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A master's recital in piano

Min Jeong Kim
University of Northern Iowa

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A MASTER'S RECITAL IN PIANO

A Recital Abstract
Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Music in Piano Performance

Min Jeong Kim
University of Northern Iowa
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This Recital Abstract by: Min Jeong Kim

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has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the

Degree of Master of Music in Piano Performance

Date

Professor Sean Botkin, Chair, Thesis Committee

Date

Dr. Dmitri Vorobiev, Thesis Committee Member

Date

Dr. Theresa C. Camilli, Thesis Committee Member

Date

Dr. Michael J. Licari, Dean, Graduate College

ABSTRACT

On March 14, 2014, Min Jeong Kim presented a recital in completion of her Master's degree in Piano Performance. The recital was held at 6 p.m. in Davis Hall at the University of Northern Iowa School of Music. Pieces on the program included: Prelude and Fugue in C minor, BWV 871 by Johann Sebastian Bach, *Klavierstücke*, Op. 118 by Johannes Brahms, *Rain Tree Sketch II* by Toru Takemitsu, and Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 81a by Ludwig van Beethoven.

Prelude and Fugue in C minor from WTC II, BWV 871 by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach is one of the most admired composers of the Baroque period. He composed chamber, keyboard, voice, string and wind music, but not opera. Bach's music education was influenced by his father, Johann Ambrosius, who was a clavecinist and a court director.

J. S. Bach was a master of contrapuntal music. His works show not only German musical style but also Italian and French styles. His music has built-in mathematical concepts; however, his music also has lyrical, artistic, and emotional qualities.

Bach's works are divided into four periods. The first period was while he was in Arnstadt. At this time, he used to imitate other composers' works and little is left of those works. The second period was from 1708 to 1717 in Weimar. Bach was an organist and church director; he composed a lot of church music such as cantatas and

oratorios. He sought more musicality and expression in his music in the second period. 1717-1723 in Köthen was the third period. Bach wrote many chamber works and solos for strings. He also started to compose *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier Book I*, BWV 864 through 869, and six of his English Suites and French Suites. The last period was from 1723 onwards in Leipzig. He composed concertos, cantatas, passions, oratorios, six partitas, Italian Concerto, and Goldberg Variations. Most of his representative works were composed at this time. During the last period, his works were more for performance than educational purposes. In 1744, Bach composed *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier Book II*. It shows features of all his early and late music. ¹

The prelude is in a style similar to that of Bach's *Two Part Inventions*. Sixteenth notes and eighth notes alternate in the subject. It also has sequential progression. The prelude has a fast tempo in contrast to the fugue.

The fugue is simple, non-decorative, and calm. There are four voices and the fourth voice enters in measure 20 in augmentation technique. At the end of the fugue, the subject has built up in all four voices. It depicts thick textures and ends in stretto technique.

¹ Christoph Wolff, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online.* under "Grove Music Online," <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40023pg10> (accessed Feb, 2014).

6 Klavierstücke, Op. 118

by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

No.1 Intermezzo

No.2 Intermezzo

No.3 Ballade

No.5 Romanze

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), a great conservative composer of the Romantic era, expressed depth of inner emotions and passions with the strict formal style of the Baroque era and Classicism. He admired Johann Sebastian Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven. As a result, Brahms was also called a neo-classic composer, and his music has been evaluated as music with lyricism but also profound deep sounds. In 1853, Brahms was introduced by Robert Schumann in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* as the greatest and most valuable composer of the expressive musical trend at that time.²

Brahms wrote three sonatas, five sets of variations, and nine character pieces. He tried to represent instrumental colors and logical thematic handling which is exemplified in his three Sonatas Opp. 1, 2, 5, and his Scherzo Op. 4 in his early years of piano music (1852-1853). In his middle years (1854-1863), he preferred to write variation forms, such as Theme and Variations Opp. 9, 21, 24, 35. He used not only existing themes by Haydn, Handel, and Paganini but also his own themes. The counterpoint of Bach influenced

² Peter Latham, *Brahms* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1975), 62.

Brahms in his thematic development with imitation or expanded themes. In Brahms' late years (1865-1893), he expressed more deep internal emotions via free character pieces. All of his late works were character pieces that expressed his sophisticated and complex thoughts. Op. 76 to Op. 119 were composed between 1877 and 1897.³

Each character piece is made up of three parts and is in ABA form. They have titles such as Capriccio, Intermezzo, Ballade, Rhapsody, and Romanze. Despite the literary titles, the music does not have the descriptive qualities of character music. Brahms avoided using depictive titles because he did not seek to create program music.

Klavierstücke, Op. 118, was composed in 1893. He sought deep and profound sounds when he composed this music. Op. 118 shows Brahms' mature, sad, and solitary sounds. Diatonic and chromatic harmonies appear simultaneously and are combined with Baroque elements: ostinato bass, stretto, and canon. Brahms also used various rhythmic devices such as syncopation and hemiola, two against three or three against two. In addition, he used non-harmonic tones, passing tones, and auxiliary tones. He often used Picardy thirds and diminished seventh chords at the ends of pieces.

Klavierstücke, Op. 118 is made up of six pieces; four Intermezzos, one Ballade, and one Romanze. As mentioned before, these titles have no meanings. All six pieces are in three-part formation, ABA, but also have transitions, codettas, and codas.

³ Soo Youn Chung. "A Study of Johannes Brahms' *Klavierstücke*, Op. 118" (master's diss., Ewha Women's University, 2003), 14.

In the nineteenth century, the intermezzo was used as a free form character piece and appears in Schumann's music as well. Brahms' intermezzo represents control, sensitivity, elegant sounds and masculine passion.⁴ It is in ABA form with a coda and is the shortest piece of the six, but the length of each section is equal. Each of the A-B-A sections is ten measures and the coda is eleven measures. Chromatic descending lines in the right hand from measures 1 to 10 are typical of the chromatic harmony of Brahms, and they bridge diatonic melody lines. In measures 5-8, the outer melody line and the inner melody line imitate each other. In the coda section, the A appears as a suspension note and goes to A major's Picardy third. It ends up in A major, which brings us to the beginning of No. 2 Intermezzo, also in A major.

In contrast to No. 1 Intermezzo, No. 2 Intermezzo sounds feminine and lovely, which makes this intermezzo one of the most widely popular of Brahms' character piano pieces. It is in ABA form and in the key of A major, but F-sharp minor is used in the B section as the relative key. Each voice is imitated from measures 64-67 by using crossing melody lines. Also, Brahms often used dotted rhythms and hemiola. No. 2 Intermezzo ends up with a half cadence instead of an authentic cadence.

The No. 3 Ballade is in ABA form and in the key of G minor. It starts with energetic strong rhythm and stepwise harmonies.⁵ In the beginning of the A section, he marked staccato in the right hand in order to have masculine and strong sounds and

⁴ Chung, *A Study of Johannes Brahms' Klavierstücke*, Op. 118, 22.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 32.

accents. In the B section, in contrast to the A section, the melody line is expressed by legato technique.

The term Romanze was used for lyrical instrumental character pieces after the eighteenth century in Germany. The Romanze is related to poems, *lieder*, and literature. In the No. 5 Romanze, the soprano and bass melody lines are moving conversationally with quarter and half notes, while the alto and tenor melody lines are moving together in the A section. The theme appears in contrapuntal style. The tempo marking changes in the B section from *andante* to *allegretto*. The theme consists of eighth notes and the theme is transformed four times in the right hand and ostinato is in the bass line.

Rain Tree Sketch II

by Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996)

Toru Takemitsu was a Japanese composer and writer who specialized in music theory and analysis of western heritage and tradition. Born in Japan, Takemitsu became aware of and interested in western music during World War II. Takemitsu was exposed to a wide range of music genres and styles over the radio during his lifetime. These exposures included jazz, avant-garde, and traditional Japanese music, which were largely influenced by the music of Claude Debussy and Olivier Messiaen. Takemitsu was spotlighted on the international stage in 1957, with his piece *Requiem for String Orchestra*. Takemitsu was one of the most important twentieth century composers in Japan.

Being an innovative thinker and analyst, Takemitsu also showed interest in modern art, philosophy and film, which influenced his pieces. Takemitsu's knowledge of modern art is shown through his attention to detail and specific markings throughout his works. His major piano works include *Rain Tree Sketch II* and *Lew Yeus Clos* which are considered to be two of the greatest instrumental compositions of the twentieth century.

Rain Tree Sketch II was composed in 1992. It is a set with *Rain Tree Sketch I*, which was composed in 1982. Those pieces are representative of Takemitsu's solo piano works. *Rain Tree Sketch II* is a combination of traditional Japanese aesthetics; calm, simple notes, and mood and western musical notation. It has two staves, treble and bass clefs, bar lines, and Italian dynamics and tempo marking.⁶ This piece represents sensitive and delicate sounds by using free pedaling. Much of the colors are produced through free use of pedal which are indicated by Takemitsu as *ad libitum*.

Takemitsu did not often use loud sounds. His use of *forte* dynamics is limited. He used *piano*, *pianissimo*, and *pianississimo* the most. Takemitsu said that "Music is either sound or silence. That sound should be a single, strong sound."⁷ There is only one note marked *fortissimo* in *Rain Tree Sketch II*. This is in measure fifty in the bass. However, it immediately soft and *pianississim*. In his music, rests are an important element which is especially heard in this piece. The measures following Tempo I indication always starts with a rest.

⁶ Scott Meek, "Traditional Japanese Aesthetics Within A Modern Frame: Japanese Literary Sources in Relation to Toru Takemitsu's Rain Tree Sketches" (master's diss., Indiana University, 2012), 1.

⁷ Meek, *Traditional Japanese Aesthetics Within A Modern Frame: Japanese Literary Sources in Relation to Toru Takemitsu's Rain Tree Sketches*, 16.

The opening of *Rain Tree Sketch II* begins with two different rhythmically complex motives. The right hand starts in 3/8, with three groups of sixteenth notes, while the left hand is in 6/16, with two groups of sixteenth notes. After nine measures of the Tempo I section there is a measure of rest, which bridges to Tempo II. Between Tempo I and Tempo II, these tempo markings are used seven times with always one measure of rest before each tempo marking. So, when it changes from Tempo I to Tempo II, the music stops and only silence remains.

Sonata No. 26 in E-flat Major, Op. 81a *Das Lebewohl*
by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), along with Joseph Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, established the classical style of music, and contributed to cultivating the new trend of Romantic music.⁸ He systematized and expanded the classical sonata form through his thirty two keyboard sonatas. Based on the style of composition, Beethoven's thirty two piano sonatas are generally divided into three periods: the early, the middle, and late period.⁹ Generally, Beethoven's piano sonatas reveal outstanding musical aesthetics and were composed throughout his entire life. His piano sonatas have

⁸ Min Jeong Kim, "A Study on L. v. Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op.31, No.3," (master's diss., Sungshin Women's University, 2009).

⁹ John Gillespie, "Five Centuries of Keyboard Music," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 14, no. 4 (Winter 1966). Under "Jstor," <http://jstor.org/stable/3344289> (accessed Mar.18, 2014).

artistic motives and sudden dramatic changes in dynamics. This especially appears in his middle period music.

The piano sonata Op. 81a, *Das Lebewohl*, is one of the middle period works. The title was given by Beethoven and means The Farewell. It has extra musical ideas from the story of the Ten Years' War in 1809 and it was composed during that time. In the beginning of this sonata, the keys G, F, and E-flat appear under the syllables Le, be, wohl. It turns out that Beethoven wrote these three syllables himself. Therefore, the title of this piano sonata is clearer than other titles of his piano sonatas.

Each movement has its own title; the first movement is **Das Lebewohl (Les Adieux)** *Adagio-Allegro*. Beethoven shows missing, longing, and regret of the absence of Archduke Rudolf, who supported Beethoven and whom Beethoven respected. The second one is **Abwesenheit (L'Absence)** *Andante espressivo* and it represents the anxiety of Archduke Rudolf's absence by changing keys multiple times. The last one is **Wiedersehen (Le Retour)** *Vivacissimamente* and it shows the happiness of Beethoven's reunion with Archduke Rudolf. Piano sonata Op. 81a is one of the most virtuosic pieces. Moreover, Beethoven said that it is intended to express emotions rather than describe stories.¹⁰

The first movement is in sonata form. It has an exposition, development, and recapitulation with coda. The first movement begins with a slow introduction in key of G, F, and E-flat keep appearing throughout the first movement. The slow introduction

¹⁰ William S. Newman, *Sonata in the Classical Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 525.

changes to *Allegro* in the first theme. In the first theme, G, F, and E-flat are augmented and transformed. At the end of the first movement, the subject comes out by using canon technique.

The second movement is in C minor, which is the relative key of the original key of E-flat major. This movement is short and only has 42 measures. The second movement has various changes in harmony, which presents Beethoven's unstable emotions due to the absence of Archduke Rudolf. It is in ABAB double form with A and B in contrasting characters. The A section is in a dark and solitary mood. In contrast to this, the B section is bright and happy. In addition, it is connected to the third movement without pause as indicated by the word *attacca*. At the end of the second movement, Beethoven used a half cadence instead of an authentic cadence to help connect it to the third movement.

The last movement is in the home key of E-flat Major, returning from the relative minor of the second movement. Also, it is in sonata form with an exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda. The exposition shows the use of sudden dynamic changes. The use of *sforzando* and *pianissimo* creates a dramatic and virtuosic mood and produces tension. The first ten measures consist of sixteenth sequences of arpeggios and show exuberance. In the coda, there are few harmonic changes, which implies the last movement ends smoothly with the happiness of reuniting with Archduke Rudolf.

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School of Music

University of Northern Iowa

Min Jeong Kim

Piano

Studio of Prof. Sean Botkin

**Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center
Friday, March 14, 2014 Davis Hall, 6:00 p.m.**

Program

Prelude and Fugue in c minor from WTC II, BWV 871.....Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

6 Klavierstücke, Op. 118.....Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

1. *Intermezzo* in A minor
2. *Intermezzo* in A Major
3. *Ballade* in G minor
5. *Romanze* in F Major

~*intermission*~

Rain Tree Sketch II (1992).....Toru Takemitsu
(1930-1996)

Sonata No.26 in E-flat Major, Op. 81a "Les Adieux" Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

I. Das Lebewohl (Les Adieux)

Adagio-Allegro

II. Abwesenheit (L'Absence)

Andante espressivo

III. Wiedersehen (Le Retour)

Vivacissimamente

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the Master of Music in Piano Performance degree