second time the concerto had been heard locally. Thus, Joseffy's was actually the third time the concerto was played in New York. According to the *Tribune*, Joseffy had wanted to play the work for over a decade ("Concert of the Symphony Orchestra," *Tribune*, 5 March 1906, 7). MacDowell was among America's most promising composers. In 1896, he was appointed as the first professor of music at Columbia University, a position he held until 1904. In that year, MacDowell was involved in a streetcar accident. Soon after, the composer deteriorated mentally and physically, until his death in 1908. In 1906, the state of MacDowell's health was also common knowledge, which "aroused popular curiosity" for his music (*Tribune*, 5 March 1906).

<sup>230</sup> "Last Sunday Concert of the Symphony Orchestra," *Times*, 5 March 1906, 9. Huneker erroneously suggested the concerto had not been performed locally before this concert.

We can imagine much of the music played more assertively than it was yesterday, but we cannot imagine more poetical tenderness than Mr. Joseffy breathed into the solo passages of the slow movement, or a more devout and consistent reading than the work received as a whole. It was a fine exhibition of musicianship and a remarkable tribute of affection.<sup>231</sup>

The reviews seem to agree with so many earlier accounts of Joseffy's playing and thus, can be considered accurate. The pianist would always be remembered for his finished and beautiful playing, but unfortunately, he could never completely convince the critics of greater breadth and deeper emotion. Had it been known that this was Joseffy's final concerto performance before local audiences, the critics might have been willing to credit the pianist with more; however, the consistency of their remarks is valuable, giving a clearer description of Joseffy's performance style.

Following his final New York performances, Joseffy seems to have officially retired from the concert stage. The local press does mention that the pianist contributed to a benefit for the survivors of the San Francisco earthquake, which took place on 5 May 1906 at the Metropolitan Opera House. The affair was called an "astonishing dollar programme," which included the famous contralto Mme. Ernestine Schumann-Heink (1861-1936); the pianist Adele aus der Ohe (1861-1937), who played Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasy*; and Victor Herbert (1859-1924) conducted. The *Times* did not mention what sort of repertoire Joseffy performed, but likely solo pieces. An unusual set of circumstance surround the announcement that Joseffy would appear on 22 March 1907 in Brooklyn with the Boston Symphony. The pianist did not perform and was apparently one of several soloists who were affected by "unwarranted announcements."<sup>232</sup> Following 1905-06 season, the New York press documents no further performances by Joseffy.

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<sup>231</sup> *Tribune*, 5 March 1906, 7.

<sup>232</sup> See "Soloists Don't Appear," *Times*, 27 January 1907, 12.

Although the pianist may have contributed to various benefits and other smaller-scale performances, he seems to have devoted the remainder of his life teaching and editing music.

### **Joseffy the Teacher**

Throughout his career, Joseffy was dedicated to pedagogy and was ultimately considered among the best teachers in New York. According to the January 1881 edition of *Church's Musical Visitor*, the pianist began teaching at the New York College of Music, located at 163 East Seventieth Street. The College was founded in 1878 and at the time of its inception Thomas was a member of the Board of Supervisors along with E. H. Schermerhorn, who was also the current president of the New York Philharmonic Society. By 1884, classified ads no longer listed Joseffy among the faculty.<sup>233</sup> For the next four years, the local press is not informative regarding Joseffy's teaching activities; however, coinciding with the pianist's declining performance schedule and his first retirement, the pianist took a position at The National Conservatory of America in 1888, where he would remain for almost two decades.

In the fall of 1885 The National Conservatory of Music (originally called the American School of Opera) opened at 126-128 East Seventeenth Street in New York City.<sup>234</sup> The institution was the vision of Jeanette Meyers Thurber (1850-1946), a New York-born singer who

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<sup>233</sup> Other notable faculty at the time included the conductor Gotthold Carlberg (choral department), George Frederick Bristow (harmony and theory), Bernardus Boekelman (piano), and other members of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra who provided instrument instruction.

<sup>234</sup> See Emanuel Rubin, "Jeannette Meyers Thurber and the National Conservatory of Music." *American Music*, 8/3 (Autumn, 1990): 234-325. According to an article, "Modern Music-Schools" which appeared in *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* (July 1886), active work at the school began on 14 December 1886. See also "The American School of Opera," *Times*, 20 September 1885, 5. According to the *Times*, articles of incorporation for the American School of Opera went to the New York County Clerk's Office on 19 September 1885. See also "Picking Out Good Voices," *Times*, 27 December 1885, 5. The article documents the "first of the supplemental examinations of candidates for admission to the American School of Opera" had occurred for some applicants at an earlier date, were given on 26 December, and were scheduled for 2 January 1886. These dates indicate that the conservatory did not open for operation until 1886.

studied at the Paris Conservatory. Upon her return to America, she married the wealthy wholesale food merchant, Francis Beattie Thurber. With his financial support and the backing of several prominent New York businessmen, such as Andrew Carnegie and William K. Vanderbilt, Thurber's realized her dream of establishing an American version of the famous Conservatoire. The National Conservatory remained one of New York's prominent music schools until the stock market crash of 1929. Records of operation after 1930 have not been located, and on 15 October 1952 the state of New York officially declared the institution defunct.<sup>235</sup>

According to Emanuel Rubin's article, "Jeannette Meyers Thurber and the National Conservatory of Music" (1990), and an advertisement in *Harper's Bazaar* on 29 September 1888 Joseffy began teaching at The National Conservatory in the fall of 1888. Upon his resignation, the *Times* printed an announcement on 13 May 1906 entitled: "Joseffy Has Resigned. Leaves the National Conservatory After 15 Years' of Service." The article claims that the pianist held his teaching position for "more than fifteen years." According to the timeline assembled from the mentioned sources, the pianist likely taught at the Conservatory for eighteen years, although periods of absence might explain the tenure of fifteen years. The *Times* article claims that Joseffy's own private studio had grown so large that he had reduced his time at the Conservatory to only one day a week. Regardless of actual dates, it is clear that Joseffy spent much of his final years devoted to teaching.

Investigation into Joseffy's pedagogical influence reveals a wide range of students, from pianists, composers, and conductors, to other prominent literary figures and established members of other artistic communities. Among the most notable were Ferdinand M. Himmelreich (1880-

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<sup>235</sup> In 1892 Anton Dvořák (1841-1904) became the second director of the National Conservatory. In the same year, Thurber established a competition for American composition. The combination of these two events encouraged young native composers to attend the conservatory and simultaneously contributed toward a serious push for the development of American nationalism in musical composition.



1937), a blind American composer, pianist, and organist. Himmelreich was known for his piano arrangements and early recordings. He was a popular keyboardist, playing in New York department stores and he also made early radio appearances. The popular vaudeville pianist, arranger, composer, and teacher Herman Wassermann also studied with Joseffy. Wassermann's most famous student was George Gershwin (1898-1937). The composers Albert Mildenberg (1878-1918) and Louis Hirsch (1887-1924) also spent time with Joseffy. Mildenberg's opera *Rafaelo* received some acclaim, while Hirsch became a staff pianist for several publishers in Tin Pan Alley and in 1914, was one of the founders of ASCAP. Other pianists include the Italian-born Pasquale Talerico (b. 1891), who was one of the first instructors at the Indiana College of Music and Fine Arts before going on to the Peabody Conservatory. The Cuban-born Enrique Ros and the American pianist Julie Geyer both studied with Joseffy, had active careers, and toured the United States. During his childhood, the conductor Walter Damrosch studied with Joseffy, while the New York-born actor Alfred Cross (1891-1938) pursued music under Joseffy's tutelage before opting for a career on the silver screen.

Perhaps Joseffy's best-known students were the prominent literary figure, James Gibbons Huneker (1857-1921), and pianist and pedagogue Edwin Hughes. Huneker was born in Philadelphia and by his early twenties pursued a career as a concert pianist, which led the young musician to a year-long stay in Paris. Upon returning to New York, Huneker became a student of Joseffy and was the famous virtuoso's assistant and colleague at the National Conservatory for ten years. Although Paderewski called him "an excellent musician," Joseffy was successful in convincing Huneker that he would never be a top-rated performer. Taking the advice of his mentor and a love of writing, Huneker devoted his life's work to criticism of the arts, especially music. As a writer for several local papers and periodicals, Huneker became one of the most

informed and important music critics of the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth. Among his literary works, *Chopin: The Man and His Music* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1900) and *Franz Liszt* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1911), remain important sources on these two composers, while Huneker's article: "The Rare Art of Rafael Joseffy," which appeared in the *New York Times* on 4 July 1915, provides important insight on his mentor.<sup>236</sup>

Hughes was born in Washington, DC on 15 August 1884. His first teacher of note was S. M. Fabian who was a prominent pianist, teacher, president of the Washington College of Music, and later associated with the Clavier Piano School in New York City. From there, Hughes went to Joseffy, and upon finishing with Theodore Leschtizky (1830-1915), became the latter's assistant for two years (1909-10). Hughes gave his debut in Vienna in 1912 and his New York debut in 1917. Between 1920 and 1925, the pianist served as editor-and-chief for G. Schirmer's piano music division.

Along with his performing career, Hughes also devoted much time to teaching. Between 1910 and 1912 he taught at the Ganapol School of Musical Art in Detroit, MI. In 1912, Hughes returned to Europe and taught in Munich until 1916, when the newly-opened Volpe Institute of Music, located at 146 West Seventy- Seventh Street in New York City, hired Hughes to head the piano department.<sup>237</sup> Then, between 1918 and 1923 Hughes taught at the Institute of Musical Art

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<sup>236</sup> See Arnold T. Schwab, *James Gibbons Huneker: Critic of the Seven Arts* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1963).

<sup>237</sup> See *Musical America*, 21 October 1916. The Volpe Institute of Music opened its doors on 2 October 1916. Arnold Volpe (b. 1869) was a Russian immigrant who studied at the Warsaw Institute of Music and at the Imperial Conservatory of Petrograd, where he was a student of Leopold Auer. In 1898, Volpe came to the New York and by 1901 was the conductor of the Young Men's Orchestra (Joseffy was a member of the board of directors). In 1904 he founded the Volpe Symphony Orchestra, designed to give young players valuable experience. In 1910, he became the director of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences and also the conductor of the municipal orchestra; a position he held until 1914.

(later the Juilliard School). For the remainder of his life, Hughes was very active in music education, offering master classes and participating in the Music Teachers National Association, the Music Educators Association, and the National Council on Arts and Government.<sup>238</sup> Following Joseffy's death, Hughes published, "Rafael Joseffy's Contribution to Piano Technic" in *Musical Quarterly* 2/3 (July 1916). The article is very informative concerning the pianist's approach to teaching and his highly popular publications: *School of Advanced Piano Playing* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1902) and his *First Studies for the Piano* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1913).

Following the publication of *Advanced School*, Joseffy gave several local seminars at the National Conservatory for teachers interested in his pedagogical approach.<sup>239</sup> The classes likely resulted in numerous private instructors who could now claim association with the famous pianist, and hoping for an attractive position in the teaching profession. Throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, the New York press frequently ran classified advertisements for local instructors whose selling points were their own studies with the famed virtuoso and/or his teaching approach. Often, the hopeful teacher mentioned their own style as "in accordance with the Joseffy method" or some similarly-worded claim. Occasionally, the classifieds also ran solicitations for more legitimate pupils. Such notables include Rose Wolf who was Joseffy's assistant for fifteen years; Alexander Berne, who studied with Joseffy for five years; and Eleanor Foster Kriens, who was on the faculty of the Knox School, Cooperstown, New York. Most,

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<sup>238</sup> See [http://library.sc.edu/digital/collections/hughesDM\\_about.html](http://library.sc.edu/digital/collections/hughesDM_about.html), consulted 30 November 2015. The website is maintained by the University of South Carolina, where the Edwin Hughes Collection resides.

<sup>239</sup> See *Tribune*, 15 March 1903, A8. According to the *Tribune*, sessions would be held in May and June. See also *Times*, 1 May 1904, 18. A classified advertisement stated that classes would again be given from 17 May to 19 June. The courses consisted of "ten talks, with illustrations on the piano of Mr. Joseffy's new work . . . and theoretical instruction." The cost for admission was fifty dollars.

however, were local piano instructors of various successes who like their more well-known company, have since vanished into obscurity.<sup>240</sup>

### **Editions of Brahms, Liszt, and Chopin**

Joseffy's final contribution was the editing and publication of selected works by Brahms, Liszt, and the complete compositions of Chopin. Much of this music was already available to the American consumer; however, these entire volumes dedicated to each composer, including various performance directives such as fingerings and pedal indications—by such a renowned pianist as Joseffy—were significant. On 27 November 1910 the *Times* announced the new Brahms and Liszt editions in their “News of the Music World” column. With a preface by Huneker, the Brahms edition was first published for the “Musicians Library” series by the Oliver Ditson Company. Citing Joseffy's “copiously indicated fingerings” and “explicit directions as to pedaling and occasionally as to phrasing,” the *Times* called the effort “what such a work should be.”<sup>241</sup> Likely due to existing copyrights for the later works, the edition concluded with the *Rhapsodies*, Op. 79.

The same column also advertised the publication of Joseffy's edition of selected works by Liszt. Calling the work a “labor of love,” the *Times* stated that with the cooperation of publisher, G. Schirmer, few others could accomplish what Joseffy presented. The edition included the two piano concertos; the fifteen *Hungarian Rhapsodies*; the Sonata in B Minor; the

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<sup>240</sup> See Harriette Brower, *Piano Mastery Second Series: Talks with Master Pianists and Teachers* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1917). Rose Wolf was born in Russia and studied at the Rubinstein Conservatory. Along with Rubinstein (either Nicholas or Anton), she also studied with Karl Klindworth and Xaver Scharwenka in Berlin, and William Mason and A. K. Virgil in New York. In the interview, Wolf states that she “prepared” most of Joseffy's students and also co-authored *First Studies for the Piano*. The author also interviewed Berne and Hughes.

<sup>241</sup> *Times*, 27 November 1910, X7.

*Années de Pèlerinage*; the second ballade; the Polonaise in E Major; variations on Bach's *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*; and some of the etudes. The *Times* also claimed that earlier editions were corrupt and full of typographical errors, and that in some cases, Liszt had made corrections after their initial publication. Joseffy's knowledge of Liszt's music and style, coupled with his own experience as a pianist and pedagogue and his fingerings, pedal indications, and phrasing, contributed to what the writer called "a valuable possession" for those who play and study Liszt's music. By 1915, G. Schirmer had acquired rights to reissue Joseffy's edition of the *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, with the *Times* calling the edition "probably the last word in the technical exposition of these pieces."<sup>242</sup> Presented in their collection, "Schirmer's Library of Musical Classics," the publisher would eventually acquire the entire series.<sup>243</sup> Although subsequent editions would soon appear by leading pianists such as Arthur Friedheim, Ferruccio Busoni, and others, the Joseffy edition remained a standard source throughout much of the twentieth century.

A year before Joseffy's death, *The Independent* mentioned in their "The World of Music" column that "America's foremost pianist" had begun editing the complete works of Chopin. The writer claimed: "No living musician is better equipped for just this task than Joseffy."<sup>244</sup> Three months following Joseffy's death, the September 1915 edition of *Current Opinion* mentioned that G. Schirmer had just released the first volume of Chopin series. By November the *Times* also announced that Schirmer would include the edition in its "Library of Musical Classics" and that Chopin's waltzes comprised the first volume, which was already available. The *Times* also

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<sup>242</sup> *Times*, 10 January 1915, 70.

<sup>243</sup> G. Schirmer also published several standard compositions for piano and orchestra, "edited and revised" by Joseffy. Along with works by Chopin and Liszt in this genre, Schirmer also published Joseffy's editions of Anton Rubinstein's Piano Concerto No. 4 in D Minor, Op. 70; and Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-Flat Minor, Op. 23.

<sup>244</sup> *The Independent*, 14 December 1914, 420.

stated the remaining volumes would soon appear and that, “Much of what he has done appears in the careful and detailed fingerings.”<sup>245</sup>

On 3 October 1915 the *Tribune* dedicated two entire columns to the new Chopin edition with an article written by the long-time critic, Henry Edward Krehbiel (1854-1923), entitled: “New Edition of Chopin Recalls the Real Joseffy.” Although the article celebrates the edition’s appearance, Krehbiel uses the event to reminisce about Joseffy the man, while showing even greater interest in Huneker’s essay on Chopin, which prefaced the first volume in the series. Krehbiel chronicles the early rivalry between Joseffy and Rummel and suggests that the perceived competition between the two virtuosos was spurred by the press, rather than the pianists themselves. The writer also recounts his relationship with Joseffy; from its rocky start because of Joseffy’s refusal to allow members of the press to be present at dress rehearsals, to their enduring friendship of thirty-five years. Krehbiel states that Joseffy had no real rival between 1880 and 1890, but that the pianist always displayed an “unselfish sympathy” towards the many pianists who followed, regardless of their own popularity. Ultimately, Krehbiel says very little about the new edition but his remarks on Joseffy are informative.

At the time of their publication, the Joseffy editions carried a certain vogue due to the popularity of the music and fame of the pianist himself. Publishers understood that an edition carrying the name of a prominent virtuoso could boost marketability and Joseffy’s was no exception. As the memory of the famed pianist faded throughout the twentieth century, so did the validity of his editions. The significance of modern *Urtext* editions coupled with the fact that Joseffy’s most recently sported the easily-recognizable yellow cover with green filigree borders of Schirmer (the supposed antithesis), have only contributed to their dismissal. In his article,

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<sup>245</sup> “New Musical Publications,” *Times*, 15 November 1915, X11.

“The Chopin Nocturnes,” James Methuen-Campbell discusses the various editions currently available. Although the author ultimately ranks certain *Urtext* editions higher, he does attempt to give proper perspective and credit where due:

Rafael Joseffy’s edition is currently out of fashion though still available. It should not be dismissed lightly, as Joseffy, apart from being a supreme pianist and a Chopin player of renown, was a meticulous man with an abiding interest in fingering, so this aspect of his edition deserves attention.<sup>246</sup>

In an era that relies so heavily on *Urtext* editions, it becomes difficult to determine the pedagogical and musical value of Joseffy’s. At times, the pianist was liberal with regard to the notation of phrasing and pedaling indications, which often reflect his personal interpretations. Thus, with *Urtext* editions attempting to present the final word on such details, Joseffy’s liberties are generally frowned upon. With regard to fingerings, however, Joseffy’s are usually intelligent suggestions that conform to musical contexts and are often successful presenting logical and effective solutions to technical challenges. According to the recollections of Hughes, his teacher was apparently almost obsessive in this regard:

Joseffy was immensely particular about fingering. I have known the whole lesson hour to be occupied with this subject. He would finger a passage in several ways, telling the pupil to practice them all and then decide which would best fit the hand. In his work as editor, he would spend many hours over the fingering of a single composition. He often hit upon brilliant ideas in this line, though he was apt to be somewhat old fashioned and pedantic. This frequently showed itself in the changing of fingers on keys, for no special reason. With him fingering was almost an art in itself. He worked according to a principle, and always put that first. If a passage ought to be played legato, he would preserve that principle in the fingering.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> James Methuen-Campbell, “The Chopin Nocturnes,” *The Musical Times* 126/1708 (June, 1985): 344-346.

<sup>247</sup> Jeffrey Johnson, ed. *Piano Mastery: The Harriette Brower Interviews* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2003), 123.

Joseffy's publication of substantial portions of Brahms and Liszt is noteworthy; that the pianist edited the entire Chopin for the American market is significant.<sup>248</sup> As Hughes again points out, "Joseffy's own editions of the works of various composers were not the result of a hasty impulse to do something of the sort, but rather, the culmination of the study of a lifetime."<sup>249</sup> Thus, the Joseffy editions represent, to a large extent, the music he performed and taught throughout his entire life. His direct association with the generation of pianists that included Tausig and Liszt himself also bears consideration. That Joseffy was one of the foremost Chopin pianists and considered one of the top interpreters of Brahms at the time, should also carry weight when considering the merits of his editions.<sup>250</sup>

### **Sickness and Closure**

Joseffy died on the morning of 25 June 1915 at his home at 3657 Broadway in New York City, eight days prior to his sixty-third birthday. On 24 June the pianist apparently taught several piano lessons, went on a walk with friends, and later stopped at a restaurant for dinner. His death was sudden and the cause was reported following the coroner's examination as acute indigestion. The *Tribune* attributed the cause to "Ptomaine poisoning," or food poisoning, likely from the

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<sup>248</sup> Joseffy's editions of the *Études* are elusive. If the pianist did edit these works, G. Schirmer apparently did not publish the entire series. In 1902, G. Schirmer did publish a collection: "Etudes for the Piano," which was edited by Joseffy. The set includes three Chopin etudes: Op. 10, No. 5; Op. 10, No. 10; and Op. 25, No. 8. His editions of the Polonaises and the Sonatas also seem to have not made publication. That these three genres are not included in catalogues suggests that Joseffy did not complete the series before he died.

<sup>249</sup> Edwin Hughes, "Rafael Joseffy's Contribution to Piano Technic," *The Musical Quarterly* 2/3 (July 1916): 358.

<sup>250</sup> See "The Rare Art of Rafael Joseffy," *Times*, 4 July 1915, SM14. In his memorial article on the pianist, Huneker made two informative claims, which may add certain perspective to Joseffy's editions of Liszt and Chopin. According to the critic, Joseffy owned many musical rarities, including the original manuscripts of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies*. Huneker also claimed that in preparation for the fifteen volumes of Chopin, the pianist, "not only fingered, phrased, and revised the original text, but he actually copied anew this text so that no error could possibly creep in."



previous evening's meal. Joseffy left a wife and two children.<sup>251</sup> Franz Kneisel (1865-1926), violinist, quartet leader, and president of The Bohemians (a New York Musicians' Club founded by Joseffy in 1906 whose members included many of New York's prominent musicians), requested that members attend funeral services, which were held at the pianist's residence on 27 June at 1:30pm.

Joseffy was mourned by the New York establishment but perhaps, not to the degree one might expect for such a prominent musical figure. The first two decades of the twentieth century were a time of booming musical activity in New York and Joseffy the performer had been largely silent. For almost a decade, his entire efforts were spent teaching and editing music. Thus, he was not in the public eye and as a result, no longer the most popular pianist on the New York scene. Huneker penned a beautiful memorial, "The Rare Art of Rafael Joseffy," which appeared in the *Times* on 4 July 1915. The article recalls the pianist's career and is understandably sentimental to the point of hero-worship; however, Huneker provides valuable insight, especially recalling Joseffy's touch and production of tone at the piano:

*His touch, or manner of attack, seemed to spiritualize its wiry timbre. The harsh, inelastic, metallic unmalleable tone, inseparable from the music made by conventional pianists, became in his hands floating, evanescent. Tones were his plastic passagework . . . his atmospheric pedaling and gossamer arabesques—if Joseffy played the pianoforte, you asked in desperation, what then did his contemporaries play? . . . A cool, silvery touch of penetrating sweetness was Joseffy's, a comminglement of magic and moonlight. He had the cult of nuance, and here is where I take my stand in claiming for him originality. No pianist, with the*

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<sup>251</sup> The local press was generally silent concerning Joseffy's family and private life. I have been unable to locate extensive information about his wife, Marie Kroehn Joseffy, or his son, Carl Ludwig Joseffy (1890-1955). See *Tribune*, 13 December 1917, 11. The pianist's daughter Helen Joseffy (1897-1973) seems to have been an aspiring actor who appeared on 22 December 1917 at the Broadhurst Theatre in a production of British writer R. C. Carton's comedy play, "Lord and Lady Algy." Teri Joseffy (1905-1937) was born in Hungary and was the grandniece of Rafael. She was an accomplished pianist and studied with Josef Lhevinne at the Juilliard School. She married F. Howell Baker, a fellow Lhevinne student. Her New York debut was at Town Hall on 9 February 1929. She died on 7 June 1937 only a week after giving birth to her son, Anton Fenner Baker. Her son was also a prodigy, who was taught by his father until age eleven, when he was taken to Vera Brodsky (Lawrence) at Juilliard. Brodsky Lawrence later became a recognized scholar of nineteenth-century American music.

exception of Chopin, has paralleled his mastery of nuance. He was the master of the finer shades, gray within gray, and also a chameleon-like variety in iridescent tonal tints.<sup>252</sup>

In more florid and fanciful words, Huneker was simply reiterating the qualities other writers and critics had observed throughout the pianist's career. The legacy of Chopin's tone production and touch had always been expressed in similar terms. Thus, like Chopin, who stood apart from more volcanic and orchestral virtuosos like Liszt, so did Joseffy in a world dominated by virtuosos who often preferred heaven-storming bombast over subtlety.

Hughes's article, "Rafael Joseffy's Contribution to Piano Technic" appeared a year later in *Musical Quarterly*. If Huneker was able to recreate with prose Joseffy the pianist, Hughes was equally successful in describing his teacher's methods and pedagogical approach. From technical exercises and the most effective practice techniques, to preoccupation with proper fingerings, choosing appropriate repertoire, and a wealth of information concerning the great artists of the day, Hughes's article is a valuable memorial to Joseffy.

Of the New York scene at large, the only public memorial to Joseffy was a concert given by the Kneisel Quartet.<sup>253</sup> On 11 January 1916 the group gave the third concert of their season, at Aeolian Hall. The *Tribune* advertised the event: "Kneisels Honor Rafael Joseffy." The program showcased the local premiere of Jean Sibelius's Quartet in D Minor, Op. 56 with the remainder of the program specifically to honor Joseffy. The fifth movement, "Cavatina" from Beethoven's Quartet in B-Flat Major, Op. 130 followed the Sibelius on the program. According

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<sup>252</sup> *Times*, 4 July 1915, SM14.

<sup>253</sup> See "New York Trio at its Best," *Times*, 19 January 1926, 30. On 18 January 1926 the New York Trio gave its second subscription concert for the season, at Aeolian Hall. The group included the pianist Clarence Adler, violinist Louis Edlin, and cellist Cornelius Van Vilet. Their program included works by Haydn, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky. According to the *Times*, the New York Trio performed the unspecified chamber work by Tchaikovsky in honor of Joseffy.

to the *Tribune*, Joseffy was said to “have felt a peculiarly ardent love” for this specific movement. Krehbiel followed up with this statement: “Small wonder for it is one of the most luminous of the many golden pages created by the immortal tone-poet.”<sup>254</sup> The critic noted a certain solemnity in the players during the Beethoven and further lauded the musicians, stating: “It was as near perfection in quartet playing as one is ever likely to hear.” Schumann’s Piano Quintet, Op. 44 rounded out the program. For this work, the group called upon the British-born pianist, Harold Bauer (1873-1951). The *Times* noted that Joseffy had played this work for his final appearance with Kneisel’s group.<sup>255</sup> The critic called the Schumann “a notably fine performance . . . The many beauties of this work were splendidly brought out, though perhaps the Scherzo was a trifle hurried, so that its melodic line was sometimes obscured.”<sup>256</sup> That the writer cited hurried tempo in the Scherzo is ironic since in his limited public performances of chamber music, Joseffy was also called out for such infractions. Overall, inclusion of the Schumann quintet was fitting, since Joseffy performed the work with the Kneisel Quartet almost a decade earlier to rave reviews.

## Conclusions

Joseffy was one of the most important resident pianists in America during the nineteenth century. It would be difficult to name another whose total contributions surpassed the Hungarian-born student of Liszt and Tausig. Gottschalk’s tireless travels throughout the 1860s, and the landmark tours of Thalberg, Rubinstein, and von Bülow may have produced more actual performances, but

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<sup>254</sup> “Kneisels Honor Rafael Joseffy,” *Tribune*, 12 January 1916, 9.

<sup>255</sup> Joseffy performed the Schumann Quintet with Kneisel’s group on 17 December 1879. This was actually the pianist’s penultimate appearance with the group. The pianist’s last appearance with the ensemble took place on 17 February 1898, in Schubert’s Piano Quintet in A Major, D. 667.

<sup>256</sup> “Kneisel Quartet Plays,” *Times*, 12 January 1916, 5.

these were under different circumstances. All of them, with the possible exception of Gottschalk, were visiting virtuosos; they caused a sensation for a couple seasons, then packed up shop, and went home. Although Gottschalk was a native-born celebrity, he never stayed in one place very long. His career resembles that of a visiting virtuoso more than a resident pianist. By contrast, Joseffy remained and became a fixture of the American musical landscape.

In terms of the piano concerto, Joseffy's contribution was significant. The pianist appeared with New York orchestras well over a hundred times. The total may well be twice as many if numbers from various touring scenarios are also included. Although impressive, especially for the nineteenth century, the performance totals are really secondary in importance to the overall influence they had to New York's musical establishment. Joseffy seldom gave local premieres; however, the frequency that he performed certain concertos, especially ones by Chopin and Liszt, contributed to the popularity and overall familiarity of these works with American audiences. Whether critics favored his performances of Beethoven, Rubinstein, and Schumann is perhaps less important than the regular presentation of these works by such a popular artist, giving this music additional exposure as well. The debut of Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 2 and the frequency that Joseffy performed the work thereafter was significant to establishing an early appreciation for the composer in America, while the later presentation of Piano Concerto No. 1 and several solo pieces only added to Brahms's timeless reputation in the United States.

What Joseffy's concerto performances represent is perhaps more significant still. His extensive appearances demonstrate how vibrant the New York musical scene was during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. For audiences at the time, piano concertos were nothing new. Several of the city's most prominent pianists played them each season, while visiting

virtuosos also included concertos as a facet of their performance scenarios. That a single pianist had the opportunity to play so frequently with orchestras speaks to the musical appetite and consumption of the city, while contributing to the popularity of the genre.

Joseffy performed with most, if not all the local orchestras. Documenting his extensive activity with these ensembles gives insight into the orchestral scenario of the time. Investigating Joseffy also provides a deeper knowledge of New York's conductors such as Carlberg, Leopold and Walter Damrosch, Thomas, and Seidl. Through Joseffy's concerto appearances, we gain knowledge about their orchestras, their performance practices, and their varied approaches to concert-giving and programming alike. Frequently, when discussing the general musical scene of New York for example, conductors often fill the spotlight and grasp our attention. Consequently, a certain perspective results, highlighting the orchestral or operatic world, while marginalizing the pianistic activity to an extent. Observation through a different lens—like that of Joseffy—provides another angle, while contributing to a fuller understanding of the nineteenth-century musical scene.

Joseffy's contributions to piano pedagogy are also significant. Although it would be difficult to compile a complete list of students, we know that many spent time under his tutelage. One commentator called Joseffy, "the Liszt of his time, with pupils flocking from everywhere if only for one lesson with the master."<sup>257</sup> In this respect, Joseffy may be called a first in America. Before the virtuoso established himself as a teacher, most talented young pianists from the United States went abroad to complete their training. An amusing story survives that speaks to Joseffy's feelings about American students traveling in search of piano instruction. Once a

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<sup>257</sup> See "Benno Lewinson Reviews Many Years of City Life," *Times*, 19 October 1924, X13. The article documents the recollections of the veteran lawyer who was active in city affairs for over fifty years. Lewinson's commentary on the development of New York's music scene is both entertaining and informative.

student who was determined that they must study in Europe inquired of Joseffy who would be the best teacher to seek. Joseffy replied: “In my days Liszt and Tausig were reputed the best teachers. If you could get one of them...” The confused student exclaimed: “But, they are all dead!” To this, Joseffy responded: “Are they, indeed? Well, you see, it’s a long time since I was in Europe.”<sup>258</sup> The humorous story addresses the notion of world-class teachers in America, while questioning whether students still needed to travel abroad to finish their studies. Joseffy seems to have believed this was not altogether necessary. In his article, Hughes affirms that his teacher did recommend students go abroad because European artistic life and experiences still offered certain advantages, not because the teaching was superior.

Nineteenth-century New York had no shortage of prominent piano teachers. William Mason, Sebastian Bach Mills, and Richard Hoffman, to name a few, took plenty of students to higher levels of proficiency. Afterwards, the most gifted went on to Liszt, Leschetizsky, or some other celebrated European pedagogue. While all of New York’s important piano teachers supplied capable young pedagogues for the local markets, Joseffy seems to be among the first in America to establish an international prominence, which attracted students from other parts of the world. Although talented young American pianists still went abroad, it was not always necessary with teachers like Joseffy in New York. In this respect, he represents things to come. By the second half of the twentieth century, conservatories such as Juilliard, Curtis, Peabody, and others become important destinations for the world’s aspiring young pianists, while larger American cities like New York, Boston, and Chicago could now be called important musical centers.

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<sup>258</sup> “Joseffy on Study Abroad,” *Chicago Tribune*, 18 June 1905, 8.

Joseffy was also an important early editor of Brahms, Chopin, and Liszt. Although his editions are no longer fashionable, they stand as a testament to the virtuoso himself and represent significant dedication to his art. Upon their publication, Joseffy's collections were among the best sources of these master's piano works—the editions were also immensely popular. One can only imagine how many young American pianists throughout the twentieth century learned to love, admire, and play this corner of the nineteenth-century canon with the guidance of these editions. Joseffy never made recordings, thus, the only indications we have about how he played come from reviews and the word of those who admired his artistry. If studying this virtuoso's ideas on fingering, pedaling, and phrasing can possibly give insight into how Joseffy created his magical touch and tone—a technique that captured the imagination and mesmerized a generation of music lovers—then perhaps we should take a closer and unbiased look into his editions.

Investigating Joseffy's career provides much insight into the vibrant musical scene in nineteenth-century New York City. His concerts shed light on many facets of performance practice, repertoire, and various aspects of virtuosity at the time, while his work with orchestras gives insight into the conductors and the ensembles they led. With regard to the piano realm, Joseffy's fills a gap that exists between the landmark tours of Rubinstein and von Bülow and the many virtuosos who came after. In some ways, Joseffy represents an American musical establishment on the cusp of being world-class and a dominant force on an international scale.

## Chapter Five

### VIRTUOSO SHOWSTOPPERS AND ARRANGEMENTS OF POPULAR MUSIC BY RESIDENT PIANISTS, 1860-1887

In 1862, the American virtuoso, Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-69) found himself tirelessly touring his homeland, now torn apart by the Civil War. On 26 May 1862 the pianist gave a concert at the Academy in Philadelphia and was anticipating a performance in Baltimore two days later. In his memoirs, Gottschalk reveals a certain apprehension as he prepared to venture into the politically charged region, while giving insight to the musical tastes of his perspective audience:

A bad business for me, who ought to give a concert there in two days. I understand very well how to fill a hall, but it is dangerous. It would be to announce that I would play my piece called *The Union* and my variations on ‘Dixies Land.’ In the first I intercalate ‘Yankee Doodle’ and ‘Hail Columbia.’ The second is the Southern Negro air of which the Confederates, since the beginning of the war, have made a national air... At the point at which men’s minds are now the hall would be full of partisans of both sections, who certainly would come to blows. But I should make three or four thousand dollars. It is true that in the tumult I might be the first one choked.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from the advantages (or disadvantages at the time, perhaps) of programming repertoire that spoke directly to patriotic sensibilities, Gottschalk’s entry brings attention to the current American desire to hear familiar and popular melodies from the concert stage.

Another similarly informative story comes from Gottschalk’s diary entry on 7 May 1864. At a recent concert, a friend of the pianist noticed two ladies who were apparently disturbed by the absence of “tunes” on the program. The women were, however, consoled when they noticed

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<sup>1</sup> Louis Moreau Gottschalk, ed. Jeanne Behrend, *Notes of a Pianist* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), 66.



the pianist would include his *Home Sweet Home Caprice*, Op. 51 later in the program. The ladies waited and the concert continued. Finally, Gottschalk gave his elaborately decorated, yet, easily recognizable arrangement of Henry Bishop's ever-popular "tune" and was encored. Unfortunately, the two ladies did not recognize "Home Sweet Home" and left disappointed, complaining that Gottschalk did not play the programmed music.<sup>2</sup>

While both stories may be amusing and are decidedly entertaining, they suggest that many mid-nineteenth-century American concertgoers wanted popular and accessible music from concert platforms. In larger centers such as New York City, audiences may have been willing to accept more substantive piano literature, but other genres such as opera, minstrel shows, and the variety concert still dominated the scene, and apparently influenced pianist's choice of repertoire. Regardless of the locale, however, recitals were uncommon in America during the central decades of the nineteenth century, and programming canonic music such as Bach, Beethoven, and others was rarer still. For many Americans at the time, musical tastes rested on recognizable patriotic tunes, operatic themes, and popular songs. Thus, audiences wanted to hear this music from concert platforms, and according to Gottschalk's own accounts, they expected to. Significant to this study, is the notion that virtuosos in nineteenth-century America were aware of current pop culture and responded with compositions based on popular music.

In this chapter, I investigate how several prominent mid-nineteenth-century pianists in the United States incorporated popular musical material into their performances. Since many frequently presented their own arrangements in concert, documenting this activity illuminates several aspects of performance practice, while illustrating various approaches to programming. How pianists chose to construct these elaborate settings gives further insight into their personal

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<sup>2</sup> See Gottschalk, 210.

compositional skills, while demonstrating the influence of certain European models. That many dedicated time to arranging popular music is a testament to the appeal of such genres and speaks to the appetite and consumption of concertgoers, dilettantes, students, and music-lovers, while demonstrating what was expected from performers of the time.

My discussion begins with concert-worthy treatments of American patriotic tunes. In this area, Gottschalk's compositions such as *Battle Cry of Freedom*, *Grand Caprice de Concert*, Op. 55 and *L'Union, Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48 are known, while the latter is well-known and popular today. Fascination with Gottschalk in general has made his career and music a subject of academic study, while numerous recordings give audiences, enthusiasts, historians, and other interested parties access into his musical world.<sup>3</sup> However, he was not alone, nor was he the first virtuoso in the United States to arrange patriotic pieces for performance. The practice of resident pianists crafting showpieces based on such sources predates Gottschalk by at least twenty-five years (see W. A. King and Daniel Schlesinger in Chapter 1). Many of his contemporaries in the United States were also active with this sort of arranging, yet their efforts remain almost completely unknown today. The general familiarity of *L'Union* serves as an introductory model and backdrop for introducing arrangements by others.

Popular songs were a source of useful material. Famous examples such as "Dixie's Land" by Daniel Decatur Emmett (1815-1904), "Home Sweet Home" by Henry Rowley Bishop (1786-1855), and songs by Stephen Collins Foster (1826-1864) such as "My Old Kentucky Home" and "Old Folks at Home" to name a few, were among American's most beloved tunes. These songs and others featured in the popular entertainments of the day, such as minstrel shows

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<sup>3</sup> See John Godfrey Doyle, "The Piano Music of Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869)." Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1960. See also S. Frederick Starr, *Bamboula! The Life and Times of Louis Moreau Gottschalk*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). See also The Irish pianist, Philip Martin has recorded the complete piano music of Louis Moreau Gottschalk for Hyperion Records.

and other vocal concerts, making them popular and immediately recognizable. Numerous amateur arrangements for voice and piano and various other instrumental versions also made these songs a staple in the nineteenth-century parlor or music room. Although various sources such as concert programs, advertisements, and reviews confirm Gottschalk was fairly prolific arranging popular songs, but these works are almost entirely lost. Thus, I draw upon examples by other celebrated artists to illustrate this facet of composition.

Opera was also among the most popular entertainments in nineteenth-century New York City, which provided pianists with further possibilities. Following the example and tradition set in place by European superstars such as Franz Liszt (1811-1886), Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871), and others, pianists in the United States crafted elaborate showpieces based on operatic sources. As discussed in Chapter 2, Richard Hoffman (1831-1909) was fairly prolific in the genre, yet he seems to have programmed works by Thalberg and Leopold de Meyer (1816-1883) more frequently when giving public performances. By contrast, notable pianists such as Maurice Strakosch (1825-1887), Gottschalk, and Gustave Satter (1832-?) also performed fantasies by Liszt and Thalberg, but concert programs frequently featured their own arrangements. Two of America's top-rated pianists, Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898) and Alfred Humphreys Pease (1838-1882), championed such works by Liszt; however, both composed dazzling fantasies on Charles Gounod's French grand opera, *Faust*. These two examples, in particular, remain among the most demanding showpieces written in America during the central decades of the nineteenth century and thus, offer an appropriate conclusion to this chapter. Ultimately, this study introduces several lesser-known examples from the realms of concert music, transcriptions, and arrangements to the discussion of piano performance in nineteenth-century America.

## The Patriotic Virtuoso and Gottschalk's *L' Union*

One of the most popular piano arrangements from the time based on American patriotic tunes is Gottschalk's *L' Union, Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48. Apart from other pieces like *Le Banjo*, *Grotesque Fantaisie*, *Esquisse Américaine*, Op. 15 (1854-55) and *The Last Hope, Religious Meditation*, Op. 16 (1854) to name a few, *L' Union* is one of Gottschalk's best-known compositions today. In this work, the composer draws upon three patriotic tunes: "The Star-Spangled Banner," "Hail Columbia," and "Yankee Doodle" to craft a descriptive and dazzling showpiece that packs a virtuosic punch. The following analysis illustrates Gottschalk's virtuosic writing, while demonstrating how the composer incorporates the three patriotic tunes into a fantasia-like setting.

### Example 5.1: Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, introduction, mm. 1-4<sup>4</sup>

The image shows a musical score for the introduction of Gottschalk's *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, measures 1-4. The score is in E-flat minor and 4/4 time. It features a piano introduction with dynamic markings *ff* and performance instructions: *Allegro Moderato*, *Maestoso*, *Streppitoso*, and *Con Brazura*. The music includes chromatic octaves and arpeggiated sextuplets.

Example 5.1 demonstrates the intense and dark forty-two bar introduction in the key of E-flat minor. Waves of downward chromatic octaves and quick-rising arpeggiated sextuplet

<sup>4</sup> Louis Moreau Gottschalk, *Union Paraphrase de Concert* (New York: Wm. Hall & Son, 1863). Reprinted by Dover Publications: *Piano Music of Louis Moreau Gottschalk*. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973).

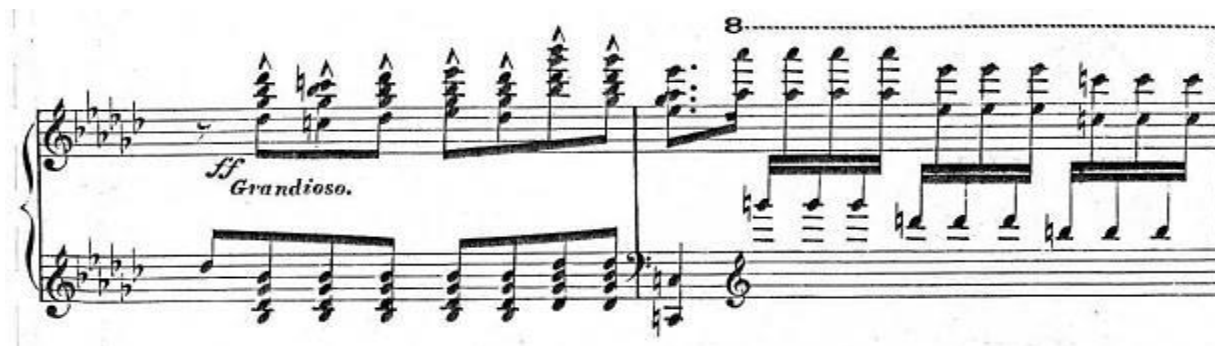
figures make a bold opening statement, depicting perhaps, the blasts canons or cacophony from the battlefield. Then, Gottschalk introduces a four-bar melodic fragment that is both ominous and foreboding as it rises from the rumble of bass octaves, retaining the residue of the initial bombardment:

**Example 5.2:** Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, introduction, mm. 17-20



Gottschalk repeats the whole sequence until m. 28, when the minor mode is relinquished to the mediant key of G-flat major as triumphant chords suggests, perhaps, a change of tide in the battle or that Union troupes have arrived:

**Example 5.3:** Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, introduction, mm. 28-29



Outlining the dominant harmony of D-flat major, a brilliant and sweeping downward chromatic cadenza of thirty-second notes spans the entire keyboard:

**Example 5.4: Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, chromatic cadenza, m. 36**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system, labeled 'Cadenza. Rapido e brillante.', features a treble clef staff with a series of thirty-second notes descending chromatically across the entire keyboard range. A dotted line above the staff indicates the extent of this cadenza. The bass clef staff shows a simple accompaniment with a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking. The second system, labeled '(Main Droite.)', shows the continuation of the piece with a treble clef staff containing a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a more active accompaniment. The key signature is D-flat major, and the time signature is 2/4.

Concluding the cadenza is a graceful four-measure arabesque at m. 38, recalling the dreamy elegance of Chopin, which modulates to F-sharp major, setting the stage for “The Star-Spangled Banner:”

**Example 5.5: Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, Chopinesque arabesque, mm. 37-42**

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system is marked *Volante.* and *mf*, with a *2 Ped.* instruction. The second system is marked *Grazioso elegante.* and *p*. The third system is marked *Foco rit.* and ends with a 3/4 time signature. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, various note values, rests, and dynamic markings. There are also performance instructions like '2 Ped.' and 'Foco rit.' and fingering numbers (1-4) and articulation marks (x) above the notes.

Gottschalk states the first sixteen measures (mm. 43-58) of the patriotic hymn straightforwardly enough in right-hand octaves with the typical addition of a third or sixth in between. The left-hand accompaniment fleshes out the harmonies, while incorporating wandering melodic-like fragments of secondary interest. Occasionally, Gottschalk adds certain color chords, such as the C-double sharp diminished-seventh that resolves to D-sharp minor (m. 44-45) creating a sense of melancholy and perhaps suggesting the discordant state of the nation:

**Example 5.6: Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, "The Star Spangled Banner," mm. 43-49**

The image shows a musical score for the piece "THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER" by Louis Gottschalk. The title is written in all caps at the top. Below the title, the tempo marking "Molto conico." is present. The score is in 3/4 time and the key signature has one sharp (F#). It consists of two systems of music. The first system shows measures 43-49. The right hand (treble clef) features a melodic line in large print, with a dotted line above it indicating an octave shift. The left hand (bass clef) provides a thick, chordal accompaniment in smaller print. The second system continues the piece, showing the continuation of the melodic line and the accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "P" and "Ped."

Measures 59-81 conclude the anthem and demonstrate one of Gottschalk's singular variation techniques.<sup>5</sup> Here, the composer incorporates full-chordal structures in both hands with the melodic figure nestled within one of the middle voices in the right hand. In this instance, the melody is doubled in the top voice in the left hand, which occasionally strays into a countermelody. Gottschalk notates the main theme with large print, while the supporting chordal notes appear in smaller type. The overall effect: the melody in octaves surrounded by a thick choral-like accompaniment:

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<sup>5</sup> Gottschalk uses the same compositional technique in *Home Sweet Home*, *Caprice*, Op. 51 (mm. 43-57) and for the introduction of *Miserere du Trovatore*, *Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 52.



**Example 5.7: Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, “Star Spangled Banner” choral setting, mm. 59-68**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system includes performance instructions: "Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*" and "Sempre Pedal Come Sopra." The notation features complex chordal textures and melodic lines in both hands, characteristic of a Romantic-era piano setting.

Following the “Star-Spangled Banner,” the introductory bombardment recommences at m. 81, bringing the listener back to the battlefield, and finally modulating to B-flat major.

Gottschalk then announces “Hail Columbia” with a five-measure bugle call, which is reiterated and fleshed out with chords, establishing the new key center. The imitation of a lone brass player not only brings attention to the heart of the composition, but also sets off an interesting moment in the piece. Crafted in two distinct sections, Gottschalk quotes the first twelve measures of “Columbia” four times, twice for each section. In measures 102-124, he presents the melody in single right-hand notes, while the left hand accompanies with a lush and colorful variety of diminished seventh chords, augmented sixth chords, and secondary dominants. With this section, Gottschalk transforms what is an otherwise diatonic and typical march tune into a moment of introspective beauty and grace:

Example 5.8: Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, bugle call and “Hail Columbia,” mm. 91-106

The image displays four systems of musical notation for a piano and trumpet. The first system features a trumpet part with the markings *Stridente.*, *Fibrante.*, and *f Trombe.*, and a piano accompaniment. The second system includes the marking *Echo.* above the trumpet part and *Silenzio. pp* below the piano part. The third system has *Silenzio. mf* written above the piano part. The fourth system includes the instruction *Ben legato il basso.* below the piano part. The music is in a key with two flats and a 2/4 time signature.

The concluding two statements of “Hail Columbia” are not nearly as interesting harmonically, but showcase another singular compositional moment as Gottschalk’s

accompaniment dwindles into a five-note drone, which depicts a drum-roll and might suggest troops marching into the distance:

**Example 5.9: Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, “Hail Columbia” with drum-roll, mm. 125-130**

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Hail Columbia" from Gottschalk's *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, measures 125-130. The score is written for piano and includes a drum part. The piano part is in the right hand, and the drum part is in the left hand. The piano part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, and the drum part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score is marked with "Drums." and "pp Tamburra." in the left hand. The piano part is marked with "Cres" (Crescendo) in the right hand. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The piano part is written in a treble clef, and the drum part is written in a bass clef. The score is divided into two systems, each with two staves. The first system shows measures 125-127, and the second system shows measures 128-130. The piano part in the first system has a melodic line that starts with a quarter note, followed by eighth and sixteenth notes. The drum part in the first system has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The piano part in the second system has a melodic line that starts with a quarter note, followed by eighth and sixteenth notes. The drum part in the second system has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The piano part in the second system is marked with "Cres" (Crescendo) in the right hand. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The piano part is written in a treble clef, and the drum part is written in a bass clef. The score is divided into two systems, each with two staves. The first system shows measures 125-127, and the second system shows measures 128-130. The piano part in the first system has a melodic line that starts with a quarter note, followed by eighth and sixteenth notes. The drum part in the first system has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The piano part in the second system has a melodic line that starts with a quarter note, followed by eighth and sixteenth notes. The drum part in the second system has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The piano part in the second system is marked with "Cres" (Crescendo) in the right hand.

For the finale, Gottschalk introduces “Yankee Doodle.” Rising above the ordinary and hopefully to elicit hysterical applause, the composer uses a clever and popular nineteenth-century virtuosic device. As “Yankee Doodle” rings out in the higher register, “Hail Columbia” enters simultaneously in the left hand in counterpoint.<sup>6</sup> A fanfare erupts and the bombastic chromatic octaves from the introduction return, leading to a final statement of the recently interwoven and now unified patriotic themes and Gottschalk’s showstopper comes to a triumphant conclusion:

<sup>6</sup> This technical device was not new. European virtuosos such as Liszt, Thalberg, and others used this approach in their operatic fantasies and improvisations for decades prior.

Example 5.10: Gottschalk, *L'Union Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 48, “Yankee Doodle” and “Hail Columbia,” mm. 179-83

Following its debut on 22 February 1862 at Niblo’s Saloon, *L’Union* quickly became a favorite with audiences and figured prominently on Gottschalk’s programs for the remainder of his career.<sup>7</sup> As the American Civil War waged on, hearing their beloved patriotic tunes presented in the guise of the virtuosic *L’Union* may have ignited excitement and great national pride for Northern concertgoers. On 24 and 26 March 1864 Gottschalk gave performances in Washington, DC, programming his patriotic showpiece for audiences that included President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) and General Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885). The following year, Gottschalk and his fellow San Francisco-bound passengers aboard the steamer *Constitution*

<sup>7</sup> See S. Frederick Starr, *Bamboula! The Life and Times of Louis Moreau Gottschalk* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 388. Starr reports that even after Gottschalk left America and embarked upon his South American tours, he “programmed both *The Battle Cry of Freedom* and *The Union* repeatedly as if to proclaim his personal belief in the superiority of the political institutions of the United States.”

learned that the Civil War was over. The captain from another passing ship boarded to report that Richmond had fallen, General Lee had surrendered, and that Lincoln was assassinated. The next evening (24 April 1865), Gottschalk contributed to an on-deck meeting and prayer service playing *L'Union*, which under the circumstances, must have served as a memorable and emotional event for Americans who only hours earlier learned of the President's demise.

### **“Hail Columbia” and S. B. Mills**

Another patriotic showpiece and a decidedly more technically demanding example is *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8 by Mills. The piece is a dazzling knuckle-breaker, complete with a flashy introduction, “Hail Columbia” stated as the theme, followed by two elaborate variations, and an extended coda. In this arrangement, Mills demonstrates the whole of his bravura style, while incorporating many tricks in the virtuoso's bag. Although *Hail Columbia!* does not evoke the dramatic imagery found in Gottschalk's setting, it is more ambitious in terms of sheer virtuosity, and demonstrates a level of compositional intricacy not found in *L'Union*. One of the most active performers on the New York scene, Mills was also considered among the foremost virtuosos of the time, and a relatively prolific composer (discussed in Chapter 3). Coupled with the elaborate and impressive Liszt transcriptions this pianist introduced to New York audiences, *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert* was an early showpiece used by Mills to demonstrate his virtuosic skills.

Beginning on 20 March and concluding on 1 May, three New York-based pianists spearheaded a new chamber music series to close out the 1859-60 concert season. William Saar, Robert Goldbeck, and Mills as well as various other local musicians involved, called themselves the Chamber Concerts Union and presented a subscription series of six soirées given at

Goldbeck's Music Hall, located at 765 Broadway.<sup>8</sup> Not surprisingly, piano pieces featured prominently, but various forms of chamber and vocal music also fleshed out their programs. The series was, however, not generally mentioned or reviewed in the local press, suggesting a certain degree of informality.<sup>9</sup> Although the performers were among New York's most prominent and highly-regarded musicians, the soirées were unenthusiastically received and the series was not renewed.<sup>10</sup>

The Chamber Concerts Union's first soirée included an impressive program: Saar played an unspecified *Hungarian Rhapsody* by Liszt and Schumann's *Symphonic Etudes*, Op. 13 (both purportedly for the first time in New York); Goldbeck performed Chopin's Scherzo in B-Flat Minor, Op. 31; and Mills played an unspecified waltz and the famous Polonaise in A-Flat Major, Op. 53 by Chopin. The three pianists also contributed in chamber works, while a few vocal selections added necessary variety. According to the correspondent for *Dwight's Journal of Music*, Mills was encored and responded with his *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*. The critic said little about the piece, but credited Mills for having the "good taste not to unite 'Yankee Doodle'" in his arrangement.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The venue soon became the Hall of the National Musical Institute. In a review from *Dwight's Journal of Music* (14 April 1860), the critic, "Trovator" referred to the hall as, "a snug little box of a room." Beyond its function as an intimate musical venue, the hall was also used for a variety of functions including political speeches, religious meetings, and lectures on various topics.

<sup>9</sup> On 24 April 1860 *The Tribune* ran an announcement for the final soirée.

<sup>10</sup> See Vera Brodsky Lawrence, *Strong on Music: The New York Music Scene in the Days of George Templeton Strong* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 3:374. Lawrence suggests the effort was an unsuccessful attempt to rival the Mason/ Thomas Concerts, which were among the most popular and successful chamber soirées at the time.

<sup>11</sup> *Dwight's Journal of Music*, 17/ 2 (7 April 1860): 13. According to *Dwight's*, the original review appeared previously in the *New York Evening Post*. Note: At mm. 148-152, Mills does reference "Yankee Doodle" in the coda. Apparently the critic somehow missed this obvious quotation. In early performances of the work, Mills may have presented a version that incorporated a different ending. A less obvious reference occurs in mm. 9-12 of the introduction, where the first five notes of the patriotic song are the building blocks of an octave flourish, sweeping up and down the entire keyboard in mm 17-29.

Although the Chamber Concert Union's series itself may have only been of secondary interest to the New York musical establishment, the review provides valuable insight concerning Mills's showpiece on American national airs, the timeframe of composition, and probably the premiere performance of the work. Much later, and probably a marketing strategy by New York's Wm. A. Pond & Company to coincide with the national centennial, *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert* was first published in 1876. *Dwight's Journal*, however, documents what was likely the first public performance on 20 March 1860, which confirms that Mills composed the piece at least sixteen years prior to the centennial. Performances of *Hail Columbia!* also predate the heightened political tension resulting from President Lincoln's election (November 1860) and the initial southern succession by at least eight months, thus negating the notion that Mills, like Gottschalk, was making a political statement during the Civil War. The following analysis demonstrates Mills's bravura style and provides another example of virtuosic writing in America during the central decades of the nineteenth century.

*Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert* begins with a thirty-seven bar introduction establishing the dominant key of E major. In mm. 1-4 the opening phrases of "Hail Columbia" appear in the tenor range in the tonic key of A major. Another statement enters in the alto at m. 3, creating a momentary contrapuntal texture, which quickly dissolves into a choral-like voicing, while a succession of perfect authentic cadences conclude in E major at mm. 5-6. Motion comes to a halt at m. 8 on a low octave E with fermata, firmly establishing the tonality of E major. In mm. 9-17, "Yankee Doodle" appears in B minor but by the second phrase (m. 11) the tonality quickly reverts back to E major. Beginning at m. 17, a single-note motive based on the first five pitches of "Yankee Doodle" supplies Mills with material to build an ascending interlocking octave-sweep that reaches the highest registers of the keyboard and finally unravels

into an  $E^7$  arpeggio in octaves, which descends back to the point of departure. Chordal tremolos ( $V^9 - I$ ) at m. 30 accompany a descending bass line until the arrival at a full-voiced E major chord at m. 33.  $E^7$  arpeggios with added chromatic tones (A and A-sharp) gracefully sweep up the keyboard once again until m. 35, when Mills makes a final  $E^7$  arpeggio descent to set up “Hail Columbia” as the main theme at m. 38. This moment is derived from a similar instance where Chopin sets up the introduction of his main thematic material for the Polonaise in A-Flat Major, Op. 53:



Example 5.11: S. B. Mills, *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8, introduction and main theme, mm. 1-49<sup>12</sup>

**HAIL COLUMBIA.**  
S. B. Mills.  
OP 8

**Allegro Moderato.**

*f* *p* *ff* *sva.bassa.*

*f* *p* *dim.* *p* *sva.bassa.*

*f* *p dim.* *p* *cres. f*

*f* *accel.* *ff* *sva.bassa.*

Copyright, 1876, by Wm. A. Pond & Co.

<sup>12</sup> Sebastian Bach Mills, *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8 (New York: Wm. Pond & Co., 1876).

8

*ff et Presto.* *ff*

Rea

This system contains two staves of music. The upper staff features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and a dotted line above it labeled '8'. The lower staff provides harmonic accompaniment with chords and eighth-note figures. Dynamic markings include *ff et Presto.* and *ff*. A rehearsal mark 'Rea' is placed below the second measure of the lower staff.

*ff* *ff* *ff* *cres.*

Rea

This system continues the piece with two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with some rests. The lower staff features a rhythmic accompaniment of chords and eighth notes. Dynamic markings include *ff* and *cres.* (crescendo). A rehearsal mark 'Rea' is located below the third measure of the lower staff.

*f* *ff* *ff*

Rea

This system consists of two staves with dense chordal accompaniment. The upper staff has a melodic line with eighth notes. The lower staff has a rhythmic accompaniment of chords and eighth notes. Dynamic markings include *f* and *ff*. A rehearsal mark 'Rea' is placed below the first measure of the lower staff.

8

*f*

Rea

This system contains two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and a dotted line above it labeled '8'. The lower staff provides harmonic accompaniment with chords and eighth-note figures. Dynamic markings include *f*. A rehearsal mark 'Rea' is placed below the first measure of the lower staff.

**THEME.**  
**Allegro maestoso.**

Following his statement of “Hail Columbia” as the main theme (mm. 38-65), the composer launches into two complete and highly-virtuosic variations, which are both repeated and set-off with fanfare interludes. Mills presents each statement of the patriotic march with a

variety of three-handed techniques. In general, the theme appears in a middle voice accompanied by sweeping and perpetual arpeggio figurations. Mills also provides accents, directing the performer's attention to his placement of the theme:

**Example 5.12:** S. B. Mills, *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8, variation one, mm. 66-72

The image displays three systems of musical notation for piano, arranged in a three-staff format. The music is in a key with two sharps (D major) and a 3/4 time signature. The first system (measures 66-72) features a melody in the middle voice with sweeping arpeggio accompaniment. Dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *ff* (fortissimo). Markings include *marcato il tema.* and *cres.* (crescendo). The second system (measures 73-79) is marked *pesante.* (heavy) and features a more rhythmic, accented accompaniment. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *ff*. The third system (measures 80-86) continues the *pesante* character with heavy chords and arpeggios. The score includes various fingerings, accents, and performance instructions such as *res.* (resolute) and *ff et pesante.*

Concluding the first variation at m. 94, Mills presents an interlude of octaves and fully-voiced chords. The section carries indications such as “resolute,” “*ff et pesante*,” and “quasi

tromba,” suggesting a bold fanfare, designed to conclude the section and set the stage for the second variation:

**Example 5.13: S. B. Mills, *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8, fanfare interlude, mm. 92-101**

The image displays a musical score for the fanfare interlude of 'Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert' by S. B. Mills, measures 92-101. The score is written for piano and features three systems of music. The first system (measures 92-94) includes dynamic markings *cres.*, *f*, *p*, and *p*, and the instruction *resoluto.*. The second system (measures 95-97) is marked *ff et pesante.* and *ff quasi tromba.*. The third system (measures 98-101) includes the instruction *resoluto.* and *fff et pesante.*. The score is characterized by complex textures, including scale-like passages and arpeggio figurations, with various articulations and dynamics throughout.

Variation two begins at m.103. Here, Mills focusses on scale-like passages, followed by an ascending chromatic scale in the left hand. A point of interest occurs at m. 109, where the pianist’s arpeggio figuration again demonstrates the influence of Chopin, recalling similar

contexts from Ballade in G Minor, Op. 23 (mm. 48-53) and the “Più lento” section of Étude No. 17, Op. 25, No. 5:

**Example 5.14:** S. B. Mills, *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8, variation two, mm. 103-11

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of four systems of music. Each system is written for both the right and left hands on a grand staff. The key signature is G major (one sharp). The score includes various dynamic markings and articulations:

- System 1:** Starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand features a complex, rapid melodic line with slurs and fingerings. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment. Dynamics shift to forte (*f*) and then back to piano (*p*).
- System 2:** Features a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand has a more rhythmic, chordal texture. A crescendo (*cres.*) is marked in the right hand.
- System 3:** Begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a *pesante* (heavy) articulation. The right hand has a slower, more weighty feel. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and a decrescendo (*dim.*).
- System 4:** Starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs. The left hand has a steady accompaniment. Dynamics shift to forte (*f*) and include a *marcato* (marked) articulation.

Throughout the score, there are asterisks (\*) and a double bar line with a repeat sign (⌋) indicating specific performance instructions or structural markers.

The second variation concludes with a restatement of the fanfare interlude, followed by a 28-measure cadenza, which includes more descending arpeggios and chromatic octaves that lead to a short quotation of “Yankee Doodle” in left-hand octaves (mm. 147-52):

**Example 5.15:** S. B. Mills, *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8, chromatic octaves and “Yankee Doodle,” mm. 143-52

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of three systems of staves. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 2/4. The score is characterized by dense, rhythmic patterns of chromatic octaves and arpeggios. The first system includes dynamic markings such as *f* and *cres.* (crescendo). The second system features a *ff* (fortissimo) marking and a *Red.* (ritardando) marking. The third system begins with a *marcato.* (marked) instruction and includes a *Red.* marking. The final measure of the third system is marked with *et pe-san-te.* and a *ff* dynamic. The score concludes with a series of octave-chord tremolos and a final, powerful chord.

Mills brings his patriotic showpiece to a conclusion with a final statement of “Hail Columbia.” For this, he places the theme in the middle register, accompanied by a sweeping A-major scale that spans the entire range of the keyboard. Mills follows this dramatic gesture with a succession of octave-chord tremolos, and the piece ends with a bang:

Example 5.16: S. B. Mills, *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert*, Op. 8, finale, mm. 153-64

*Presto.*

*ff*

*cres.*

*8...*

*sempre marcatissimo la melodia.*

*ff*

*p*

*r.h.*

*ff*

*p*

*8...*



First system of a piano score. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music is marked with a forte dynamic (**f**). The right hand plays a melodic line with slurs and fingerings, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment. A double bar line is present, and the system ends with an asterisk (\*).

Second system of the piano score. It continues the melodic and rhythmic themes from the first system. The right hand has a more active melodic line. The system concludes with an asterisk (\*).

Third system of the piano score. The right hand part is marked *marcato.* (marked). The music features a strong, accented rhythmic pattern. The system ends with an asterisk (\*).

Fourth system of the piano score. The right hand part is marked with a forte dynamic (**f**). The music is characterized by a dense, rhythmic texture. The system ends with an asterisk (\*).

Fifth system of the piano score. The right hand part is marked *cres.* (crescendo) and *pesante.* (heavy). The music reaches a climactic point with a final chord marked **fff** (fortississimo). The system ends with an asterisk (\*).

*Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert* may be counted among the most technically demanding piano compositions written in the United States during the central decades of the nineteenth century. As a setting of an American patriotic piece, it might be considered the most virtuosic example from the era. With specific technical devices, Mills demonstrates the influence of Chopin, while various orchestral effects recall Liszt. In terms of piano technique and sheer virtuosic display, Mills seldom went beyond what is required here; however, the composer's *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17 is another dazzling showpiece, described later in this chapter.

### **Introducing Alfred Humphreys Pease and the “Star Spangled Banner”**

On 8 February 1864 a young pianist from Ohio named Alfred Humphreys Pease (1838-1882) gave his New York debut at Dodsworth Hall. As a virtuoso and composer he may have been the most promising native-born talent since Gottschalk. Reviews following his first concert were positive and critics immediately recognized the pianist's abilities:

His mastery over his left hand is surprising and a fine instance of the faculty which he has acquired in playing rapid octave passages in the bass was had in his performance of Liszt's arrangement of the 'Tannhauser March.' The 'Rigoletto' fantasia by the same author, a polka by Raff, and Liszt's musical comments upon themes in 'Faust' gave further undeniable evidence of native ability on the part of the performer, and received well merited applause.<sup>13</sup>

The review brings attention to a commanding technique, especially Pease's ability to play octaves. The choice of repertoire also illustrates his style and gives some indication as to how Pease became one of the most popular pianists in America during the 1860s and 1870s. In

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<sup>13</sup> "Pease, the Pianist," *The Chicago Tribune*, 28 February 1864, 2. The review initially appeared in the *New York World*. The *Faust* transcription Pease played as an encore was likely his own arrangement, not Liszt's.

public, he almost exclusively played Liszt's demanding operatic fantasies and *Hungarian Rhapsodies*; however, being a composer himself, Pease often programmed his own arrangements as well. Formidable technique coupled with what the *New York Post* called "a powerful and showy style of execution," appealed to concertgoers and left little room for criticism.<sup>14</sup> Beyond big showpieces, the remainder of his output for solo piano is comprised of flashy and effective creations on currently popular dance forms such as mazurkas, polkas, polonaises, and galops. Thus, when Pease's performances were announced and reviewed, the press typically referred to him as "the well-known and popular pianist."<sup>15</sup>

Pease was born on 6 May 1838, the eldest son of Sheldon Pease (1809-1887) and Marianne Humphreys Pease (1812-1883) of Cleveland, Ohio. Although the child showed uncommon sensitivity toward music and art, his talent either went unrecognized or was not encouraged by his parents. At age sixteen (1854), Pease was sent to Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio where, along with a more traditional course of study, he began investigating potential education in art and music.<sup>16</sup> After two years, Pease went to Germany (ca. 1856), where serious musical studies were possible, and he developed quickly considering formal training started no earlier than his late teens. Most sources agree that the pianist remained in

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<sup>14</sup> *The New York Post*, 9 February 1864.

<sup>15</sup> See Frederick Humphreys, M. D., *The Humphreys Family in America* (New York: Humphreys Print, 1883), 199-202. This fascinating source traces the family lineage in England to the middle ages and from the seventeenth century in America. The few pages dedicated to Alfred Humphreys Pease are informative of the composer's biography and output. Regarding Pease as a performer, Humphreys supplies this statement: "As an American performer to an American audience he had no rival. He had mastered with great assiduity the varied difficulties of his chosen instrument, and had learned the secret of reaching the popular heart." Humphreys continues with a quotation from an unnamed source: "His electrical touch, his impetuous and brilliant technique, his broad and sweeping style, which alternated with infinite tenderness and delicacy of expression, together with an indescribable *chic* which pervaded all he did, held his audience spellbound." See also E. Douglas Bomberger, editor, *Brainard's Biographies of American Musicians* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), 215-217. Much of the biographical information and references to compositions found in both Brainard's entry and in Humphreys family records seem to be from the same unmentioned sources.

<sup>16</sup> See *The Catalog of the Theological Seminary of the Diocese of Ohio and Kenyon College, 1855-56* (Gambier: Theological Seminary Press, 1856), 18. The catalog lists "Alfred Humphreys Pease, Cleveland," as a freshman. An enclosed calendar states that the winter session began on 11 September 1856. These dates would suggest that Pease was actually eighteen years old when he attended Kenyon College.

Europe initially for three years, during which time he studied piano with Theodor Kullak (1818-1882), composition with Richard Wüerst (1824-1881), a student of Mendelssohn, and orchestration with F. W. Wieprecht (1802-1872). Pease's first compositions appeared in 1859 (published by S. Brainard of Cleveland), which imply the pianist did return home in 1858 or 1859. A few more pieces were published in 1860-61, suggesting that Pease remained in America until 1861. Pease then went back to Berlin for three more years, where he completed studies with Hans von Bülow (1830-1894). Pease's next compositions were published in 1864, supporting the timeline of instruction under Bülow and the pianist's final return to the United States.

Following his New York debut, Pease quickly established himself as a touring virtuoso, teacher, and composer. Advertising a concert for 11 June 1864 at Bryan Hall, the *Chicago Tribune* printed recent reviews for several performances throughout the Midwest and the East. The *Buffalo Courier*, voicing a certain amount of pride (by this point, the Pease family had relocated to Buffalo, making the pianist a local celebrity of sorts) declared: "We feel safe in prophesying for him a brilliant career." The *Cleveland Herald*, also making a claim, since Pease was born and raised in that city, opined: "We have heard, we think, all the pianists of the day . . . But we adopt the opinion of Eastern critics in thinking that no one has combined more skill and power of execution, with poetic grace and delicacy of touch and expression, than our young friend, Alfred Pease." The *Springfield Register* (Illinois) claimed: "Mr. Pease is one of the first of living pianists, ranking with Gottschalk and Mason in this country, and but little below Liszt and Thalberg in Europe."<sup>17</sup> Much later, following a performances of his own Piano Concerto in

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<sup>17</sup> "The Pease Concert at Bryan Hall," *The Chicago Tribune*, 10 June 1864, 4.

E-Flat Major at the Peabody Institute under Asker Hamerik (1843-1923) in 1876, *The Baltimore Bulletin* printed a glowing review:

He is the best pianist that New York has yet sent to us, not excepting Pattison, Hoffman, or Mills. His technique is as good, and his inspiration much finer . . . The work shows great talent, and we think that Mr. Pease has not yet reached his maturity as a composer. His studies have, we believe, been chiefly in Germany; but he has not modeled himself on any other composer, nor even upon German traditions. We may fairly claim him as a distinctly American writer, and as yet one of the pioneers.<sup>18</sup>

These reviews demonstrate the reputation Pease held throughout his career. He seems to have been a favorite in New York, and everywhere he played. The latter review suggests that Pease not only sustained popularity, but also speaks to the opinion that had the talented musician lived longer, he might have developed into one of America's first truly nationalistic composers. Following the most bizarre set of circumstances that included a mysterious disappearance, a drinking binge, and the pianist wandering about under the alias "John C. Boehn," Pease died on 12 July 1882 in St. Louis, Mo.

One of Pease's earliest published compositions is his *The Star-Spangled Banner*. The arrangement was first published in 1861 by Blodgett & Bradford of Buffalo, New York.<sup>19</sup>

Pease's transcription begins with a 50-measure introduction in two parts: the first nineteen measures are marked *Allegro Maestoso* followed by a 31-measure section, "A la Marcia." Next,

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<sup>18</sup> "Alfred Pease's Piano-Forte Concerto," *The Chicago Tribune*, 27 February 1876, 8. Pease's Piano Concerto in E-Flat Major for Piano and Orchestra is an item of particular curiosity. The mentioned performance (date not given) at the Peabody Institute seems to be the first time his piano concerto was performed. Later that season, the concerto was given twice in Philadelphia with Theodore Thomas conducting and Pease as soloist. The first performance with Thomas took place on 19 July 1876 with a second hearing on 25 July 1876 as part of the Thomas Summer Nights Concert Series. Records suggesting further performances have not surfaced. The two concerts with Thomas have led most writers to suggest that the concerto was composed in 1875; however, an entry in *Watson's Art Journal* suggests a much earlier date: "Mr. Alfred H. Pease has returned to the city, and has brought, as a result of his summer leisure, a new concerto for piano and orchestra, which he proposes to produce this season." (*Watson's Art Journal* 7/25 (12 October 1867): 381. Apparently, the concerto was not performed in public at this time. Regardless of the actual date of composition, the work has not been located and is believed lost.

<sup>19</sup> Pease's arrangement was later included in a series, "The Union Forever" by William Pond & Co in 1876, likely in celebration of the American centennial.

a statement of “The Star Spangled Banner,” followed by a virtuosic variation of the patriotic hymn and a coda, marked “A la polacca,” which also serves as a quasi-variation. With the first section of the introduction, the composer states the opening phrase of the patriotic hymn in C major, with ascending chromatic octaves tapering off to an authentic cadence. The same phrase is then repeated in A minor with the same effect. At m. 9 and again at mm. 14-19, Pease suggests brass fanfares, while a left-hand *ostinato* suggests drum rolls:

**Example 5.17: Pease, *Star Spangled Banner*, introduction, mm. 1-19<sup>20</sup>**

Allegro Maestoso.

INTRODUCTION.

The musical score consists of five systems of staves. The first system is for the piano, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a section labeled "quasi Trombi." The second system continues the piano part. The third system includes parts for Trumpet and Drum, with dynamic markings of *f* and *ff*. The fourth system continues the piano part. The fifth system concludes the introduction with a double bar line and repeat signs.

<sup>20</sup> Alfred Humphreys Pease, *The Star Spangled Banner* (Buffalo, New York: Blodgett & Bradford, 1861). Excerpts used with permission from the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

Following the E<sup>7</sup> harmony at m. 19, Pease presents “A la Marcia” in A minor for the second section of the introduction. The writing, to this point, is not particularly challenging; however, the section demonstrates the composer’s preference for octaves and orchestral sonorities:

**Example 5.18: Pease, *Star Spangled Banner*, “A la Marcia,” mm. 20-9**

The image shows a musical score for the piece "A la Marcia" from the Star Spangled Banner. The score is written for piano and is divided into three systems. The first system begins with the tempo marking "A la Marcia." and the dynamic marking "f con forza:". The music is in A minor and features a driving, rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand, often using octaves. The right hand plays a melody with various ornaments and slurs. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *ff*, and *fz*, as well as performance instructions like accents and slurs. The piece concludes with a first ending bracket and a repeat sign.

After stating “The Star Spangled Banner” in a similar octave-chordal setting (mm. 52-91), which is no more technically demanding than the “A la Marcia,” Pease gives the listener some virtuosic fireworks. With the variation section, he presents the patriotic hymn in two different three-handed textures. For the first half of the theme (mm. 92-107), Pease places the melody in the middle register of the piano, played mainly with the thumb in the left hand, while

the same hand simultaneously provides a chordal harmonic foundation. Above, the right hand incorporates florid filigree figurations. At m. 108, Pease states the remainder of the hymn in the right hand, surrounded by an arpeggio in the same hand, while the left hand provides harmonic support with octaves and chords:

**Example 5.19: Pease, *Star Spangled Banner*, variation one, mm. 92-121**

The musical score for Example 5.19, Pease's variation one of the Star Spangled Banner, spans measures 92 to 121. It is written for piano in G major and 2/4 time, marked 'Vivace'. The score is presented in six systems. The first system includes the tempo marking 'Vivace.', the dynamic 'p', and the instruction 'la melodia marcato.' in the bass clef. The score features intricate right-hand filigree and a left-hand accompaniment of octaves and chords. Performance markings include '8' (octave), 'x' (fingerings), and 'legato, p'.



*The Star Spangled Banner* concludes with a coda, marked: “A la polacca.” Here, Pease recalls the four-note figurations of the filigree passage-work from the preceding variation, while fragments of the patriotic hymn now appear in the lower voice, providing another example of three-handed texture. Pease wraps up with an ascending chromatic scale, followed by a descending C major scale in unison, which gives way to final arpeggios and octaves:

**Example 5.20: Pease, *Star Spangled Banner*, “A la polacca” and coda, mm. 128-152**

The image displays a musical score for a three-handed piano piece. It consists of six systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The first system is marked *diminuendo*. The second system is marked *A la polacca* and *pp*. The third system is marked *ff*. The fourth system is marked *ff*. The fifth system is marked *Molto vivace. f*. The sixth system is marked *sostenuto.* and *ff*. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, octaves (marked with '8'), and dynamic markings. The piece concludes with a descending C major scale in unison.

Pease's arrangement predates Gottschalk's *L'Union* by a year, making it one of the earliest, if not the first virtuosic treatment of this patriotic hymn published by an American-born pianist. Although much of the composition lies well within the abilities of an amateur, the variation section and coda are formidable, and in some ways go beyond the technical demands of Gottschalk's patriotic showpiece. *The Star Spangled Banner* is one of Pease's earliest published works, not only demonstrating talent but also his potential as a pianist and composer. Discussed later in this chapter is one of Pease's most impressive piano arrangements: *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, which may be considered among the most virtuosic examples of piano music written in America during the central decades of the nineteenth century.

### **The Virtuosos Arrange Popular Songs**

Along with patriotic anthems, various popular songs were also sources of compositional creativity for resident pianists in America. From melodrama to opera, to the enormously popular blackface minstrel shows, New York audiences had an unquenchable appetite for theatrical productions. Soon, arrangements from favorite productions inundated the parlors of the middle and upper-classes, while several selections found their way to concert halls.

#### *“Home, Sweet Home”*

Is there a theme upon which the mind of sensibility pauses with more peculiar delight, 'tis “Home Sweet Home!” the cradle of our infancy and our age. Called from the house of our fathers to a far distant scene, it surprises us in the midst of enjoyment; and if sorrow and adversity cross our path, it comes upon us with double force, inspiring consolation and hope.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> John Howard Payne, “Clari, the Maid of Milan,” *The Dramatic Mirror, and Literary Companion*, 26 February 1842, 18.

In 1822, the lyricist John Howard Payne (1791-1852) and composer Henry Bishop (1786-1855) collaborated in production of the English melodrama, *Clari, the Maid of Milan*. The work premiered the following year in London and within six months was also staged at New York's Park Theater. A single number from the production, "Home, Sweet Home" appealed to the nostalgic and sentimental mindset of the era and became one of the most popular songs of the English-speaking world. The following year, "Home, Sweet Home" allegedly sold more than 100,000 copies and by the end of the nineteenth century, had sold millions.<sup>22</sup>

By mid-century, "Home, Sweet Home" was on the lips of celebrated singers and under the fingers of instrumentalists alike. Jenny Lind (1820-1887) included the famous song on her concert programs, while touring virtuosos such as the violinist Ole Bull (1810-1880) and the pianist Thalberg drew on the song's popularity and figuratively pulled upon American heartstrings with their own arrangements.<sup>23</sup> In 1862, Gottschalk composed *Home, Sweet Home, Caprice*, Op. 51, which was published two years later and occupied a prominent place in the pianist's performance repertoire for the remainder of his career. Thalberg's and Gottschalk's settings are known today; however, Mills also crafted an arrangement.

*Recollections of Home Caprice Populaire*, Op. 23 was apparently premiered during a concert on 6 February 1867 at Steinway Hall and published by Wm. Pond & Co. the following year. Mills's caprice includes settings of two traditional Scotch folk songs: "The Shearin's Not for You," or "Kelvingrove," followed by "Charlie is My Darlin'," by Robert Burns (1759-1796), and concludes with the ever-popular "Home, Sweet Home." Being of British/Welsh ancestry and growing up in England, Mills likely heard all three songs since childhood. Thus, the choice

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<sup>22</sup> See Charles Hamm, *Music in the New World* (New York: Norton and Company, 1983), 176.

<sup>23</sup> Other singers, such as Anna Bishop and Christina Nilsson also used the song as an encore.

of source melodies was perhaps a personal reminiscence by Mills (hence the title), and may have carried a measure of sentimentality unknown to audiences in general. Regardless, New York concertgoers and consumers in local music stores likely recognized the Scotch tunes, and of course, “Home, Sweet Home.”

Mills’s arrangement begins with a twelve-measure introduction in which graceful thirty-second note arabesques, constructed of A-major arpeggios and chromatic figurations wander up the keyboard and descend with a unifying diatonic figure derived from “Kelvingrove,” while sparse chords in the left hand establish the total center of A major. Following a succession of descending chromatic thirds in duplets, the left hand concludes at m. 11, suggesting an E<sup>7</sup> harmony and the stage is set for the first Scotch melody:

Example 5.21: S. B. Mills, *Recollections of Home*, Op. 23, introduction, mm. 1-12<sup>24</sup>

*Recollections of Home.*

S. B. MILLS, OP. 23.

**Allegro brillante.**

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a right-hand and left-hand part. The first system (measures 1-4) includes a 'Ped' marking in the left hand. The second system (measures 5-8) includes a 'cresc.' marking. The third system (measures 9-12) includes another 'Ped' marking. The tempo is marked 'Allegro brillante.' and the piece is in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time.

<sup>24</sup> Sebastian Bach Mills, *Recollections of Home Caprice Populaire* (New York: Wm. A. Pond & Co., 1868).

At m. 13, Mills introduces “Kelvingrove.” The traditional Scottish folk tune is 12 measures in length and the pianist’s presentation is simple: melody in the right hand, accompanied by doubled-note figurations and chords in the left:

Example 5.22: S. B. Mills, *Recollections of Home*, Op. 23, “Kelvingrove,” mm. 13-21

The musical score for "Kelvingrove" by S. B. Mills, Op. 23, mm. 13-21, is presented in a three-hand arrangement. The piece is in G major and 3/4 time. The right hand plays a melodic line with a wandering arabesque, while the left hand plays a sixteenth-note accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, and *p dim:*. The score is divided into two systems, with the first system containing measures 13-18 and the second system containing measures 19-21. The first system includes a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.).

Next, Mills includes a variation on “Kelvingrove” by placing the melody mainly in the first two fingers of the left hand, while the other digits in the same hand include the harmonies. In this case, he presents melodic notes in augmentation, perhaps for the sake of variety, and probably for the practicality of fitting the melody against the sixteenth-note runs in the right hand. Above, the wandering arabesque from the introduction (largely based on the first eight notes of “Kelvingrove”) appears in the right hand. Again, the effect of three hands provides interest for listeners, while giving the performer a challenging version of the original:

Example 5.23: S. B. Mills, *Recollections of Home*, Op. 23, “Kelvingrove” variation, mm. 22-27

For the middle section, Mills includes another popular Scottish folk tune: “Charlie is My Darlin’.” In this case, the pianist foregoes an introductory statement and simply presents the eight-measure refrain, one verse, and concludes with a reprisal of the former. Mills begins with a straight-forward statement of the refrain in octaves, accompanied by arpeggios in the left hand. On beat four of m. 46, the verse begins with F sharp in the left hand but quickly moves to the



right hand in m. 47. This section poses a challenge for the performer with regard to voicing, as the melody is now the first note of every sixteenth-note group in the treble:

**Example 5.24:** S. B. Mills, *Recollections of Home*, Op. 23, “Charlie is My Darlin’,” mm. 39-50

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece, Example 5.24, by S. B. Mills. The score is presented in four systems, each consisting of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 6/8. The piece is in the key of D major. The first system (mm. 39-42) features a right-hand melody of sixteenth-note groups, with the first note of each group being the melody. Dynamics include *f* and *Ped*. The second system (mm. 43-46) continues the sixteenth-note pattern, with *Ped* markings and a *f* dynamic. The third system (mm. 47-50) is marked *marcato il Thema* and features a right-hand melody of sixteenth-note groups, with the first note of each group being the melody. Dynamics include *f*. The fourth system (mm. 51-54) continues the sixteenth-note pattern, with *f* dynamics. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingering numbers (1-5) for the right hand. Pedaling instructions are marked with *Ped* and *\*Ped*. The piece concludes with a final chord in the right hand.

Mills concludes with “Home, Sweet Home.” After stating the first 16 measures in a simple texture, Mills spends the remainder of the piece presenting a variety of three-handed techniques. Sometimes the theme appears as the top note of a fully-voiced chord with arpeggio figures cascading down upon it, while at other times the melody is embedded within the arpeggios themselves. Later, the tune sounds in right-hand octaves, while chromatic scales rise from below, giving way to arpeggios in the right hand as the left hand again takes up the melody:

**Example 5.25: S. B. Mills, *Recollections of Home*, Op. 23, “Home, Sweet Home,” mm. 96-114**

The musical score for "Home, Sweet Home" by S. B. Mills, measures 96-114, is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 96-100) shows a simple texture with a melody in the right hand and accompaniment in the left. The second system (measures 101-105) features a more complex texture with arpeggiated chords and a melody in the right hand. The third system (measures 106-114) includes a chromatic scale in the left hand and arpeggiated chords in the right hand. The score includes dynamic markings (*p*, *f*, *ff*), pedaling instructions (*Ped*), and fingering numbers (1-5).

The image displays four systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system shows a treble staff with a whole rest and a bass staff with a complex melodic line, including a sequence of notes with fingerings 1, 5, 8, 2, 1. Pedal markings 'Ped' and asterisks are present. The second system features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a sustained chord, marked with 'p' and 'Ped'. The third system has a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a complex accompaniment, marked with 'f' and 'Ped'. The fourth system shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a complex accompaniment, marked with 'ff' and 'p'. Pedal markings 'Ped' and asterisks are used throughout to indicate pedaling instructions.

A different version of this piece, *Home Sweet Home Transcription*, Op. 60 was published posthumously in 1906 by Wm. Pond & Co. The later publication includes an introduction similar to the interlude that precedes “Home, Sweet Home” in the original, followed by Mills’s

arrangement of the ever-popular song only, omitting the original introduction, “Kelvingrove,” and “Charlie is My Darlin’.” Who prepared this later edition is unknown; perhaps the composer’s wife, who was also a pianist. In any case, the fact that a posthumous version was published is a testament to the attractiveness of Mills’s arrangement and the continued popularity of “Home, Sweet Home,” which endured well into the twentieth century.

### **Blackface Minstrelsy Makes its Contribution**

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, the minstrel show was perhaps the most popular form of theatrical entertainment in the United States. It may be difficult by twenty-first century standards to fully understand and appreciate minstrelsy’s appeal, given its racialized nature, or to grasp the significant place it held on the American musical scene. An article from the *New York Tribune* effectively addresses the notion:

We think it is now safe to announce that the Ethiopian Opera is an established institution in this country. The long-continued, unequivocal success of the artists engaged in the representation of this species of national amusement seems to have settled the question. If money be the test of merit and position, and if the delight of an audience be a fair evidence of the skill of an artist, then the Ethiopians are entitled to a rank in both respects. Nightly are these entertainments crowded with audiences which shout and scream with delight, while hundreds upon hundreds of disappointed wretches who arrive a few minutes too late are turned away from the doors and go disconsolately home without their souls being delighted with the concord of sweet sounds.<sup>25</sup>

#### *“Dixie’s Land”*

In 1859, the well-known minstrel Dan Decatur Emmett wrote “I Wish I Was in Dixie’s Land,” or more commonly, “Dixie’s Land.” Although there is speculation and contradiction concerning

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<sup>25</sup> “The Ethiopian Opera,” *Tribune*, 21 October 1848, 2.

authorship and the actual timeframe of composition, by 1860 the Bryant's Minstrels included the song as their closer and its popularity spread like wildfire. On 21 June 1860 Firth, Pond & Co. published the first authorized version of *Dixie* and it quickly became a favorite in the North as well as the South. President Abraham Lincoln included the song among his favorites, claiming it was "one of the best tunes I have ever heard," while its appeal in the South led to *Dixie* becoming an unofficial anthem of the Confederacy.<sup>26</sup>

Within months, the minstrel song found its way into concert rooms as virtuoso pianists also responded to its popularity. Gottschalk apparently crafted a version, *Variations on Dixie's Land*, which he likely programmed with frequency until the outbreak of the Civil War; however, this arrangement was not published and is presumed lost.<sup>27</sup> One such work, however, composed by Gottschalk's friend and colleague Richard Hoffman, did make it to press.

In 1861, Firth, Pond & Co published Hoffman's *Dixiana Caprice on the Popular Negro Minstrel's Melody* "Dixie's Land," Op. 23. This flashy showpiece is noteworthy for its success in capturing the flavor of minstrelsy, while elevating the tune into an arrangement worthy of the concert hall. The early date of publication attests to the immediate appeal of *Dixie* and suggests that Hoffman responded to the song's popularity in the context of the minstrel show, rather than its association with the Confederacy. Although Hoffman was an active performer, there appears to be no surviving documentation of the composer actually playing his arrangement in public. There is, however, an account of his brother performing the work for a concert series in New England.

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<sup>26</sup> Richard Crawford, *An Introduction to America's Music* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001), 166.

<sup>27</sup> See Robert Offergeld, "The Centennial Catalogue of the Published and Unpublished Compositions of Louis Moreau Gottschalk," prepared for *Stereo Review* (New York, 1970), 32. See also James E. Perone, *Louis Moreau Gottschalk: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press), 181.

On 16 January 1862 Edward Hoffman (1836-?) gave a soirée at Wolcott's Piano Rooms in Springfield, Massachusetts.<sup>28</sup> His program included operatic fantasies by several celebrated virtuosos such as Alfred Jaëll (1832-1882), Satter, and Thalberg, while the pianist also played works by Gottschalk and several of his brother's compositions. Reviews for the performance appeared in two periodicals: *Musical Review and Musical World* and in *Dwight's Journal of Music*. Both sources gave little commentary concerning the more well-known repertoire programmed; however, both critics were particularly interested in *Dixiana*. *Musical Review* stated: "Mr. Richard Hoffman's 'Dixiana' was the most odd piece of the evening, and people were strongly tempted to demand an encore."<sup>29</sup> Although the reviewer found the piece "odd," the comment suggests the arrangement was attractive to listeners. *Dwight's* account is more amusing: "But there was considerable to laugh at in 'Dixiana.' The antiquated melody of 'Dixie,' in this caprice of Richard Hoffman's, is made to rave with perfect looseness. Think of making a fugue of 'Dixie!' 'Glory, hallelujah!' will come next."<sup>30</sup> The somewhat sarcastic tone is no surprise, considering Dwight's convictions toward higher forms of Germanic art music and his general disdain for superficial showpieces; however, one of the piece's singular highlights did catch the critic's attention.<sup>31</sup>

*Dixiana* begins with the first phrase from the chorus of Emmett's "Dixie's Land" as a subject in the alto voice. Two measures later an answer appears in the soprano. At m. 6 the left

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<sup>28</sup> Edward Hoffman followed his brother, Richard to New York in 1854. He became a local pianist and teacher and composed several solon pieces. He is perhaps most known as accompanist and eventually the husband of the American soprano Charlotte Varian (1829-1884) with whom he toured the United States.

<sup>29</sup> *Musical Review and Musical World* 8/2 (16 January 1862): 18. The review mentions that Hoffman gave the same program previously in Boston.

<sup>30</sup> *Dwight's Journal of Music* 20/16 (18 January 1862): 334.

<sup>31</sup> John Sullivan Dwight (1813-1893) was a Boston-based musical journalist, whose periodical *Dwight's Journal of Music* was widely-read and influential in America throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.

hand enters, and by m. 7, states the theme in octaves. The overall effect is an attention-grabbing, quasi-fugal setting, which *Dwight's Journal* found humorous:

Example 5.26: Hoffman, *Dixiana*, Op. 23, fugal setting of chorus, mm. 1-16<sup>32</sup>

**DIXIANA.**  
**Richard Hoffman.**  
Allegro moderato.

**PIANO**  
*f marcato*

*f* *p*

*f* *Ped*

5181  
Entered acc. to Act of Congress AD. 1861 by Firth, Pond & Co. in the Clerk's Office of the Dist. Court of N.Y.

<sup>32</sup> Richard Hoffman, *Dixiana Caprice on the Popular Negro Minstrel's Melody "Dixie's Land"* (New York: Firth, Pond & Co., 1861).

Next, having modulated to A major, Hoffman states the entire chorus in right-hand octaves, coupled with a leaping accompaniment in the left hand. The ascending left-hand octaves in chromatics (mm. 21-24) provide momentary dramatic tension before the piece settles back into the home key of F major to conclude the section:

**Example 5.27: Hoffman, *Dixiana*, Op. 23, chorus, mm. 17-40**

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a treble and bass clef. The first system (mm. 17-20) is marked *giocoso*. The second system (mm. 21-24) features ascending chromatic octaves in the left hand, with *Ped* markings and asterisks. The third system (mm. 25-30) continues the chromatic ascent, with *Ped* markings and asterisks. The fourth system (mm. 31-36) concludes the section in F major, with *Ped* markings and asterisks. The score includes various performance instructions such as *Ped*, *dim:*, and *p*. The page number 5181 is visible at the bottom left.



The following two sections (mm. 41-82 and mm. 83-102) seem to be a deliberate attempt at capturing the dynamic of the minstrel show itself. The first section is an extended interlude comprised of a repeated-note triplet motive in the right hand, coupled with a sparse, and at times, syncopated left-hand accompaniment. With this section, Hoffman may be suggesting a solo-break of an improvisatory nature:

**Example 5.28: Hoffman, *Dixiana*, Op. 23, interlude, mm. 41-54**

The next section portrays another facet of the minstrel show dynamic. Hoffman now brings the theme back in the right hand, marked “cantando” to suggest singing, but this time, includes a singular accompaniment. Here, the left hand begins with a sextuplet arpeggio on beat

one, imitating banjo finger-picking, followed by an accented chord on the second half of beat two, designed to suggest a syncopated strum of the instrument:

**Example 5.29: Hoffman, *Dixiana*, Op. 23, chorus with banjo-like accompaniment, mm. 83-94**

The image displays three systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The first system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and the instruction *marcato* in the bass staff. The notation features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the bass staff, often beamed together, and chords in the treble staff. The second and third systems continue this pattern, with the treble staff showing melodic lines and the bass staff providing harmonic support. The word *cantando* is written above the first system. The overall style is characteristic of early 20th-century jazz-influenced piano music.

At m. 102, Hoffman brings the chorus back in octaves with a leaping accompaniment, this time, sounding full chords in the left hand. The striking climax occurs at m. 115 with a direct modulation to D-flat major, while m. 122 provides another special moment as Hoffman leaves the momentary tonic by creating a D-flat seventh chord, which functions as an augmented sixth harmony, bringing the piece back to F major:

Example 5.30: Hoffman, *Dixiana*, Op. 23, climax in D-flat major, mm. 109-25

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first system (measures 109-114) shows a right-hand melody with eighth-note patterns and a left-hand accompaniment of chords. The second system (measures 115-120) continues the melody with more complex rhythmic patterns. The third system (measures 121-125) shows a change in dynamics to piano (p) and includes a section marked '5181' at the beginning. Pedal markings ('Ped') and asterisks (\*) are present throughout the score.

*Dixiana* concludes with a final statement of the main theme similar to the above example in D-flat major, but now in the home key of F major. As the rambunctious and merrily-playful minstrel tune comes to a close, Hoffman draws out the final statement with a *rallentando* and impedes the perpetual forward motion with an effective beat and one-half of silence, followed by a lickety-split codetta and the piece comes to a dashing conclusion:

Example 5.31: Hoffman, *Dixiana*, Op. 23, finale and codetta, mm. 138-49

The image shows a musical score for the finale and codetta of 'Dixiana' by Hoffman, Op. 23, mm. 138-49. The score is in two systems. The first system (mm. 138-149) features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat. It includes first and second endings, a 'rall:' marking, and 'Ped' (pedal) markings with asterisks. The second system (mm. 150-159) begins with 'f Allegro.' and continues with 'f' dynamics and 'Ped' markings. The score is presented in a clear, black-and-white format with standard musical notation.

Hoffman’s arrangement is both fun and effective. Although *Dixiana* does not demonstrate the heights of virtuosic display, it is nonetheless clever, and evokes the flavor of the minstrel show, while memorializing the ever-popular, “Dixie’s Land.”

“Old Folks at Home”

By mid-century, the sustained popularity of the minstrel show also resulted in the union of America’s most successful troupe and the genre’s most recognized songwriter. In 1850, collaboration between Christy’s Minstrels and Stephen Foster granted the troupe exclusive rights to perform the composer’s new songs. While Foster’s skill to produce attractive songs led to

great profit for Christy's, the composer's reputation also benefited from an association with the country's most popular minstrels.

Foster wrote over 200 songs, with several achieving quick and enduring success. Foster's earliest minstrel hits include "Oh! Susanna" (1847-48) and "Gwine to Run All Night" ("Camptown Races") (1850). "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair" (1854) and "Gentle Annie" (1856) were also popular, but draw from the parlor song tradition, while "Beautiful Dreamer" (1862, published 1864) demonstrates the influence of Italian opera.<sup>33</sup> Two minstrel songs in particular, "Old Folks at Home" (1851) and "My Old Kentucky Home, Good Night" (1853), not only achieved particular fame with Christy's; they also became two of the most popular songs in the United States throughout the nineteenth century, inspiring arrangements by resident pianists.

Some of Foster's songs quickly transcended their roots, becoming concert hall favorites, as touring artists wasted no time including their own arrangements on programs. The celebrated Viennese-born French virtuoso, Henri Herz (1803-188) toured America between 1845 and 1851 and seems to have been the first pianist to arrange Foster's songs for concert use. His *Impromptu burlesque sur des melodies populaires des Christy's Ménéstrels* Op. 162 (published, 1849) is a set of variations on "Oh! Susanna" and E. P. Christy's "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia."<sup>34</sup> By 1852, the Irish-born composer, pianist, and violinist William Vincent Wallace (1812-1865) was also programming his set of Grand Variations on "Oh! Susanna," while the "Swedish Nightingale," Jenny Lind quickly made "Old Folks at Home" a favorite during her American tours. Gottschalk was also influenced by the popularity of Foster's songs. Among his efforts is

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<sup>33</sup> See Hamm, *Music in the New World*, 235-240.

<sup>34</sup> See R. Allen Lott, "The American Concert Tours of Leopold De Meyer, Heni Herz, and Sigismond Thalberg" (Ph. D. diss., City University of New York, 1986), 183-86.

the popular *Le Banjo*, Op. 15, which quotes “Camptown Races” in the introduction, while *Columbia, Caprice Américain*, Op. 34 (1859) is based on “My Old Kentucky Home.”

“Old Folks at Home” was a particular favorite with resident pianists. Responding to its initial popularity, Gottschalk seems to have incorporated the song into at least two arrangements. *Bunker’s Hill (American Reminiscences, National Glory)*, *Fantaisie Triomphale* (1853) apparently included statements of “Oh! Susanna” and “Old Folks at Home.” In 1853-54, the virtuoso also included a set of variations on “Old Folks at Home” in concert programs. Unfortunately, both pieces were not published and presumed lost.<sup>35</sup>

For decades the popularity of “Old Folks at Home” continued to extend beyond the minstrel show, becoming a fixture in the concert programs of notable vocalists. As Lind had done twenty years earlier, the next celebrated Swedish diva, Christina Nilsson (1843-1921), also featured the song as a favorite encore during her America tours. With operatic singers presenting the song, it likely took on a certain refinement and elegance appropriate for the concert hall, which would not have been a quality of its initial conception. Under these circumstances, pianists responded again with concert-worthy transcriptions.

A review that appeared in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* on 24 November 1874 confirms that Pease was programming an arrangement of “Old Folks at Home.” On 23 November the pianist performed at Chicago’s McCormick Hall as a member of a touring troupe with the operatic singer Adelaide Phillipps (1833-1882). The pianist’s selections for the evening included Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6* and a work of his own: *Souvenir de Nilsson*. According to the Chicago press, Pease’s composition was an arrangement of “Home, Sweet Home” and “Old

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<sup>35</sup> See Offergeld, 16 and 32. See also Perone, 104-5 and 134.

Folks at Home.” The review gives little indication of how the composer treated the two songs; however, the fact that Pease was programming the arrangement attests to the continued popularity of the originals. His choice to unite both songs under a title referencing Nilsson speaks to the singer’s fame, while suggesting that the continued popularity of both songs was in some way connected to her renditions. Unfortunately, *Souvenir de Nilsson* was apparently never published, and thus, like Gottschalk’s treatments of this song, is probably lost.

One arrangement of “Old Folks at Home” appeared several years later with the publication of *Old Folks at Home Concert-Transcription*, Op. 26 by S. B. Mills. The piece first appeared in 1887 with a copyright by J. H. Schroeder of New York.<sup>36</sup> The initial publication, however, gives no indication concerning the actual time of composition. In the case of Mills, publication dates are not always conclusive, as seen earlier with his *Hail Columbia!* The year 1887 seems a late response on the part of Mills concerning the popularity of the original; however, reviews of the pianist’s concerts give no indication that he was programming the work earlier. Since this arrangement appeared almost thirty-five years after Foster’s song hit minstrel stages, it would seem that Mills was responding to the continued popularity “Old Folks at Home,” sustained by singers presenting the song in concert form.

*Old Folks at Home Concert-Transcription* begins with a 12-measure introduction taken from the first phrase of the song, followed by graceful arpeggios. Mills states the idea first in the home key of A-flat major (mm. 1-4), then again in the parallel key of A-flat minor (mm. 5-7). The addition of an augmented 2<sup>nd</sup> (B natural) gives the first arpeggio a distinct flavor (m. 3):

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<sup>36</sup> See “New Music,” *The American Bookseller* 24/51 (September 1888): 132. The journal suggests the piece was published by Wm. A. Pond & Co. The title page, however, indicates “Copyright 1887 by J. H. Schroeder,” while a further indication appears in the footer next to the copyright engraving: “J. H. S. By permission of O. Ditson & Co.” With references to three separate publishers it becomes difficult to know when the piece was first published.

Example 5.32: Mills, *Old Folks at Home Concert-Transcription*, Op. 36, introduction, mm. 1-7<sup>37</sup>

*Allegro moderato.*

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 1-4) shows the piano accompaniment in the bass clef and the melody in the tenor clef. The tempo is marked 'Allegro moderato.' and the dynamics are 'p' (piano). The second system (mm. 5-8) features a forte 'f' dynamic and includes a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking. The third system (mm. 9-12) returns to a piano 'p' dynamic. The score includes various fingering numbers (1-5) and articulation marks (accents, slurs) throughout.

At m. 13, Mills provides a simple arpeggio figure and the melody enters at m. 15 in the tenor range. The close proximity of the theme and accompaniment poses a small challenge as the hands are frequently crossing:

<sup>37</sup> Sebastian Bach Mills, *Old Folks at Home Concert-Transcription*, Op. 36 (New York: J. H. Schroeder, 1887).



Example 5.33: S. B. Mills, *Old Folks at Home Concert-Transcription*, Op. 36, mm. 15-21

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano transcription. The first system consists of two staves: a bass staff on top and a bass staff on the bottom. The top staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It contains a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes (3), followed by quarter notes (2, 1, 3, 2), and then a half note (1) and a dotted quarter note (5). The bottom staff of the first system is marked *dolce.* and contains arpeggiated chords with fingerings (5, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1, 4, 5) and dynamic markings *Rit.* and asterisks (\*). The second system also has two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes (5, 4, 3), followed by quarter notes (4, 2, 1, 2), and then a half note (3) and a dotted quarter note (2). The bottom staff of the second system is marked *p* and *rall.*, with fingerings (5, 4, 3, 4, 2, 1, 2) and dynamic markings *Rit.* and asterisks (\*). The final measure of the second system is marked *f*.

Example 5.34 demonstrates how Mills then places the B section of the tune in the right-hand thumb as the same hand fleshes out the harmonies, while the left hand supports with arpeggio figurations. To this point, however, demands placed on the performer are few. With this section, Mills seems more interested in depicting the vocal qualities of the original, rather than any form of virtuosic display:

Example 5.34: S. B. Mills, *Old Folks at Home Concert-Transcription*, Op. 36, mm. 22-27

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system, measures 22-27, features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a more rhythmic accompaniment. The second system, measures 38-40, shows a shift in the melodic focus, with the right hand playing chords and the left hand playing a more active line. Both systems include detailed fingering and performance instructions.

For the next statement, Mills adds some technical interest. At m. 39, the melody sounds initially in the upper voice with a chromatic figuration simultaneously underneath in the same hand, while the left hand provides octaves and single harmonic notes. On the fourth beat of m. 40, however, the melody shifts to the left hand, as decorative arpeggio figures and scale-like patterns now occupy the right hand:

Example 5.35: S. B. Mills, *Old Folks at Home Concert-Transcription*, Op. 36, mm. 38-43

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano transcription. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first system (mm. 38-43) features a melody in the treble clef with various fingerings (e.g., 1 2 3 5 1 2 3, 5 1 2 4) and a bass line with arpeggiated chords. The second system (mm. 44-49) continues the melody with more complex fingerings and includes a dynamic marking of *f* (forte). The third system (mm. 50-55) shows the melody with a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking and a bass line with a *p* (piano) marking. The score includes numerous fingerings, slurs, and dynamic markings throughout.

With the remainder of *Old Folks at Home*, Mills introduces more elaborate textures, with the melody bouncing between the hands. The supporting harmonies are eventually fleshed out with thicker chords, while non-chordal notes are also added to the embellishing arpeggios, as seen in following excerpt for the final variation:

Example 5.36: S. B. Mills, *Old Folks at Home Concert-Transcription*, Op. 36, mm. 59-66

The image displays a piano transcription of the song 'Old Folks at Home' by Stephen B. Mills. It consists of four systems of music, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The first system (measures 59-62) features a complex, flowing melody in the right hand with numerous slurs and fingerings (e.g., 1 2, 1 2 5, 3 1 2, 5, 2 1 3 1 2, 3 4 1 6). The left hand provides a steady accompaniment. The second system (measures 63-66) includes a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and features triplets in both hands. The third system (measures 67-70) is marked *ff* (fortissimo) and contains dense chordal textures and slurs. The fourth system (measures 71-74) is marked *f* (forte) and continues the intricate melodic and harmonic patterns. The score is annotated with various musical symbols, including slurs, fingerings, and dynamic markings, and includes editorial markings such as '8.' with dotted lines and asterisks.

*Old Folks at Home Concert-Transcription* is a graceful example, memorializing one of the era's most popular songs. Mills again exhibits his skills as a pianist and arranger, while effectively demonstrating a decided understanding for keyboard logistics and techniques. Fortunately, Mills's arrangement survives as material evidence of how pianists in America

applied their talent as transcribers to American popular music. It is unfortunate, however, that versions by other contemporaries such as Gottschalk and Pease were heard and known, but somehow, were never brought to press.

### **Operatic Inspiration**

Large-scale spectacle made opera particularly appealing to New York concertgoers. Beginning with the earliest local productions in Italian by troupes such as the Manuel Garcia group, which came in 1825, to French companies from New Orleans that first arrived in 1827, to the wide variety of ‘englished’ operas, New Yorkers quickly developed a love for the genre.<sup>38</sup> As seasons grew to include more and more productions and the seemingly endless succession of superstar singers (both European and native-born) graced American’s stages, opera became one of the most popular entertainments with New York audiences. Not surprisingly, resident pianists responded to this popularity much the same way European virtuosos did decades earlier.

Operatic fantasies were one of the most commonly programmed piano pieces in the United States throughout the nineteenth century. Early on, works by Thalberg, de Meyer, Herz, and others occupied a prominent place; however, by the 1870s, if virtuosos chose to program a fantasy, they almost exclusively played several of Liszt’s showpieces. Moreover, toward the end of the nineteenth century, pianists in America seldom programmed their own operatic fantasies, but this was not the case throughout the central decades. Between 1848 and 1865 many resident pianists such as Gottschalk, Strakosch, and Satter, to name a few, not only performed these works, they frequently programmed their own. Two such arrangements, based on Charles

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<sup>38</sup> New York audiences first heard much of the operatic repertoire in English translation, thus, the term “englished” describes how many European operas were first performed in the United States.

Gounod's *Faust* by Mills and Pease, are outstanding, providing good examples of resident pianist's abilities to craft virtuoso display pieces, while demonstrating how popular the opera was on the local musical scene.

### *Faust Fixation*

Between 1863 and 1865 there was no greater operatic sensation in New York City than Gounod's *Faust* (1859). The work was staged in both Italian and German, and quickly became a local favorite. From numerous performances of the opera itself, to the inclusion of vocal excerpts, the "Soldier's Chorus" in various concert settings, and the opera's famous waltz from Act Two, many quarters of the local musical scene responded to the popularity of *Faust*. New York's pianists were also inspired and quickly produced their own arrangements. Soon, amateur settings such as Gottschalk's *Valse de Faust* (1863, published under the pseudonym: "Oscar Litti") and Hoffman's *Morceau de Salon sur l'Opera Faust*, Op. 25 (1865) were available, while virtuoso showpieces such as *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust de Gounod*, Op. 17 by Mills and *Faust Paraphrase de Concert* by Pease became popular favorites in the concert hall and eventually also achieved publication. Arrangements by other prominent New York pianist/composers such as Charles Fradel (1821-1886), Robert Goldbeck (1839-1908), and Charles Kunkel (1840-1923), to name a few, flooded retail music stores with examples tailored to virtually every pianistic ability. The array of *Faust* pieces available to consumers demonstrates an extensive marketing campaign by local music publishers to capitalize on the opera's popularity, while underscoring the notion that "Faustomania" had taken New York.

As the conclusion of the 1863 fall season approached, New York concertgoers anxiously anticipated the first American production of *Faust*. The premiere took place at the Academy of

Music on 25 November 1863 with the Italian Opera Company, under Max Maretzek's direction.

The local press ran tantalizing advertisements, recapping the opera's European success:

No opera ever, in the short space of four years, obtained the celebrity now attached to the 'Faust' of Maestro Gounod. . . . In Paris, 'Faust' has been performed already over seven hundred times. Milan witnessed it simultaneously with London, and in each Capital the public evinced the most remarkable appreciation of the merits of the work, whether musical, dramatic, or artistic. Throughout the whole of Germany the opera has occasioned a profound sensation, and is regarded by managers as a never-failing attraction.<sup>39</sup>

The *Times* also ran a similar announcement, bringing attention to Maretzek's efforts towards production:

To-night Gounod's 'Faust' will be produced for the first time in New-York. It is a grand romantic opera, involving in its interpretation all the resources of the Academy. Mr. Maretzek has spared no expense, and has been prodigal of labor in the bringing out of this very important work. Gounod is a French composer, who, in 'Faust' at least, has won a success which Europe has not been slow to indorse [*sic*]. Since the days of Meyerbeer's 'Robert le Diable' there has been no opera that combines inspiration and learning in so remarkable a manner. 'Faust' has created a popular and artistic sensation in all the cities where it has been played. If it fails to do so here it will not be the fault of Mr. Maretzek, who has been liberal in all that can contribute to the success of the *mise en scene* and music. There is, however, no ground for apprehension. The composition is beautiful, and of the age.<sup>40</sup>

If concertgoers were undecided before reading such accounts, the sheer number of performances given in Europe coupled with the notion that Maretzek put forth every resource and "spared no expense," encouraged an enthusiastic response. Following the opening night, the *New York Herald* confirmed this notion: "We have rarely seen a more brilliant house . . . Not only were the *beau monde* in full force, but the *demi-monde* in full feather."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *New York Times*, 25 November 1863, 4. See also *New York Herald*, 23 November 1863.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *New York Herald*, 26 November 1863, 4.

In spite of sensational publicity and the popular turnout, *Faust* met with cold reviews. The *Herald* opined: “You are carried through five acts of the piece without being even moved to enthusiasm either by singers or the music. In other words, it is wanting in those strong contrasts—those effects of light and shade—which render the works of Verdi so enduringly popular.”<sup>42</sup> The review in the *Times* was harsh:

The simplest way of courting failure on any subject is to be overanxious concerning it. One-half of the breakdowns of life arise from too much effort. It is the pale-faced student, with the overwrought mind and a large consciousness of responsibilities, who is in danger of being plucked, not the phlegmatic drudge who cares for nothing in particular, and would just as soon march out without a degree as with one. These remarks are suggested by the poor performance on Wednesday last. The artists of Mr. MARETZEK’S company are singularly conscientious; they had labored hard at rehearsal, and studied the music with intelligence and devotion. They knew that a great deal was expected of them, and, with a single exception, they all failed.<sup>43</sup>

The *Musical Review and World* also faulted the singers: “Faust was but coldly received on the night of its first performance, owing to the deficiency on the part of most of the singers.”<sup>44</sup> The local German press responded with a miscalculated prediction: “The opera will not be a favorite here and will not have many performances.”<sup>45</sup> With so many negative reviews following the opening night, it is a wonder that *Faust* endured, becoming the most popular opera in New York City for the next two seasons.

Reviews following the second performance (27 November) were positive, suggesting the premiere performance was simply a rough start. The writer for the *Times* was very complimentary:

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> *Times*, 30 November 1863, 4.

<sup>44</sup> *Musical Review and Musical World*, (5 December 1863): 293.

<sup>45</sup> *New-Yorker Staats-Zeitung und Herold*, 27 November 1863, 8. Translation: “Music in Gotham the New York Scene 1862-75” database. [www.musicingotham.org](http://www.musicingotham.org), consulted 20 August 2016.



The performance of 'Faust,' last night, was so near perfection that criticism can barely refer to it, except in terms of unlimited praise. All the hesitation of the first night had disappeared, and the artists did ample justice to themselves. The house was crowded, and the audience indulged in many *encores*, limiting them, it seemed, not by their desires, but by the painful necessity of allowing the performance to come to an end.<sup>46</sup>

Most reviews agree with the *Times*; however, the German press held strong: "It was the most significant performance at the Opera House, yet it was not considered successful."<sup>47</sup>

On 18 December 1863 New York audiences heard *Faust* for the first time in German. The production was considered the first complete performance of the opera. Apparently, Maretzek made adjustments to the orchestration and cut entire sections from the original.<sup>48</sup> The future of the local German Opera Company also seemed contingent upon the success of this production. The previous year, Anschütz spearheaded an effort to bring German opera to New York; however, by 1863 the enterprise was approaching failure due to poor management and indifference among local concertgoers.<sup>49</sup> The *New-Yorker Staats-Zeitung* voiced their support: "Tonight, Mr. Anschütz plays his best card, and may it lead him to win the game."<sup>50</sup>

The German premiere was a success on all accounts. Members of the local press declared: "The German company performed most acceptably Gounod's 'Faust,' to the largest audience of the season."<sup>51</sup> The *Times* expressed similar approval, while confirming that audience turnout was most impressive:

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<sup>46</sup> *Times*, 28 November 1863, 6.

<sup>47</sup> *New-Yorker Staats-Zeitung und Herold*, 29 November 1863, 8. [www.musicinthegoat.org](http://www.musicinthegoat.org)

<sup>48</sup> See *Times*, 18 December 1863, 4: "It may be added, too, as a matter of interest, that the whole of the music will be given. The Italian version is defective, and some cuts were even made in that by Mr. Maretzek."

<sup>49</sup> See *New-Yorker Staats-Zeitung*, 18 December 1863, 8. [www.musicinthegoat.org](http://www.musicinthegoat.org)

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *New York Post*, 19 December 1863, 2.

The production of ‘Faust’ last evening by Mr. Anschütz’s company, was, in every way, a success... Indeed, the performance, in all leading aspects, was so good that we cannot help expressing the regret that the opera was not produced at an earlier period of the season. The house was magnificent – probably the largest that has ever assembled in the Academy. A few such would have insured the success of Mr. Anschütz’s season.<sup>52</sup>

Apparently the success of *Faust* was enough to give the German Opera Company a boost in popularity. Anschütz concluded the fall and began the winter season (1864) with further productions of the opera. According to the *New-Yorker Staats-Zeitung*, “The performance of *Faust*, which in some parts exceeded the Italian version, was a turning point in the season, and from then on the evenings became increasingly successful.”<sup>53</sup> By January, Anschütz responded to the success of *Faust* and began rehearsing for the production of three more operas: Wagner’s *Tannhäuser*, Spohr’s *Jessonda*, and Weber’s *Euryanthe*.

The popularity of *Faust* endured for the remainder of the 1864 and 1865. On 25 September 1865 Maretzek opened the fall season with *Faust*. At this late date, the local press declared: “Gounod’s ‘Faust’—a work which we have always had well performed in this country, and which in consequence has become a general favorite with the public.”<sup>54</sup> Announcing another performance by Maretzek and the Italian Company on 29 November, the *Courrier des États-Unis* also commented on the longevity of *Faust* with New York audiences:

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<sup>52</sup> *Times*, 19 December 1863, 6.

<sup>53</sup> *New-Yorker Staats-Zeitung*, 17 January 1864, 4. [www.musicinthegoat.org](http://www.musicinthegoat.org).

<sup>54</sup> *Times*, 26 September 1865, 5.

As he had announced to us, *Faust* inaugurates the season. It seems that the success of Gounod's opera should be deflated; it is nothing like that. We could dispute sometimes whether *Faust* is a masterpiece, but we have always recognized its popularity, and we are persuaded that the immense majority of spectators will be charmed to hear again these melodies that have charmed the public so many times.<sup>55</sup>

For two years Gounod's blockbuster dominated New York opera houses, with performance totals suggesting that *Faust* was among the most popular operas in America throughout the central decades of the nineteenth century. During the 1863-64 seasons *Faust* was staged in New York twenty-seven times—twenty-two in Italian and five in German—while the following season, it was heard fourteen more times; eleven in Italian and three in German. For its inaugural year, *Faust* was the most frequently staged opera in either language. The landmark twenty-seven performances in Italian between 1863 and 1864 can only be rivaled by Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, which had an impressive run of twenty-one performances between 1856 and 1857. During the 1864 and 1865 seasons, Donizetti's French grand opera, *Don Sébastien* (performed in Italian) received thirteen performances, only two more than the Italian production of *Faust*.<sup>56</sup>

Coinciding with local publicity, Mills seems to be the first New York pianist who responded to the Faust-hype with a virtuosic setting for piano. On 7 November 1863 Mills performed with the New York Philharmonic Society, giving the American premiere of Ferdinand Hiller's Piano Concerto in F-Sharp Minor, Op. 69, which concluded the first half of the program. After intermission, the orchestra played Beethoven's *Coriolan Overture*, Op. 62, and Mills followed with the first local performance Liszt's *Valse de l'opera Faust de Gounod*, S. 407 (publ. 1861). Critics, however, were apparently more interested in the premiere of Hiller's piano

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<sup>55</sup> *Courrier des États-Unis*, 25 November 1865, 2. [www.musicingotham.org](http://www.musicingotham.org).

<sup>56</sup> See Andrew C. Minor, "Piano Concerts in New York City 1849-1865." (Master's thesis, University of Michigan, 1947), 425- 26 and 458-59.

concerto than in Mills's performance of the waltz.<sup>57</sup> In general terms, the press simply stated: "Mr. S. B. Mills gave again proof of his superior ability as a pianist."<sup>58</sup>

Circumstances surrounding the performance are suggestive and may indicate why Mills initially chose to include Liszt's arrangement on his programs. To begin, *Faust* was first produced in Paris on 19 March 1859, which means Mills was likely not too familiar with the opera itself, as he arrived in New York a month earlier. Liszt's fantasy was composed in 1861 and since Mills apparently gave the New York premiere, he probably had not seen a prior performance of this version either. Mills may have heard the *Faust* waltz at Gottschalk's concert at Irving Hall on 19 October 1863. The famous American pianist, however, did not perform an arrangement of the piece. Rather, a young singer named Lucy Simons made her debut that evening, singing the famous waltz and giving the excerpt its first American performance.<sup>59</sup> Mills may have also heard the waltz if he attended Theodore Thomas' Popular Music Concert on 24 October 1863. The program included an arrangement of the *Faust* waltz, for which the orchestra was encored. These events may have inspired Mills to learn Liszt's arrangement; however, both concerts occurred within three weeks of Mills's first performance, giving the pianist little time to prepare the difficult concert piece for public display. Therefore, it is more likely that Mills responded directly to current publicity for the upcoming operatic debut.

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<sup>57</sup> Mills programmed the work again on 28 November 1863 for the Arion Society's Vocal and Instrumental Concert. Under the direction of Carl Bergmann and a fifty-piece Orchestra, the Society also sang the "Soldier's Chorus." The *Times* simply mentioned: "On the same night, too, Mr. S. B. Mills played at the same entertainment Liszt's famous arrangement of the waltz in the second act." (*Times*, 30 November 1863, 4).

<sup>58</sup> *Musical Review and Musical World*, 21 November 1863, 280.

<sup>59</sup> See *Times*, 20 October 1863, 8.

*S. B. Mills and his Faust*

Following *Faust's* notable successes, pianists quickly began programming their own fantasies on the opera. On 30 April 1864 Mills was set to unveil his *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust de Gounod*, Op. 17 at a benefit concert featuring the tenor, Francesco Mazzoleni.<sup>60</sup>

Unfortunately, the star soprano for the event, Madame Brignoli-Ortolani, was ill and the concert was cancelled. A week later, on 7 May 1864 at Irving Hall, Mills finally performed his arrangement for the first time in public. As a testimonial concert for Mr. George Leach, the program was of a popular nature, showcasing several singers, with Mills being one of only two pianists. The concert was poorly attended, receiving scant reviews, and the press reported nothing of Mills's performance.

Moving forward, Mills dropped Liszt's arrangement from his performance repertoire in favor of his own piece, and for the remainder of 1864 and throughout the next season, actively programmed his *Fantaisie Dramatique*. Following a concert on 30 October 1865, the local press finally gave a review that went beyond the cursory mention of Mills performing his showpiece:

Mr. S. B. Mills played with more than his usual fluency, accuracy and force. The performance of his brilliant and very clever transcription from Faust was admirable in every respect. He gave out his themes, which, by the bye, are most felicitously selected, with breadth, tenderness and force, and dashed through the variations, or entourage of his subjects with a brio that we have rarely heard excelled. It was a splendid performance, and both artist and composition fully deserved the admiring applause which they received. Mr. Mills is probably not aware of the strides he has made in important artistic points within the last few months. In his compositions his improvement is remarkable not only in construction but in tone of thought and method of working out his subjects tactfully and artistically.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Mazzoleni played the role of Faust for the opera's New York debut.

<sup>61</sup> *Tribune*, 31 October 1865.

The review effectively demonstrates how Mills was perceived: “fluency, accuracy, and force” are commonly used tropes when describing his performances. The article also suggests that his fantasy was a success and that critics recognized a certain amount of compositional potential in the pianist, who at this time was twenty-five years old.

Between 7 May 1864 and 3 February 1866 Mills performed *Fantaisie Dramatique* on at least a dozen documented occasions in New York. At the time, it was apparently the pianist’s strategy to program his most successful showpieces as frequently as possible or until the critics expressed disapproval.<sup>62</sup> Following a series of five farewell concerts at the Academy of Music given between 8 and 12 January 1865 for the soprano, Euphrosyne Parepa-Rosa (1836-1874), at which Mills purportedly performed his fantasy, the press finally voiced a complaint:

The programs did not vary much from the ones before. Even the performers were much the same except for Mills. However, even Mills repeated his usual pieces. We do not comprehend that a fine artist such as Mills is moving in the same circle (of people) all the time. We suggest for him to leave out his own compositions for a change. The audience has heard enough of them. Moreover, we advise that he should use the Chopin style music for other works more. Above all he should adopt a repertoire of brilliant pieces. He is able to play everything, and much better than anybody else. So why not use his talent in a more diverse way?<sup>63</sup>

The nature of this review, coupled with other articles appearing throughout the previous two years, suggest that Mills was indeed programming the piece repeatedly, and by this time, *Fantaisie Dramatique* may have worn out its welcome. Apparently, the pianist took the criticism to heart and only gave the work one more local hearing on 3 February 1866. Mills, furthermore,

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<sup>62</sup> Mills had a similar approach with performances of Liszt’s paraphrase of Mendelssohn’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream* and the transcription of Wagner’s *Tannhäuser*. Beginning with his debut in 1859 and throughout 1862, Mills programmed these two works for almost every public performance.

<sup>63</sup> *New-Yorker Musik-Zeitung*, 15 January 1866, 33. [www.musicinthegoat.org](http://www.musicinthegoat.org).

seems to have taken the writer's advice, and for the next decade, diversified his repertoire as the music of Chopin occupied a more prominent place in his concert programs.

*Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust* draws from many of the opera's memorable moments, showcasing material associated with the drama's main characters. Example 5.37 demonstrates how the piece begins with a 60-measure introduction, quoting from two sections of the opera: the Overture (mm.1-8 and mm. 9-21) and Mèphistophélès's serenade, "Vous qui faites l'endormie" from Act Three. Mm. 1-8 are identical to the first eight measures of the Overture. At m. 9, Mills makes a preliminary quotation from the serenade in the bass voice, while including a polyphonic texture above. In m. 11, the theme sounds in the top voice and by m. 15 has returned to the bass:

Example 5.37: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, introduction, mm. 1-19<sup>64</sup>

**FAUST.**

(GOUNOD)

FANTAISIE DRAMATIQUE. S. B. MILLS.

*Op. 17.*

Adagio.

Allegro.

*marcato*

*Fall:*

Tempo 1º

*dim: et pp*

<sup>64</sup> Sebastian Bach Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust de Gounod*, Op. 17 (New York: J. Schuberth & Co., 1865).



After returning to the Overture (mm. 9-21), Mills further elaborates on the demonic serenade (mm. 37-53) in octaves:

**Example 5.38: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, introduction, mm. 37-44**

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of two systems of staves. The first system is marked 'Allegro.' and begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The second system is marked *ff* (fortissimo) and continues the complex rhythmic pattern, showing a dramatic increase in volume and intensity. The score is written in a minor key, indicated by the key signature.

To conclude the introduction, Mills briefly quotes the main motive from the Grand Chorus, “La Kermesse” from Act One, Scene Two in mm. 55-56. The theme quickly unravels into a string of diminished-seventh chords, voiced with octaves and alternating between the hands. The dramatic Lisztian flourish ascends the keyboard, gradually picking up speed and volume, while creating a climax that announces the next section:

Example 5.39: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, introduction, mm. 54-63

The image shows a musical score for the introduction of S. B. Mills' *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, measures 54-63. The score is written for piano and consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with the tempo marking "Allegro." and the dynamic marking "ff". The left hand features a fast-moving arpeggio accompaniment, with the instruction "con ga bassa" written below it. The right hand plays a series of chords and arpeggios. The second system continues the piece, with a dynamic marking of "f" and an "acceler." instruction. The third system concludes the introduction with the tempo marking "Allegro." and a dynamic marking of "fff", featuring a "marcato" section. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, time signatures, and dynamic markings.

Following a modulation from F minor to B-flat minor at m. 63, Mills introduces “Le veau d’or est toujours debout!” The famous song comes from Act One, Scene Two, as the villagers are celebrating and drinking in the streets. Suddenly, Mèphistophélès appears on the scene, provides the assembly with more wine, and sings that all will worship the Golden Calf. Mills begins his statement at m. 64 with a single-note melody in the right hand, which, because of its close proximity to the accompaniment, consistently overlaps the left hand. The second part of the song appears at m. 74 in full-chords and octaves, while the left hand provides a fast-moving arpeggio accompaniment:

Example 5.40: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “Le veau d’or,” mm. 74-82

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Le veau d'or" by S. B. Mills, spanning measures 74 to 82. The score is written for piano and is in the key of B-flat major (two flats). It begins with a *marcato* tempo marking. The first system (measures 74-77) features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, with a *p* (piano) dynamic marking. The second system (measures 78-81) continues the melodic and bass lines, with a *p* dynamic marking. The third system (measures 82-85) shows a more complex texture with a *p* dynamic marking. The fourth system (measures 86-89) features a *f* (forte) dynamic marking. The fifth system (measures 90-93) concludes the passage with a *f* dynamic marking. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Before returning to “Le veau d’or,” the composer includes a momentary reference to the lovesick Siébel and his well-known song, “Faites-lui mes aveux” from the beginning of Act Two:

**Example 5.41: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “Faites-lui mes aveux,” mm. 86-89**



Next, Mills presents an interesting compositional moment, unifying “Le veau d’or” and “Faites-lui mes aveux” at mm. 99-100 and mm. 103-04. There is no dramatic purpose for bringing these two themes together, as the opera does not present such a scenario; however, both themes are similar in contour and comprised of arpeggios, providing a creative opportunity. In the original, the A-flat on beat one is a dotted-half note, tied to the A-flat in the next measure (see Example 5.40, mm. 76-77). Mills uses the same theme, but fills in the static moment (m. 100) with the first six notes of “Faites-lui mes aveux,” which terminates into the conclusion of “Le veau d’or” at m. 101. He then repeats the gesture a third higher at mm. 103-04. Also, note the composer’s inclusion of “Faites-lui mes aveux” at mm. 101-02 and mm. 105-06 in the left hand, providing brief moments of contrapuntal interest as the phrase from “Le veau d’or” concludes in the right hand:

**Example 5.42: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, ‘Le veau d’or’ and ‘Faites-lui mes aveux,’ mm. 99-108**



To finish the section, Mills reprises the second half of “Le veau d’or,” in octaves and thickly-voiced chords. A descending passage of diminished seventh-chords and octaves, similar to the ascending motive heard previously at mm. 57-58 leads to an E-flat<sup>7</sup> arpeggio, which sets up a modulation to A-flat major and transitions to the next section:

Example 5.43: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “Faites-lui mes aveux,” and interlude, mm. 119-28

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of three systems of music. The first system begins with a treble clef and a key signature of three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The music features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand and a more melodic line in the right hand. A dynamic marking of *ff marcato* is present in the second measure of the first system. The second system continues the piece with similar textures. The third system concludes with a final cadence. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Next, Mills returns to Act One, Scene One. Mèphistophélès and Faust have just made their epic agreement and the aged philosopher has sealed the deal by signing a contract. Satan offers riches and power, and of course, Faust declines, in favor of passionate love and bliss. The composer’s first presentation of “A moi les plaisirs” is simple: the melody in right-hand octaves with a typical chordal accompaniment in the left:

**Example 5.44: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “A moi les plaisirs,” mm. 129-36**

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The notation includes arpeggiated chords and melodic lines, with some notes beamed together. The second system continues the piece, showing similar arpeggiated textures. The third system concludes the excerpt, featuring a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic marking. The overall style is characteristic of late 19th-century piano music, emphasizing harmonic support through arpeggios.

Then, Mills states the reprisal of the aria in more dramatic fashion, by surrounding it with arpeggios. The melody generally appears in octaves, as the pianist cleverly constructs the right-hand figurations to match up to the appropriate melodic notes in the left hand. Occasionally, the theme bounces from hand to hand as well, while both in turn provide harmonic support:

Example 5.45: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “À moi les plaisirs,” mm. 145-55

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of three systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The key signature is three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The first system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a complex, rhythmic melody in the right hand with many beamed sixteenth notes. The second system continues this texture, with a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic marking appearing in the right hand. The third system includes a section marked *ff marcato* (fortissimo, marked), where the right hand plays a more aggressive, accented melody. The score is annotated with measure numbers 145, 150, and 155, and includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

With the next section, Mills focuses on Marguerite. First, he transcribes “The King of Thule” and its introductory material, followed by a short reference to “The Jewel Song,” and ending the section with the duet, “Il se fait tard.” The composer begins with a note-for-note statement of the original orchestral material that proceeds to the “The King of Thule:”



**Example 5.46: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, orchestral interlude, mm. 173-80**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The first system is marked "Andantino moderato." and "pp". It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with some rests, while the bass staff provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth notes. The second system is marked "cresc:". It also consists of a treble and bass clef staff. The treble staff continues the melodic line, and the bass staff features a more active accompaniment with sixteenth-note patterns. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is common time (C).

At m. 193, Mills presents “The King of Thule.” As Marguerite sits at the spinning-wheel, she sings of and ponders the legendary king, his endless devotion to his lady, and the prized golden chalice kept in her memory. The transcription of the melody remains fairly consistent to the original with a few liberties, especially the recitative moments, which Mills omits. With the first section (mm. 198-218), the theme appears in the upper voice, while a four-voice texture accompanies beneath. The striking feature here is the addition of a wandering bass line. The writing effectively provides compositional interest and forward motion to the otherwise simple song, while retaining the solemn mood of the original:

Example 5.47: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “The King of Thule,” mm. 193-201

Moderato .

*f*

*p legg.*

*sf*

*legato*

1º

Following a contextual restatement of the material from mm. 193-97, Mills then provides the second half of the aria. This time, the theme jumps between the top and middle voices, adorned by filigree-scales, arpeggios, and fully-voiced chords. This section (mm. 219-43) marks a climactic point and demonstrates some of the composer’s most ambitious virtuosic writing:

Example 5.48: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “The King of Thule,”  
mm. 219-24

Marcato del Thema.

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is G-flat major (three flats). The first system begins with a 'brill.' marking and a dynamic of 'f'. The second system includes a 'cresc.' marking. The third system has a 'p' dynamic marking. The fourth system continues the melodic and harmonic development. The piece is marked 'Marcato del Thema.' at the beginning.

Next, comes a reference to “Je ris de me voir si belle en ce miroir,” more commonly called, “The Jewel Song.” Upon Faust’s command, Mèphistophélès has returned with a casket of jewels and placed them at Marguerite’s doorstep. As she admires the precious gift and tries on the jewelry, the maiden sings about how beautiful the gems make her appear. Mills’s statement is brief (only 8 measures) and quickly unfolds into transitional material:

**Example 5.49:** S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “The Jewel Song,” mm. 244-53

The section concludes with “Il se fait tard,” from Act Two. The couple has just returned to Marguerite’s home and Faust implores her to stay with him. Although this material comes from a duet between the two lovers, Mills only transcribed the first twenty-six measures, which are sung by Faust. The first ten measures follow the original almost note-for-note. At m. 286, Mills gets a little more creative, using one of his standard technical devices: surrounding the theme with arpeggio figurations that necessitate the melody shift between the hands.

Example 5.50: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “Il se fait tard,” mm. 283-92



To conclude *Fantaisie Dramatique*, Mills recalls the “Prison Scene” from the opera’s final act. Marguerite awaits execution, while Faust has convinced Mèphistophélès to aid in her rescue. With no time to waste, Faust implores Marguerite to hurry. At that moment, the condemned maiden sees Mèphistophélès with fiery eyes and knows he is the evil one. She declines the opportunity for freedom and calls out to God for mercy and forgiveness. For the finale, Mills quotes Marguerite’s plea: “Anges spurs, Anges redieux.” To create a big and powerful conclusion, the composer places the theme in the right hand with octaves and thickly-voiced chords, while running octaves accompany in the left hand:

Example 5.51: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, “Ange spurs, Anges redieux,” mm. 324-31

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The first system includes dynamic markings of *ff* and *ff*. The second system includes a dynamic marking of *f*. The third system features a repeat sign with a first ending bracket. The music is characterized by dense textures, including arpeggios, driving octaves, and full chords.

Following “Anges spurs, Anges redieux,” Mills makes a final virtuosic gesture: more arpeggios, driving octaves, and full chords lead to a dramatic and triumphant conclusion:

Example 5.52: S. B. Mills, *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, Op. 17, coda, mm. 332-39

The image displays three systems of musical notation for piano, arranged vertically. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first system begins with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic marking and features a complex melodic line in the treble with multiple slurs and accents, and a bass line with chords and moving lines. The second system continues the melodic development in the treble, with a crescendo leading to a fortississimo (*fff*) dynamic. The third system shows a dense texture with rapid sixteenth-note passages in both hands, culminating in a final fortissimo (*fff*) chord. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

*Pease Also Visits Faust*

Alfred H. Pease's *Faust Paraphrase de Concert* represents one of the most daring and virtuosic examples of piano composition from the central decades of the American-nineteenth century. Through its extensive use of octaves, fully-voiced chords, three-handed illusions, and orchestral effects, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert* approaches the Lisztian-style of virtuosity more successfully than any other American composition at the time.

On 8 February 1864 Pease gave his New York debut at Dodworth's Hall. For this special concert, the pianist played *La Polka de la Reine*, Op. 95 by Joachim Raff (1822-1882) and showcased two arrangements by Liszt: The "Grand March" from Wagner's *Tannhäuser* ("Freudig begrüßen wir die edle Halle"), S. 445, No. 1 and the *Paraphrase de Concert sur Rigoletto* S. 434. The writer for the *Musical Review and World* called Pease's left hand "exceedingly well-trained," as the pianist took the octave passages in the *Tannhäuser* "in a very quick tempo (faster than we have ever heard them done), yet they were perfectly clear and faultless."<sup>65</sup> Through Pease's performance of this demanding repertoire, the press immediately recognized his technical abilities and that he had "devoted much attention to the music of Liszt."<sup>66</sup> He was encored after each piece; however, following the *Rigoletto*, Pease responded with "an arrangement from 'Faust,' showing considerable versatility of style."<sup>67</sup> Although other members of the local press cited the piece as Liszt's arrangement, the ambiguity of the *New York*

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<sup>65</sup> *Musical Review and Musical World*, 13 February 1864, 54-5.

<sup>66</sup> *New York Post*, 9 February 1864.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*



*Post's* citation and without referencing the piece as the "Faust waltz" suggests that the composition was likely Pease's own.<sup>68</sup>

On 19 November the pianist gave his first concert at Irving Hall, for which he formally introduced *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*. There is apparently no conclusive evidence to suggest that Pease was actively programming Liszt's arrangement from *Faust* prior to introducing his own fantasy in fall of 1864. Thus, if Pease had originally been playing Liszt's arrangement, it was now replaced with his own paraphrase. Along with his *Faust*, Pease also performed the challenging *Réveil du Lion*, Op. 115 by the Polish pianist/composer Anton de Kotski (1817-1899). The writer for the *Times* opined: "Both pieces are extremely difficult, and contain certain passages that demand not only endurance but great presence of mind and precision of hand."<sup>69</sup> The English-language papers all seemed to agree on Pease's formidable technique and his potential as a composer: "He has mastered the technical difficulties of his instrument, and already displayed a credible facility in writing for it."<sup>70</sup> The German press, however, suggested: "Pease was not convincing, and the selection of works of unfavorable taste, although Pease did show more skill than expected."<sup>71</sup>

Throughout the next year, Pease relied on his *Paraphrase de Concert*, although not to the same extent as Mills did with *Fantaisie Dramatique*. The pianist's next local appearance was on 26 January 1865 at Dodworth Hall as a supporting artist for the noted soprano, Maria Scoville Brainerd's Grand Concert. Pease played his own fantasy on Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, an unspecified caprice by Joachim Raff (1822-1882), and gave another performance of the *Faust*

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<sup>68</sup> See *The Chicago Tribune*, 28 February 1864, 2. The review that originally appeared in the *New York World*, cited the piece as "Liszt's musical comments upon themes in 'Faust.'" On 10 October 1864 Wm. A. Pond & Co. acquired legal rights to *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*.

<sup>69</sup> *Times*, 21 November 1864. See [www.musicingotham.org](http://www.musicingotham.org).

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *New-Yorker Staats-Zeitung und Herold*, 21 November 1864. See [www.musicingotham.org](http://www.musicingotham.org).

paraphrase, for which the *New York Post* called “his brilliant concert arrangement.”<sup>72</sup> For this event, Brainerd also sang two of Pease’s songs: “A Year’s Spinning” on the poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) and “Blow, Bugle, Blow,” which is a setting of the poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892). With this concert, Pease had demonstrated proficiency as a composer in other genres, beyond the piano virtuoso crafting dazzling showpieces. As future performances would also indicate, Pease began programming his symphonic works as well. Likely in an effort to demonstrate multi-faceted abilities and to promote a variety of his other compositions, Pease opted for a different performance strategy than Mills, and soon dropped his Faustian showpiece from concert programs.

The New York press indicates that the final local performances of *Faust Paraphrase de Concert* were in a two-piano arrangement. This version was apparently never published but was likely the same paraphrase. Pease was relatively active as a duo player, and according the local press, his most frequent collaborator was Mills. On 13 May 1865 Mills gave his annual concert at Irving Hall. Along with his own *Fantaisie Dramatique sur Faust*, he also programmed the two-piano version of *Faust Paraphrase de Concert* with Pease. Naturally, reviews focused on Mills; however, the *Times* did mention the duo’s performance: “An agreeable feature of the programme was a duet for two pianos, on themes from ‘Faust,’ performed by Messrs. Pease and Mills, and composed by the first-named gentlemen.”<sup>73</sup>

Seven months later, Pease gave his own concert at Irving Hall on 16 December. Beyond Chopin’s *Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise*, Op. 22, which closed the evening and the Overture from *Dichter und Bauer* by Franz von Suppé (1819-1895) as the opener, Pease

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<sup>72</sup> *New York Post*, 27 January 1865. See [www.musicinthegoam.org](http://www.musicinthegoam.org).

<sup>73</sup> *Times*, 16 May 1865, 4.

dedicated the remainder of the program to his own compositions. Miss Brainerd sang an unspecified song; two compositions for orchestra: *Bolero de Concert* and *Japanese Galop*; and two piano duos: *Fantasia on the Riccis' Crispino e la Comare* and *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, performed with Mills rounded out the evening. The *Post* commented on the *Faust* duo: "His new fantasia on 'Faust'—played on two noble Steinway pianos by himself and Mr. Mills—is one of the most beautiful that has been arranged from the opera."<sup>74</sup>

In contrast to Mills, whose *Fantaisie Dramatique* begins with an exact quotation from the opera's Overture, Pease opens *Faust Paraphrase de Concert* with a direct, but highly decorated transcription of the first eight measures from the "Prison Scene," the opera's final act. The composer immediately incorporates a tremolo in the bass, followed by interlocking octaves in chromatics, and ascending/descending chromatic scales. Embedded within this web of virtuosic mechanics, Pease states the solemn orchestral material in thickly-voiced chords. The visual and aural effect clearly demonstrates Liszt's influence. In fact, Pease imitates the famous Hungarian virtuoso's style so succinctly that the uninformed listener or reader, without the benefit of seeing the actual composer's name on the printed music, might easily mistake this fantasy to be one by Liszt:

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<sup>74</sup> *Post*, 19 December 1865. See *New York Herald*, 8 November 1866, 4. Pease performed the two-piano arrangement once more locally on 7 November 1866. For this performance, the pianist George W. Colby joined Pease.

Example 5.53: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Prison Scene,” mm. 1-8<sup>75</sup>

*Andante maestoso.*

The musical score is written for piano and includes the following elements:

- Tempo:** *Andante maestoso.*
- Key Signature:** G major (one sharp).
- Time Signature:** 2/4.
- System 1:** Right hand starts with a melodic line, left hand has a tremolo bass line. Dynamics include *p* and *cresc.*. A *Ped* (pedal) marking is present.
- System 2:** Right hand continues the melody, left hand has a tremolo bass line. Dynamics include *sf*, *f*, and *cresc.*. A *Ped* marking is present.
- System 3:** Right hand continues the melody, left hand has a tremolo bass line. Dynamics include *sf*, *cresc.*, and *ff*. A *Ped* marking is present. The instruction *gu il Basso...* is written below the left hand.
- System 4:** Right hand continues the melody, left hand has a tremolo bass line. Dynamics include *sf*, *con forza dim.*, and *p*.
- System 5:** Right hand continues the melody, left hand has a tremolo bass line. Dynamics include *p*. A *Tympani* marking is present.

<sup>75</sup> Alfred Humphreys Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert* (New York: Wm. A. Pond & Co., 1864). All musical examples reproduced with permission from The British Library Board (Shelfmark: Music Collections h.1459.i. 20.).

At mm. 10-12, Pease makes a brief reference to the “Song of the Golden Calf” (“Le veau d’or est toujours debout!”), by quoting the fiery sextuplet figures and descending half-steps in the lowest voice from the orchestral introduction of Mèphistophélès’s famous song:

**Example 5.54: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Le veau d’or,” mm. 10-12**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system, starting at measure 8, is marked 'Vivace.' and includes the instruction 'Trem: ad lib:'. It features a right-hand part with sextuplet figures and a left-hand part with descending half-steps. The second system, also starting at measure 8, is marked 'Presto.' and 'Vivace.'. It continues the sextuplet and descending half-step motifs. The notation includes various musical symbols such as treble and bass clefs, key signatures (two sharps), and dynamic markings like 'pp' and 'ff'.

With a modulation to D-flat major, Pease now includes an abbreviated statement of Siébel’s well-known song, “Faites-lui mes aveux” from Act Two. The statement is simple, with the melody voiced in right-hand octaves and a chordal accompaniment beneath. The inclusion of this lyrical melody provides an effective interlude before sweeping and interlocking octaves outlining a C#<sup>7</sup> harmony rush the listener back to the “Prison Scene”:

Example 5.55: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Faites-lui mes aveux,” mm. 13-22

The musical score consists of four systems of piano music. The first system is marked *Presto.* and *Allegro agitato.* It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The right hand features a descending eighth-note scale, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamics include *ff* and *pizz*. The second system continues with a change in key signature to two flats (Bb and Eb). It features a *grazioso* marking and includes the instruction *acceler: e cresc.*. The third system is marked *dim: un poco*, *pizz ritenuto*, and *precipitato*. The fourth system is marked *con forza* and *ff*. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

With the remainder of the section, Pease transcribes mm. 9-36 from the “Prison Scene.” In mm. 23-24 and again at mm. 27-28, the pianist demonstrates a singular compositional moment. Here, fully-voiced chords sound the material from the “Prison Scene,” while filigree

decorations above quote the first six notes of “Faites-lui mes aveux.” The combination of these two themes does not occur in the opera itself; however, the excerpt demonstrates the composer’s creativity, while the leaping required of both hands provides a distinct challenge for the performer:

**Example 5.56:** Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Prison Scene” and “Faites-lui mes aveux,” mm. 23-30

The image displays three systems of musical notation for piano. The first system is marked "Tempo 1º" and "ff". It features complex textures with multiple voices in both hands, including triplets and sixteenth-note patterns. The second system begins with a large, sweeping arpeggiated figure in the bass, followed by more complex textures. The third system includes a trill in the right hand and another large arpeggiated figure in the bass. Dynamics range from "ff" to "pp".

Another point of interest occurs between mm. 44-49, where Pease gives an elaborate transcription of mm. 30-36 from the “Prison Scene,” demonstrating his ability at crafting three-

handed illusions. In this instance, he presents the melody in single up-stemmed notes, surrounding it with arpeggios and chords, descending consecutive sixths, ascending consecutive thirds, and finally with an ascending chromatic scale. The section certainly provides an outstanding virtuosic challenge:

**Example 5.57: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Prison Scene,” mm. 43-49**

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The piece is marked with various dynamics and articulations:

- System 1 (mm. 43-45):** The right hand features a melodic line with a crescendo leading to a delicate passage. The left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment of chords.
- System 2 (mm. 46-47):** The right hand has a *martellato* section with fingerings indicated above the notes. The left hand continues with chords.
- System 3 (mm. 48-49):** The right hand includes a *martellato* section with a dynamic marking of *p*. The left hand has a *p* dynamic.
- System 4 (mm. 50-51):** The right hand features a *veloce* section with a dynamic marking of *p*. The left hand continues with chords.

Technical challenges include rapid sixteenth-note passages, arpeggiated chords, and chromatic runs in both hands.



The section concludes with a Lisztian cadenza constructed of a four-note descending motive in the right hand against couplets in the left, which outline fully-diminished seventh chords (m. 51-55). The flourish descends from the highest register, bringing the performer back to the central region of the keyboard. A modulation to G-flat major ensues and the stage is set for the next section:

**Example 5.58: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Lisztian cadenza,” mm. 54-55**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system, labeled with a measure rest '8' at the beginning, shows two staves. The right-hand staff contains a continuous descending line of notes, while the left-hand staff features a series of dyads (couplets) that outline fully-diminished seventh chords. The second system continues this texture, with the right hand playing a series of fully-voiced, rolled chords and the left hand playing octaves and two-note figures. The tempo marking 'rall: e dim:' is written below the second system. The key signature is G-flat major (three flats).

Between mm. 56-79, Pease transcribes the love duet between Faust and Marguerite, “O nuit d’amour,” from Act Two. Pease presents the melody with fully-voiced rolled chords in the right hand, coupled with octaves and two-note figures outlining the harmonies in the left:

Example 5.59: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “O nuit d’amour,” mm. 56-63

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano accompaniment. The first system is divided into two sections: 'Adagio.' and 'Moderato.'. The 'Adagio.' section is marked 'ppp con due Ped.' and features thick, sustained chords in the right hand and a more active bass line. The 'Moderato.' section is marked 'p con molto espress:' and features a more rhythmic bass line with triplets and fingerings (e.g., 3 2 1 1 2) indicated below the notes. The second system continues the 'Moderato.' section with similar textures and fingerings.

Following, “O nuit d’amour,” the composer shifts back to Act One. At this point in the opera, Mèphistophélès produces a vision of Marguerite at her spinning wheel. Faust is enchanted by the image and is finally persuaded to sign a contract, binding himself to Mèphistophélès. The dialogue between the two is more recitative-like rather than melodic; thus, Pease transcribes the orchestral accompaniment. The music, however, is strikingly similar to “O nuit d’amour,” stated in the previous section, which is no doubt a moment of foreshadowing on Gounod’s part. For the first nine measures, Pease places the melody in the left hand, at the top of thickly-voiced chords, while the right hand adds the violin tremolos from the orchestral accompaniment:

**Example 5.60: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, orchestral accompaniment from Act One as Faust signs the contract, mm. 81-84**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The right hand of both systems features a complex, filigree-like arpeggiated pattern. The left hand of the first system is mostly silent, with a few chords appearing later in the system, accompanied by the instruction "la melodia marcata". The left hand of the second system plays a series of chords, with the instruction "sempre pp" (pianissimo) written above it.

For the remainder of this section (mm. 90-103), Pease states the orchestral melody in fully-voiced chords, while incorporating the left-hand figuration from the earlier statement of “O nuit d’amour” (mm.56-79). A simultaneous filigree-arpeggio figure an octave above outlines each harmony and adds further interest, while the illusion of three hands playing presents a formidable challenge:

**Example 5.61: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, orchestral melody from Act One, second section, mm. 90-93**

The image shows a musical score for piano, consisting of two systems of staves. The top system covers measures 90-93, and the bottom system covers measures 94-97. The right hand (treble clef) features a melodic line of sixteenth notes, often beamed in groups of four, with a '7' fingering indicated. The left hand (bass clef) provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'una corda' (one string), and articulation marks like slurs and accents. The key signature is three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor).

A sixty-nine measure interlude based on the second part of the military march from the famous “Chœur des soldats” announces the final section of *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*. The first 24 measures recall the march; however, the key center remains ambiguous, as Pease states the material within a series of diminished-seventh chords. The excerpt below demonstrates how the section begins with the A diminished version, while statements over G diminished and B diminished harmonies follow:

Example 5.62: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, interlude, mm. 104-16

Allegro giusto, quasi Presto.

The musical score consists of three systems of piano music. The first system (mm. 104-110) begins with a piano introduction marked *ff* and *p legg:*. The second system (mm. 111-117) features a section marked *precipitato f* with a descending fully-diminished arpeggio in octaves, followed by a section marked *sf* and *p*. The third system (mm. 118-124) features a section marked *con forza* with a descending fully-diminished arpeggio in octaves, followed by a section marked *cresc:*.

At m. 142 Pease states the March in E-flat major, where the material finally matches the harmony of the original. A descending fully-diminished arpeggio in octaves leads to another outlining of F major, followed by a chromatic scale of interlocking octaves that terminates with an octave trill on F, which sets up a modulation to B-flat major:

Example 5.63: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, interlude, mm. 142-64

The musical score consists of five systems of piano accompaniment. The first system is marked *cresc.* and features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system is marked *f*, *ff*, and *con tutta la forza*, with a dynamic increase and a more active bass line. The third system continues the piece with a similar texture. The fourth system features a more complex texture with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The fifth system is marked *quasi trillo* and features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

For the remainder of *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, Pease transcribes the famous “Chœur des soldats.” The first statement is a straight-forward presentation of the theme in right-hand octaves, with a leaping octave/chord accompaniment in the left hand:

**Example 5.64: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Chœur des soldats,” mm. 223-26**

Musical score for Example 5.64, measures 223-26. The score is in 12/8 time and features a piano accompaniment. The right hand plays a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth notes and quarter notes. The dynamic marking is *ff* (fortissimo).

Moving forward, Pease presents the chorus in a variety of three-handed textures. The first variant occurs at m. 232, where the theme appears in fully-voiced chords over the same leaping accompaniment stated above; however, Pease has also added another chord an octave above, which necessitates a leap in the right hand and a simultaneous jump to a theme-bearing chord in the left hand:

**Example 5.65: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Chœur des soldats,” mm. 230-37**

Musical score for Example 5.65, measures 230-37. The score is in 12/8 time and features a piano accompaniment. The right hand plays a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth notes and quarter notes. The dynamic marking is *ff* (fortissimo). The score includes several measures with complex textures, including a leap in the right hand and a simultaneous jump to a theme-bearing chord in the left hand.

Following an extended octave section, Pease presents another version. Here, the chorus appears in a middle voice, surrounded by chords and arpeggios, alternating the theme between the hands accordingly:

**Example 5.66: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Chœur des soldats,” mm. 259-64**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system begins with a treble staff containing a series of eighth-note chords and a bass staff with a similar rhythmic pattern. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present in the second measure of the first system. The second system continues the piece, featuring more complex chordal textures and arpeggiated figures in both hands. Fingering numbers (1, 2, 3) are indicated for various notes. The notation includes slurs, ties, and dynamic markings, illustrating the intricate interplay between the two hands.

After visiting a different section of the chorus and giving the listener another demonstration of his trademark octaves, Pease presents a final variant. The melody appears once more in fully-voiced chords, but this time accompanied by an ascending octave figuration, which again demands that the theme be passed between the hands. This final statement leads directly to the coda, where more interlocking octaves, bombastic chords, and an arpeggio spanning the entire keyboard bring the piece to a smashing conclusion:



Example 5.67: Pease, *Faust Paraphrase de Concert*, “Chœur des soldats,” and coda, mm. 294-316

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece, consisting of four systems of music. Each system is written for a grand piano, with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 2/4. The score is marked with dynamic levels: *ff* (fortissimo) and *sempre ff* (always fortissimo). The first system includes a *con bravura* marking. The piece features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth-note runs and chords, and is characterized by frequent use of slurs and accents. The notation includes various articulation marks such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. The score concludes with a coda section.

First system of a piano score. The right hand features a complex, rhythmic melody with many beamed notes and slurs. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with chords and eighth notes. A fermata with the number '8' is placed over the first measure of the right hand.

Second system of the piano score. The right hand continues with intricate melodic patterns. The left hand accompaniment remains consistent. The instruction *sempre ff* is written in the right hand. A fermata with the number '8' is placed over the final measure of the right hand.

Third system of the piano score. The right hand has a dense texture with many beamed notes. The left hand features a prominent bass line with eighth notes. Two fermatas with the number '8' are placed over the first and second measures of the right hand.

Fourth system of the piano score, ending with a double bar line. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. A fermata with the number '8' is placed over the first measure of the right hand. The system concludes with a final chord in the right hand and a fermata with the number '8' in the left hand.

## Conclusions

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, many pianists were also composers. In Europe, renowned virtuosos such as Chopin, Herz, Liszt, Leopold de Meyer, and Thalberg established a model, which keyboardists of the next generation followed. With the exception of Chopin, and Liszt in his later works, these virtuosos concentrated on showpieces and flashy arrangements based on popular tunes. Such works provided audiences something that was recognizable, while allowing the performer a means to demonstrate not only compositional creativity but also virtuosic ability—and resident pianists in the United States carried on this tradition.

This chapter introduces several lesser-known piano compositions into the dialogue of music in the United States during nineteenth-century. Modern scholarship and discussions on American music history now include Gottschalk's contributions as both composer and performer; however, he was not alone. As this study demonstrates, several other pianists in the United States were also active. Certainly, the New Orleans-native holds an important position due to his sizable output and effective use of Creole, Afro-Caribbean, and Latin-American musical elements, but resident pianists such as Hoffman, Mills, and Pease also composed. Although their music, in general, does not suggest the individuality of Gottschalk—their music is thoroughly European—it nonetheless demonstrates that other pianists in America wrote effective music and were recognized for doing so. Including the compositional efforts of resident pianists into the discussion sheds light on and provides perspective to the pianistic realm and musical landscape of nineteenth-century America.

## Chapter Six

### THE RESIDENT PIANIST

During the nineteenth century, the American musical scene flourished, especially in New York City, where pianists played an active role throughout the period and did much towards establishing a foundation in concert music for a young nation that lacked any sort of long-standing artistic tradition. As immigrants, pianists like Miss Sterling, William A. King (1817?-1867), Daniel Schlesinger (1799-1839), William Scharfenberg (1819-1895), Henry Christian Timm (1811-1892), and others embraced their new surroundings. Taking opportunities to perform in a variety of settings, this first group popularized piano performance, making it a regular concert activity and an integral part of New York's musical scene. With dazzling arrangements of national airs, tour de force show pieces by celebrated virtuosos, and early performances of piano concertos, these same pianists exposed audiences to a variety of repertoire and the long-established European pianistic tradition. Since most American concertgoers had not heard Franz Liszt (1811-1886), Sigismund Thalberg (1812-1871), or any of the other internationally-acclaimed keyboard wizards, resident pianists provided the United States with an initial perception of piano virtuosity and thus, established a recognizable profile of what it meant to be a virtuoso.

By the central decades of the century, the resident pianist was an integral part of the musical landscape in major American cities. With specific performance strategies, choice of repertoire, programming, and composition, these musicians helped shape American musical tastes, consumption, and expectations, while demonstrating how certain aspects changed

throughout the rest of the century. Three of New York's most prominent resident pianists—Richard Hoffman (1831-1909), Sebastian Bach Mills (1838-1898), and Rafael Joseffy (1852-1915)—effectively illustrate specific facets this discussion.

Following the model set by New York's first resident pianists and that of celebrated virtuosos like Leopold de Meyer (1816-1883) and Henri Herz (1803-1888) who followed, Hoffman, through a long and multi-faceted career, sustained the current virtuosic image with regular performances of showpieces by de Meyer, Thalberg, and others. Hoffman's approach to programming and choice of repertoire effectively demonstrate what was popular and expected by audiences during the central decades of the century, while the frequency with which he performed certain works and the position he occupied on most programs illustrates how the pianist's role was often functional in the context of the variety concert. Hoffman's early appearances with orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic Society provided early exposure to several standard piano concertos, while his activities with chamber ensembles also contributed to the establishment of the genre in the United States.

As a composer, Hoffman demonstrates how many resident pianists supplied quality character pieces to the ever-growing musically-educated segment of society, which in turn, speaks to the musical appetite and consumption of the country. Although Hoffman was capable of playing virtuosic music and often produced technically-demanding examples, the majority of his output is accessible. This suggests a certain strategy towards sheet music sales and a response to the marketplace, while underscoring the fact that piano music was an integral part of nineteenth-century American popular culture. Most other resident pianists who also composed, such as Mills, Alfred Pease, and even Gottschalk, to name a few, approached the marketplace in similar terms. Each of these composers wrote virtuosic showpieces, yet much of their respective

output seldom goes beyond the abilities of an advanced pianist, while remaining accessible to the amateur.

Hoffman's transcriptions and arrangements illuminate the nineteenth-century musical scene in New York City in broader terms. The composer's preoccupation with operatic fantasies indicates the genre's popularity throughout much of the century, while his output documents specific operas that were most successful with audiences and how composers of piano music strategically responded. When the popularity of operatic fantasies waned, Hoffman adjusted his efforts toward transcribing several favorites from the symphonic and oratorio repertoire. Observing this shift in Hoffman's output speaks to the changing aesthetics that occurred later in the century.

Between 1856 and 1858, Thalberg's landmark American tours caused a sensation. He was considered by many to be the greatest virtuoso in the world and the only one to rival Liszt. His departure left the American musical establishment wanting, and since the Hungarian pianist would not be persuaded to visit the United States, who could follow? The arrival of Mills in 1859 answered that question. The pianist quickly dominated the New York scene, with some claiming he was the greatest pianist in America, surpassing even Thalberg. Mills did not study with Liszt, and was not the first to perform the composer's music in the United States; however, he was the first resident pianist to champion this repertoire, which provided greater knowledge of its composer.

Investigating Mills's career gives insight into the early American reception of Liszt. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the famous Hungarian composer remained suspect with many critics in the United States; however, Mills's apparently flawless technique

and powerful style of playing became an ideal vehicle for effectively demonstrating this new brand of virtuosity. Although questions concerning Liszt's legitimacy as a composer endured well into the twentieth century, Mills provided convincing displays, which impressed audiences and posed a challenge for critics eager to dismiss Liszt's music. Championing this repertoire, Mills set a new standard for many pianists who followed, and in the process, presented a new image of the piano virtuoso for American audiences.

As the end of the nineteenth century approached, the golden-age of the piano unfolded. Beginning with the tours of two celebrated virtuosos, Anton Rubinstein (1872) and Hans von Bülow (1875), pianists flocked to America. Most toured for a year or two, achieved various levels of artistic and financial success, and went home. One who stayed and became an important fixture of the New York musical scene was Rafael Joseffy.

Documenting Joseffy's extensive career provides further insight into repertoire, performance strategies, and concert programming and architecture in America during the final decades of the nineteenth century. For the time, Joseffy's appearances as a concerto soloist were unparalleled. The sheer number of concerto performances this pianist gave underscores the vibrancy of the American musical scene, while providing detailed perspective and an alternate angle towards observing the orchestral realm. As a recitalist, Joseffy was less active; however, his programs demonstrate one approach to programming at a time when piano recitals were just becoming legitimate evening entertainments and far from standardized. His approach was not the historical and well-rounded presentation that represents all eras of composition, which ultimately became standardized in the twentieth century. Rather, Joseffy employed a more flexible architecture that included several groups of character pieces, which often numbered over twenty different compositions in a single performance.

As a pedagogue, Joseffy was exceptional. He sustained a reputation as one of the most important piano teachers in America at the end of the nineteenth century. In this respect, he may be considered one of the first master piano instructors in the United States to achieve an international reputation. Although several other virtuosos such as William Mason (1829-1908), Hoffman, and Mills, were highly-regarded and successful as teachers, Joseffy seems to be among the first, if not the first, sought out by talented pianists from abroad. This raised the question of whether European conservatories were still necessary for America's aspiring musicians to finish their training. In this arena, Joseffy represents things to come. By the second half of the twentieth century, music schools in the United States became highly-esteemed, attracting the world's most talented students.

Among Joseffy's contributions, his later efforts in music editing are also significant. Following his retirement from the concert stage, the pianist spent the final years of his life editing large sections of the nineteenth-century canon. Throughout much of the twentieth century, the Joseffy editions of Liszt, Brahms, and Chopin, along with their works for piano and orchestra—including ones by Tchaikovsky and Rubinstein—were standard volumes in America. Although out of favor in recent times, it is thought-provoking to consider how many piano students learned and loved this section of nineteenth-century piano repertoire from these editions. With careful consideration for fingerings, pedal suggestions, and phrasings, Joseffy provided an accessible and helpful means to study the music of these masters.

Many of America's resident pianists were also composers. Fortunately, the music of Gottschalk has been studied, performed, and recorded for decades. Indeed, his popularity seems to increase rather than diminish with time. Although no modern publisher has yet endeavored to make the complete works of Gottschalk available (imagine an *Urtext* of Gottschalk!), more audio



recordings are available than ever before, while professional and amateur videos of pianists performing his music regularly find their way onto the internet. The general acceptance of Gottschalk is encouraging; however, after him, interest in American piano music seems to trail-off, until examples from much later in the century, when composers like Edward MacDowell (1860-1908) demonstrate that others in the United States wrote significant piano music. This perspective has created a large gap in our knowledge base, while limiting the possibilities available to modern pianists. That most of the music discussed throughout this dissertation has not been published in over one-hundred years certainly does not help. Thus, most concert pianists and others who might present this music before the public have little or no knowledge of its existence. Why can't a pianist looking for a big closer champion the showpieces by Mills and Pease, or flesh out a program with a set Hoffman's character pieces, if they only knew the music was available?

This study also touches of various aspects of American Nationalism. Much of the music discussed in Chapter 5 illustrates early attempts by composers, drawing from American subjects and sources. Although, the debate concerning when the United States truly found an original compositional voice in concert music continues to be waged, composers throughout the nineteenth century were searching, experimenting, and trying to craft music that reflected some sort of national identity. Similar to contemporary symphonists, such as Anthony Philip Heinrich (1781-1861), George Frederick Bristow (1825-1898), and John Knowles Paine (1839-1906), America's resident pianists could only draw upon their formal training. Although their thematic material and inspiration may have come from American sources, the music itself was still thoroughly European. Regardless, it would be difficult to say, for example, that Pease's transcription of "The Star-Spangled Banner" or the arrangements of minstrel songs by Hoffman

and Mills were not direct attempts at writing music with a national identity. Ultimately, several of the examples found in Chapter 5 contribute to the discussion on when and in what forms American music entered concert rooms in the United States.

The compositions of New York's resident pianists also speak to the appetite and consumption of audiences, while demonstrating what was popular, appealing, and expected by concertgoers. During the central decades of the nineteenth century, piano recitals were uncommon, while canonic literature, such as Baroque preludes and fugues, and Classical sonatas were seldom heard from concert platforms in the United States. Piano performances generally added variety to vocal and symphonic concerts, with audiences who anticipated hearing at least something that was familiar. Much of the music discussed in Chapters 2 and 5 demonstrate how pianists met this demand. With flashy arrangements of patriotic tunes, elegant transcriptions of popular songs, and virtuosic fantasies on favorite operas, pianists catered to popular tastes, and maintained the European ideal of the pianist-composer.

Nineteenth-century American subjects remain a popular area of research, as scholars recognize the importance of uncovering our own musical past. The operatic and symphonic realms have, and continue to receive much attention, while interest in Gottschalk and the celebrated European virtuosos who visited demonstrate how piano performance became an integral part of American musical culture. Effectively filling several gaps in our knowledge base, this study illuminates another largely overlooked corner of the American musical landscape, and demonstrates—through a pianistic lens—the vibrancy of the nineteenth-century musical scene in the United States and the contributions made by resident pianists.

## Appendix One

### Select Performances of Thalberg's Fantasies in New York City, 1837-53

Date	Composition	Pianist
24 November 1837	<i>Grande Fantaisie et Variations sur un Motif de l'Opéra de V. Bellini I Montecchi et Capuleti, op. 10</i>	Daniel Schlesinger
21 March 1838	<i>Grande Fantaisie et Variations sur des motifs de l'Opéra Don Juan de Mozart, Op. 14</i>	Daniel Schlesinger
15 November 1838	<i>Fantaisie sur des motifs de l'Opéra Les Huguenots, Op. 20</i>	William Scharfenberg
5 December 1838	<i>Grande Fantaisie et Variations sur des motifs de l'Opéra Norma de Bellini, op. 12</i>	William Scharfenberg
28 October 1839	<i>Fantaisie sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini, Op. 33</i>	C. Kossowski
19 May 1841	<i>Grande Fantaisie et Variations sur un Motif de l'Opéra de V. Bellini I Montecchi et Capuleti, op. 10</i>	Ludwig Rakemann
4 December 1841	<i>Fantaisie sur des motifs de La Donna del Lago, Op. 40</i>	Ludwig Rakemann
24 February 1842	<i>Fantaisie sur des motifs de l'Opéra Oberon de C. M. de Weber, Op. 37</i>	C. Kossowski
5 May 1842	<i>Fantaisie sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini, Op. 33</i>	Henry Christian Timm
7 November 1842	<i>Fantaisie sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini, Op. 33</i>	Frederick Rackemann
7 April 1843	<i>Grande Fantaisie et Variations sur des motifs de l'Opéra Norma de Bellini, op. 12 (arr. four hands)</i>	Frederick Rackemann & William Scharfenberg
5 May 1843	<i>Deux airs russes variés, Op. 17</i>	Frederick Rackemann
2 November 1843	<i>Fantaisie sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini, Op. 33</i> <i>Andante final de Lucia di Lammermoor varie, Op. 44</i>	Miro
13 December 1843	<i>Fantaisie sur des motifs de l'Opéra La Straniera de Bellini, Op. 9</i>	Sophie Gjertz

29 January 1844	<i>Fantasia sur des motifs de l'Opéra Les Huguenots, Op. 20</i>	Sophie Gjertz
22 November 1845	<i>Fantasia sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini, Op. 33</i>	Hermann Wollenhaupt
3 January 1846	<i>Fantasia sur des motifs de l'Opéra Les Huguenots, Op. 20</i>	Jules Fontana
1846	<i>Fantasia sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini, Op. 33</i>	Hermann Wollenhaupt
March 1847	<i>Fantasia sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini, Op. 33</i>	William A. King
16, 25, 27, November 1847	<i>Grand Caprice sur des motifs de l'Opéra la Sonnambula. Op. 46</i>	Richard Hoffman
26 December 1848	<i>Grande Fantasia sur la Sérénade et le Menuet de Don Juan, Op. 42</i>	Fräulein Hohnstock
29 September & 29 October 1849, 9 January 1850 & 4 June 1851, 30 January 1852	<i>Grand Caprice sur des motifs de l'Opéra la Sonnambula. Op. 46</i>	Richard Hoffman
15 June 1850	<i>Fantasia sur des themes de l'Opéra Moïse de G. Rossini, Op. 33</i>	Hélène Stoepel
4 October 1851	<i>Introduction et Variations sur la Barcarolle de l'Opéra L'Elisire d'amore de Donizetti, Op. 66</i>	M. E. Boulanger
23 October 1851 & 26 December 1851	<i>Introduction et Variations sur la Barcarolle de l'Opéra L'Elisire d'amore de Donizetti, Op. 66</i>	Richard Hoffman
15 November 1851	<i>Grand Caprice sur des motifs de l'Opéra la Sonnambula. Op. 46</i>	Alfred Jaëll
22 November 1851	<i>Fantasia sur des motifs de l'opéra La Muette de Portici, Op. 52</i>	Alfred Jaëll
6 June 1852	<i>Fantasia sur des motifs de l'opéra La Muette</i>	Otto Goldschmidt
1 October 1852	<i>Grande Fantasia sur la Sérénade et le Menuet de Don Juan, Op. 42</i>	Alfred Jaëll
15 September 1853	<i>Souvenir de Pesth, Op. 65a</i>	Madame de Berg

## Appendix Two

### Catalogue of Compositions by Richard Hoffman

This catalogue represents the only comprehensive list of Hoffman's works to date. One key source, "Catalogue of the Compositions of Richard Hoffman" appeared as back matter to *Beyond Reverie*, Op. 86 (1885). This is apparently the only instance that such a document was produced to account for Hoffman's published music. The source confirms Op. 1 through Op. 81; however, by 1885, several pieces included in the list had been published more than once and by various publishers. In most cases, the following catalogue includes the date of publication and the original publisher, which the 1885 source does not always indicate. In a few instances, beginning with Op. 5, the printed music has not been located. In such cases, this catalogue gives the known title but the listed publisher may not be the original, and thus, the date of publication is not included.

Op. 82 through Op. 130 (Hoffman's last numbered work) presents a more problematic scenario. Lists of selected works are occasionally included with various publications, but there are no complete catalogs. Sheet music for most of these pieces have also been located; however, in some instances front and back matter is the only documented proof that a certain work exists. In these cases, title, opus number, and known publisher are included, but no date of publication can be determined. Fourteen later opus numbers (beginning with Op. 83) are elusive, and to date, there is no way to determine whether these compositions were actually published. In these cases, the following catalogue includes the opus number for a missing work to suggest the likely existence of the composition. For example, Op. 82 and Op. 84 are confirmed, but Op. 83 is missing. In such instances, there is no evidence to suggest that the missing work was not composed. Rather, it is likely that the fourteen missing works were not published, or simply have not surfaced.

Several of Hoffman's earliest and latest works were published without opus numbers. Therefore, the following catalogue includes five other categories: "Compositions Published in America Without Opus Numbers," "Early Compositions," "Compositions in England Without Opus Numbers," "Unpublished Compositions," and "Published Compositions Mentioned in Back Matter." Some titles in these categories, especially "Compositions Published in America Without Opus Numbers" and "Unpublished Compositions" might account for the fourteen missing opus numbers; however, to date, no documentation has surfaced that confirms this scenario.

Op. 1	<i>La Gazelle, Éléante</i> (First British edition: Cramer, Beale & Chappell. London, 1854)	piano	B. Schott	1858
Op. 2	<i>Souvenir de Trovatore de Verdi</i>	piano	Wm. Hall & Son	1856
Op. 3	<i>Twilight Le Crépuscule Rêverie</i>	piano	Wm. Hall & Son	1859
Op. 4	<i>Caprice de Concert sur des motifs de Favorita, Huguenots &amp; Traviata</i>	piano	Beer & Schirmer	1860
Op. 5	<i>Les Huguenots Grand Duo Dramatique</i>	piano	Beer & Schirmer	
Op. 6	<i>Impromptu</i>	piano	Wm. Hall & Son	1867
Op. 7	Dead-March from the Oratorio <i>Saul</i> by Handel	piano	Beer & Schirmer	1863
Op. 8	<i>Polka de Concert</i>	piano	Beer & Schirmer	1859
Op. 9	<i>By the Sad Sea Waves Reverie</i> (J. Benedict Ballad)	piano	Wm. Hall & Son	1864
Op. 10	<i>Un Ballo in Maschera</i> (Trans.)	piano	Firth, Pond & Co.	1862
Op. 11	<i>Venice a Midnight Sketch</i>	piano	Wm. Hall & Son	1867
Op. 12	<i>Valse d'Adieu</i>	piano	Beer & Schirmer	1866
Op. 13	<i>Morceau de Salon sur La Traviata</i>	piano	B. Schott	
Op. 14	<i>Triumphal March</i>	piano	Wm. Hall & Son	1865
Op. 15	<i>Ten Minutes With Mozart</i> (Transcription from <i>Don Giovanni</i> )	piano	Firth, Pond & Co.	1862
Op. 16	<i>Solitude Pensée Fugitive</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1863
Op. 17	<i>Romeo and Juliette</i> <i>Fantaisie de Salon</i> (Transcription)	piano	Beer & Schirmer	
Op. 18	<i>Rigoletto de Verdi Fantaisie-Caprice</i>	piano	Beer & Schirmer	1864
Op. 19	<i>La Périchole Fantaisie Potpourri</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1869

Op. 20	<i>Meyerbeer et Donizetti</i> <i>Fantasie de Salon: L'Africaine et Don Pasquale</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1868
Op. 21	<i>March Funèbre</i>	piano	B. Schott	
Op. 22	<i>Elaine</i> (words from Tennyson's "Idyls of the King")	song	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1865
Op. 23	<i>Dixiana</i> <i>Caprice on the Popular Negro Minstrel's Melody "Dixie's Land"</i>	piano	Firth. Pond, & Co.	1861
Op. 24	<i>Elijah</i> (Transcription from Mendelssohn's oratorio)	piano	G. Schirmer	(?)
Op. 25	<i>Morceau de Salon</i> <i>sur l'Opera Faust de Ch. Gounod</i>	piano	Scharfengerg & Luis	1865
Op. 26	<i>Crispino E La Comare</i> <i>Opera de Ricci Caprice de Concert</i>	piano	Beer & Schirmer	1866
Op. 27	<i>Cradle Song</i>	piano	Wm. Hall & Son	1867
Op. 28	<i>The Upas Tree.</i> Scene in the Last Act of Meyerbeer's Opera <i>L'Africaine</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1868
Op. 29	<i>Dinorah Caprice de Concert</i> <i>on themes from Meyerbeer's Opera</i>	piano	Wm Pond & Co.	1863
Op. 30	<i>Hamlet Opera de A. Thomas (Trans.)</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1870
Op. 31	<i>Memory Ballad</i> (words by Henry C. Watson)	song	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1865
Op. 32	<i>Memory Ballad</i> (transcription of Op. 31)	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1864
Op. 33	<i>Sonata Bouffe</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1869
Op. 34	<i>So Far Away</i>	song	J. Schuberth & Co.	1868
Op. 35	<i>Tarantella</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1872
Op. 36	<i>Two Polaccas (for four hands)</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1864
Op. 37	<i>Robin Adair Improvisation</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1870

Op. 38	<i>Recollections of the Mendelssohn Glee Club (Valse et Marche)</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1870
Op. 39	<i>Cradle Song from Spohr's Symphony "The Power of Sound"</i>	piano	Jordens & Martens	1873
Op. 40	<i>Fourth Caprice de Concert on Themes from Mignon</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1874
Op. 41	<i>March from "Consecration of Tones" Symphony by L. Spohr</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1868
Op. 42	<i>Im Memorium LMG</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1870
Op. 43	<i>Cascarilla Cuban Dance</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1874
Op. 44	<i>Barcarolle</i>	piano	G. Schirmer	1876
Op. 45	<i>Abenlied</i> (Transcription of Robert Schumann's song Op. 85, No. 12)	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1870
Op. 46	<i>Seasons Have Passed Away</i> (words by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe)	song	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1877
Op. 47	<i>Farewell Morceau de Salon</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1874
Op. 48	"Haddon Hall" (In Ye Olden Time) A Reminiscence	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1874
Op. 49	"Il' M'Aime" (words by J. L. Stoddard)	song	G. Schirmer	1878
Op. 50	<i>Les Clochettes Impromptu Brillant</i>	piano	Scharfenberg & Luis	1866
Op. 51	<i>Ch-ci-Pipi-Nini Cuban Dance</i>	piano	Oliver Ditson & Co.	1872
	<i>Ch-ci-Pipi-Nini Cuban Dance</i> (arranged for four hands by Charles Wels)	piano	Oliver Ditson & Co.	1884
Op. 52	<i>Boat Song</i> (words by Miss Sarah O. Jewett)	song	G. Schirmer	1879
Op. 53	<i>Chiquita Third Cuban Dance</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1879
Op. 54	<i>Souvenir d'Eté</i> No. 1 Dolce Far Niete	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1880



Op. 55	<i>Souvenir d'Eté</i> No. 2 Serenade	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1880
Op. 56	"Thoughts of Home in the Desert," Op. 41 by Hans Huber	piano	G. Schirmer	1879
Op. 57	"Engelberg's Finland Love Song" (Transcription)	piano	Martens Brothers	1879
Op. 58	"Auf Wiedersehn" Ballad (words by Frederick E. Weathery, Esq.)	Song	Wm. A. Pond	1871
Op. 59	Scherzo from Mendelssohn's Scotch Symphony (Transcription)	piano	Martens Brothers	1880
Op. 60	"Give, O Give Me Back My Lord" from Bach's <i>St. Matthew Passion</i>	piano	Martens Brothers	1880
Op. 61	"Be Thou Faithful Unto Death" from Mendelssohn's <i>St. Paul</i>	piano	Martens Brothers	1880
Op. 62	Te Deum No. 1 in E-Flat Major (Morning Service)	vocal	Martens Brothers	1878
Op. 63	Benedictus (Morning Service)	vocal	Martens Brothers	1878
Op. 64	Rubinstein's "Thou Art Like Unto A Flower" (Transcription)	piano	Ed. Schuberth & Co.	1881
Op. 65	Bonum Est. (Evening Service)	vocal	Martens Brothers	1878
Op. 66	<i>Anthem</i> "By the Waters of Babylon" (Evening Service)	vocal	Martens Brothers	1879
Op. 67	Deus Misereatur (Evening Service)	vocal	Martens Brothers	1878
Op. 68	Gavotte	piano	Ed. Schuberth & Co.	1883
Op. 69	"Christ Our Passover" Easter Anthem	vocal	Martens Brothers	1881
Op. 70	Venite (Morning Service)	vocal	Martens Brothers	1878
Op. 71	<i>By the Sea Valse Brillante</i>	piano	Ed. Schuberth & Co.	(?)

Op. 72	“Stay at Home my Heart” (for male quartet)	vocal	Wm. Pond & Co.	(?)
Op. 73	<i>Forest Musings</i>	piano	Wm. Pond & Co.	1882
Op. 74	“Fair Ines” (for male quartet)	vocal	Wm. Pond & Co.	(?)
Op. 75	<i>Les Deux Papillons</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co	1882
Op. 76	Te Deum No. 2 in E-Flat Major (Morning Service)	vocal	Martens Brothers	1878
Op. 77	<i>Valse Melodique</i>	piano	Ed. Schuberth & Co.	1883
Op. 78	“Fairy Chorus” from Mendelssohn’s <i>Midsummer Night’s Dream</i>	piano	Martens Brothers	1883
Op. 79	<i>Moonlight Serenade</i>	piano	Martens Brothers	1883
Op. 80	<i>Les Hirondelles</i> by Félicien David (Transcription)	piano	Martens Brothers	1883
Op 81	Benedictus Anima Mea (Morning Service)	vocal	Martens Brothers	1878
Op. 82	Sactus from Gounod’s <i>St. Cecilia Mass</i> (Transcription)	piano	Martens Brothers	1884
Op. 83				
Op. 84	“Persian Love Song” by A. Rubinstein (Transcription)	piano	Ed. Schuberth & Co.	1885
Op. 85	<i>Maricita Cuban Dance</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1885
Op. 86	<i>Beyond Reverie</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1885
Op. 87				
Op. 88				
Op. 89	“Walther’s Prize Song” from <i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i>	piano	Ed. Schuberth & Co.	1886
Op. 90	<i>Lohengrin</i> by Wagner (Transcription)	piano	Ed. Schuberth & Co.	(?)

Op. 91	<i>Tarantella</i>		(?)	(?)
	(Referenced as a “Tarantella” played by Annette Essipoff for her “American Composers” concert at Steinway Hall in May 1877.)			
Op. 92	<i>Die Walküre</i> by Wagner (Transcription)	piano	Ed. Schuberth & Co.	(?)
Op. 93	“Gesang der Rheintöchter” from Wagner’s <i>Götterdämmerung</i> (Improvisation)	piano	B. Schott’s Sohne	(?)
Op. 94	Agnus Dei from Gounod’s <i>St. Cecilia Mass</i> (Transcription)	piano	Martens Brothers	1887
Op. 95	<i>Otello</i> “Chorus of Peasants” (Transcription)	piano	Ed. Schuberth & Co.	1887
Op. 96				
Op. 97	Nunc Dimittis	?	?	
Op. 98	<i>Wedding Music</i> 1. Dreams 2. Morning Dawn 3. Festival Polonaise 4. Guitar Reverie 5. Wedding March	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1888
Op. 98	“Guitar Reverie” arranged for sextet (flute, 2 violins, viola, violin cello, and double bass), MSS, parts signed, OCLC: 28068138, New York Public Library Reserve.			
Op. 99	<i>Two Favorite Songs</i> (Transcriptions) No. 1 “Fair Margarita” by Meyer Helmund No. 2 “Last Night” by Halfdan Kjerulf	piano	Wm. Pond & Co	1889
Op. 100	<i>Spinning Song</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1889
Op. 101	<i>Scherzo di Bravura</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1890
Op. 102	<i>Moto Perpetuo de Paganini</i> (Transcription)	piano	J. H. Schroeder & Co.	1890
Op. 103	“ <i>Liebesnacht</i> ” by Ph. Scharwenka (Transcription)	piano	J. H. Schroeder & Co.	(?)
Op. 104	<i>Gondolier’s Song Second Barcarolle</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond	1890

Op. 105	<i>To Elsie Mandolin Reverie</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond	1890
	<i>To Elsie</i> (arranged for mandolin and guitar)		Wm. A. Pond	1890
Op. 106	Transcriptions from <i>Cavalleria Rusticana</i> , Mascagni	piano	J. F. Schroeder	(?)
	1. "Lola's Ditty" and Turiddu's Song"			
	2. "Double Chorus" and "Prayer"			
	3. "Turiddu's Drinking Song"			
Op. 106*	<i>Tempo di Valse</i>	piano	John Church	1891
Op. 107	<i>Der Erlkönig</i> <i>Lied von Franz Schubert</i> (Transcription)	piano	Arthur P. Schmidt	1893
Op. 108				
Op. 109	Transcription of Czibulks's "Song d'Amour Après le Bal"	piano	(?)	(?)
Op. 110	<i>Tournament Galop Brillante</i> <i>for Piano Four Hands</i>	piano	J. F. Schroeder	(?)
Op. 111				
Op. 112	<i>La Naïde Reverie</i>	piano	Arthur P. Schmidt	1893
Op. 112*	"Crossing the Bar" (poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson)	song	Oliver Ditson	1893
Op. 113				
Op. 114				
Op. 115	<i>Ballade</i>	piano	J. B. Millet	1894
Op. 116	"The Bells of Lynn" (words by F. E. Weatherly)	song	Oliver Ditson	1893
Op. 117	Songs by Franz Schubert (Transcriptions) No. 1 "Ständchen" No. 2 "Am Meer"	piano	Arthur P. Schmidt	1895/6
Op. 118				

Op. 119	<i>Ships that Pass in the Night Reverie</i>	piano	Theodore Presser	1894
Op. 120				
Op. 121	<i>Trilby Music</i> (series one)	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1894
	1. Au clair de la lune			
	2. Malbrouck			
	3. Ben Bolt			
	4. Der Nussbaum			
	5. Impromptu, "Chopin"			
Op. 121	<i>Trilby Music</i> (series two)	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1895
	1. Rosamond-Overture, Fr. Schubert			
	2. Au Printemps, Chas. Gounod			
	3. Adieu, Fr. Schubert			
	4. London Milkmaid's Cry			
	5. Cantique de Noel, Adolphe Adam			
Op. 121	<i>Trilby Songs</i>	song	J. H. Schroeder	1895
	1. "Malbrouck"			
	2. "Au clair de la Lune"			
	3. "Ben Bolt"(Nelson Kneass)			
	4. "The Almond Tree" (Der Nussbaum), Schumann			
	5. "Au Printemps" (To Spring), Chas. Gounod			
	6. "Farewell" (Adieu), Fr. Schubert			
	7. "Cantique de Noël" (Christmas Song), Adolphe Adam			
	8. "Bonjour Suzon!" (Good Day Susanne!), J. Faure			
Op. 122				
Op. 123	<i>Two Musical Coupons</i>	piano	Oliver Ditson	1896
	No. 1: A Bicycle Ride (Etude)			
	No. 2: Plantation Scene			
Op. 124	<i>Doris' Dream Reverie</i>	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1896
Op. 125	"Auf dem Wasser zu Singen"	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1896
	<i>Barcarolle</i> (Franz Schubert, Op. 72)			
Op. 126	Cavatina from <i>Samson and Delilah</i> ,	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1899
	"Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix"			
Op. 127	"Der Lindenbaum"	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1899
	by Franz Schubert			

Op. 128				
Op. 129				
Op. 130	<i>La Manita Cuban Dance</i> , No. 5	piano	G. J. Bryan	1899
Op. 130*	<i>Parsifal</i> "Song of the Flower Maidens" by Wagner	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1904

### Compositions Published in America Without Opus Numbers

<i>Here's To You Harry Clay Grande Fantaisie</i>	piano	Firth, Pond & Co.	1850
<i>Songs for Summer Hours</i> (words by Mrs. Hemans)	songs	Wm. Vanderbeek	1851
1. "The Orange Bough"			
2. "My Gentle Child"			
3. "Bird of the Greenwood"			
3b. "The Bird at Sea" (included in the British publication)			
4. "And I Too in Arcadia Dwelt"			
<i>Premiere Polka de Salon</i>	piano	Wm. Vanderbeek	1853
"The Harp that Once Thro' Tara's Halls" (Transcription)	piano	Oliver Ditson	1893
"O, For the Wings of a Dove!" (Mendelssohn)	piano	Theodore Presser	1894
Selections from the Works of P. Tschaikowsky (Transcriptions)	piano	Arthur P. Schmidt	1894
1. Scherzo from Symphony No. 4, Op. 36			
2. Andante from Symphony No. 5, Op. 64			
3. Adagio cantabile from Sextet, Op. 70			
<i>The Lost Chord of Sir Arthur Sullivan</i> (Trans.)	piano	B. F. Wood	1901
<i>Venetian Serenade</i> "O Sole Mio" for left hand alone (Transcription)	piano	Theodore Presser	1907
"O, My Luve's Like a Red, Red Rose" (poem by Robert Burns)	song	G. Schirmer	1909

“Under the Balcony” (by Oscar Wilde, composed with Malvina Hoffman)	song	G. Schirmer	1909
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### Early Compositions

These works were all published between 1844 and 1846. Since dates of publication do not appear on the printed music, assigning specific years is not always possible, and thus, a question mark appears. With a few examples, only front matter and/or advertisements in the British press document a composition’s existence. In these cases, an asterisk is added after the title. “R. Andrews” indicates that the piece was published by R. Andrews, London Piano Forte Bazaar (The retail music business operated by Hoffman’s father).

<i>Andante and Twelve Variations on “Carnival de Venice”</i>	piano	R. Andrews	1845
<i>Les Charmes des Polkas</i>	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
<i>Count Pestal’s “Prison Melody” with Variations</i>	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
<i>The Emperor Napoleon’s Grand March*</i>	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
<i>Grand Fantasia on “Maritana” by H. V. Wallace</i>	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
<i>Kalliwoda’s Quadrilles*</i>	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
<i>New York Quadrilles*</i>	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
“Nos Galen,” Welsh Melody with Variations	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
“Proudly, My Standard” (from <i>Fra Diavolo</i> )*	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
“Rule Britannia,” <i>Brilliant Variations*</i>	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
Schubert’s “Erl-King” (Transcription)*	piano	R. Andrews	1844
<i>Three Favorite Airs from W. Vincent Wallace’s Opera, “Maritana”</i>	concertina	Wheatstone & Co.	(?)

## Compositions Published in England Without Opus Numbers

These pieces were published in England and appeared after Hoffman arrived in America. Often they are different versions of works published in the United States, while some, were apparently only published in England. Often, indicators such as footer advertisements like: “Just published by the same Composer” followed by listings of separate works by Hoffman confirm pieces that have not turned up in print. An asterisk appears next to these titles. Publications by: “R. Andrews, London Piano Forte Bazaar” or “London Piano Forte & Harp Bazaar” or “Andrew’s Piano Forte Saloon” indicate the Hoffman’s own publishing endeavors and, when listed as such, “R. Hoffman” appears in this catalogue. Dates of copyright typically are not included in these British publications. In such cases, context with other pieces give an indication, while in a few instances the reception date at the British Museum is inscribed by hand. Since the date of publication is not conclusive, a question mark is added.

<i>Les Adieux Schottische Elegante</i>	piano	R. Hoffman	1849?
<i>The Bell Polka Brillante</i>	piano	Metzler & Co.	(?)
<i>Danse Des Negres Bagatelle-Burlesque*</i>	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
“Eugénie” Polka de Salon, Op. 20 (Published as <i>Premiere Polka de Salon</i> in America, without opus, and with a different introduction and coda)	piano	Addison, Hollier & Lucas	(?)
<i>La Figlia del Reggimento Fantasia*</i>	piano	R. Hoffman	(?)
<i>La Gazelle, Élegante</i> (Published in American as Op. 1 and does not have the introduction included in the American version)	piano	R. Hoffman	1854?
<i>Les Oiseaux</i>	piano	R. Andrews	(?)
Richard Hoffman’s Drawing Room Album 1. <i>The Sea Nymph</i> 2. <i>Dixiana</i> (published in America as Op. 23) 3. <i>Maritana Grand Fantasia</i> (published previously)	piano	R. Andrews	1861?
<i>Scène Du Ballet</i>	piano	R. Hoffman	(?)



<i>Songs for Summer Hours</i> (words by Mrs. Hemans)	songs	R. Andrews	1849
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "The Orange Bough"</li> <li>2. "My Gentle Child"</li> <li>3. "Bird of the Greenwood"</li> <li>4. "The Bird at Sea" (included in the British publication)</li> <li>5. "And I Too in Arcadia Dwelt"</li> </ol>			
<i>Les Soir Reverie</i>	piano	Wood & Co.	1864?
(Shortened version of <i>By the Sad Sea Waves</i> , Op. 9; also published as: <i>Twilight Second Reverie-Sketch</i> for the British market.)			
<i>Les Soirées Dansantes</i>	piano	R. Hoffman	1849?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Valse Haydée</i></li> <li>2. "Blanche" <i>Polka Brillante</i></li> <li>3. <i>Monte-Cristo Quadrilles</i></li> </ol>			
<i>The Song of the Regiment</i> , "La Figlia"*	piano	R. Hoffman	(?)
(Clearly listed as a separate composition, not <i>La Figlia del Reggimento Fantasia</i> .)			
Three Studies	piano	Chappell & Co	1874?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Impetuoso" <i>Impromptu in C minor</i></li> <li>2. <i>Sunrise O'er the Sea</i></li> <li>3. <i>Etude in D-flat Major</i> (for left hand) by Edward Hoffman</li> </ol>			
<i>Twilight Reverie</i>	piano	R. Hoffman	1857?
(Published as <i>Twilight Le Crépuscule Rêverie</i> , Op. 3 in America)			

### Unpublished Compositions

#### Piano Trio

(According to Mrs. Hoffman, left unfinished, fragments probably lost)

#### Variations on "Hail Columbia" and "God Save the Queen"

(Holograph in ink, signed. New York Public Library Reserve, OCLC 78646634)

#### "Der Wanderer" by Franz Schubert (Transcription)

(Referenced by Mrs. Hoffman, probably lost)

**Published Compositions Mentioned in Back Matter**

<i>Die Walküre</i> Airs to Wagner's opera	piano	Martens Brothers
<i>Enchanted Bell</i>	piano	Wm. Pond & Co.
<i>Fantasia on "Elijah"</i>	piano	G. Schirmer
Marche funèbre de Saul de Handel	piano	G. Schirmer
"Nightingale's Trill" (Transcription)	piano	Wm. Pond & Co.
<i>Queen of Flowers Nocturne</i>	piano	Wm. Pond & Co.

### Appendix Three

#### Catalogue of Compositions by Sebastian Bach Mills

This catalogue represents the only comprehensive list of S. B. Mills's works to date. Although a few pieces were published with front or back matter that includes selected titles, a complete listing of Mills's works has not surfaced. Op. 1 through Op. 7 and Op. 49 through Op. 59 are elusive. Since *Hail Columbia! Paraphrase de Concert* was published as Op. 8, it is reasonable to suggest that Op. 1 through Op. 7 were composed. Likewise, since "Home Sweet Home" Transcription was assigned Op. 60 it is also likely that Op. 49 through Op. 59 were also composed. That this represents seven consecutive numbers and later eleven consecutive numbers suggests that these eighteen works were never published. Although these pieces have not surfaced, this catalogue includes the opus numbers. The catalogue does, however, include a few pieces that were published without opus numbers, which may account for some of the missing works.

Op. 1

Op. 2

Op. 3

Op. 4

Op. 5

Op. 6

Op. 7

Op. 8	<i>Hail Columbia!</i> <i>Paraphrase de Concert</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1876
Op. 9	<i>La Cambrienne Fantasie Elegant</i>	piano	E. P. Jones	1850
Op. 10	"Alpine Horn" Transcription	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1864
Op. 11	"Une Fleur Pour Toi" <i>Mazurka Styrienne</i>	piano	Jos. P. Shaw	1862
Op. 12	<i>Barcarolle Venetienne</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1865
Op. 13	<i>Tarantella</i> (first)	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1863

Op. 14	<i>La Reine des Lacs</i> <i>Mazurka Caracteristique</i>	piano	Sheppard & Cottier	1862
Op. 15	<i>Etude de Concert No. 1</i> <i>Etude de Concert No. 2</i>	piano piano	Arthur P. Schmidt Arthur P. Schmidt	1882 1882
Op. 16	<i>Grande Polonaise Militaire</i>	piano	J. Schuberth & Co.	1868
Op. 17	<i>Fantasie Dramatique</i> <i>sur Faust de Gounod</i>	piano	J. Schuberth & Co.	1864
Op. 18	<i>Polka-Caprice Elegant</i>	piano	Beer & Schirmer	1865
Op. 19	<i>Mazurka Scherzando</i>	piano	G. H Ellis	1864
Op. 20	<i>Second Tarantella</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1865
Op. 21	<i>Murmuring Fountain Caprice</i>	piano	Pond	1866
Op. 22	<i>Caprice Galop</i>	piano	Pond	1866
Op. 23	<i>Recollections of Home</i> <i>Caprice Populaire</i>	piano	Pond	1868
Op. 24	<i>Fairy Fingers Etude Caprice</i>	piano	Pond	1868
Op. 25	<i>Toujours Gai! Polka des Enfants</i>	piano	Pond	1868
Op. 26	<i>Saltarello</i>	piano	Pond	1871
Op. 27	<i>Beautiful Blue Danube</i> Concert Transcription	piano	Pond	1872
Op. 28	<i>Barcarolle No. 2</i>	piano	Pond	1873
Op. 29	<i>Waltz-Caprice</i>	piano	Pond	1879
Op. 30	<i>Fascination Mazurka Impromptu</i>	piano	Pond	1880
Op. 31	<i>Gavotte</i>	piano	Pond	1881
Op. 32	<i>Evening Thoughts Meditation</i>	piano	Pond	1882
Op. 33	<i>Harmonieuse Gavotte</i>	piano	Pond	1883

Op. 34	<i>Cradle Song</i>	piano	Pond	1887
Op. 35	<i>La Paloma Chanson Espagnole</i> Transcription	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1886
Op. 36	<i>Old Folks at Home</i> Concert-Transcription	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1887
Op. 37	<i>Improvista on Two Welsh Melodies</i>	piano	J. H. Schroeder	1888
Op. 38	<i>Le Papillon (The Butterfly)</i>	piano	Pond	1889
Op. 39	<i>Valse-Tyrolienne</i>	piano	Pond	1888
Op. 40	<i>Third Tarantella</i>	piano	Pond	1889
Op. 41	<i>Recollections of Scotland Fantasie</i>	piano	J. H. Schroeder & Co.	1891
Op. 42	<i>My Darling's-Face</i> (song by Stephen Massett) Transcription	piano	J. H. Schroeder & Co.	1893
Op. 43	<i>Rose Bud Mazurka</i>	piano	Wm. A. Pond	1894
Op. 44	<i>Menuet Antique</i>	piano	Pond	1895
Op. 45	<i>Romance</i>	piano	Pond	1895
Op. 46	<i>Elbiata March</i>	piano	Pond	1895
Op. 47	<i>Fairy Lillian Etude Caprice</i>	piano	Pond	(?)
Op. 48	<i>Waltz Impromptu</i>	piano	Pond	1896
Op. 49				
Op. 50				
Op. 51				
Op. 52				
Op. 53				
Op. 54				
Op. 55				

Op. 56			
Op. 57			
Op. 58			
Op. 59			
Op. 60	Home Sweet Home (Transcription)	piano	Pond 1906

### Works without Opus Numbers

<i>Album Leaf</i>	piano	Prochazka	1884
<i>La Chasse Rondo a la Polka</i>	piano	C. B. Seymour & Co.	1859
<i>Three Favorite Melodies</i> (Transcriptions)	piano	Russell & Tolman	1860
No. 1 "Brightest Eyes"			
No. 2 "Long Weary Day"			
No. 3 "Near"			
<i>Welsh Air with Brilliant Variations.</i>	Piano	Pond	1860
S. B. Mills: Album of Piano Solos, 1-8		Wm. A. Pond & Co.	1913
(The Library of Congress has copyright documentation for this volume: Copyright entry: #315470, date: 7 August 1913)			

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