Romanticizing Brahms: Early Recordings and the [De]Construction of Brahmsian Identity

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4) Analyses of the Schumann - Brahms Pupil Recordings

4.1) Introduction

Having focused primarily on historical documentary traces thus far, it is time to turn to a single-minded examination of sound. Though they are generally regarded as invaluable evidence of late-Romantic performance practices, early twentieth century recordings still tend to be treated as mere addendums to more tangible yet malleable traces such as biographies, eyewitness accounts and scores. Perhaps it is in our nature as visual and tactile creatures to trust what we can see and touch, while the audible past is viewed as ephemeral and potentially evidentiary of an unreliable performer, on a bad day, and by way of less than ideal recording conditions and technologies. Even HIP players who still handle historical utterances and scores with reverent meticulousness are scandalized at the thought of anyone approaching historical sounds in a similar fashion.

While modern pianists have somewhat warmed to Chopin as heard on Theodor Leschetizky's 1906 Welte-Mignon piano rolls and Raoul Pugno's 1903 Gramophone & Typewriter Co. recordings, hearing Debussy perform his piano works like a bawdy nineteenth-century beer hall entertainer is quite another story. Perhaps this is because Leschetizky and Pugno communicate a version of Chopin that is consistent with his bardic Romantic identity: a narrative buttressed by performance norms that are already fairly permissive with regards to dislocation, arpeggiation, rhythmic alteration and tempo modification. Making the leap to Leschetizky and Pugno's style thus becomes a matter of

degree, while adopting Debussy's approach demands a complete rewrite of his canonic identity and associated performance norms.

The Schumann-Brahms pupils' recordings make for similarly awkward bedfellows with modern understandings of Brahms's hale and hearty identity. While my imitations of their recorded performances are generally met with interest and pleasure, listeners often assume that I copy these traces for the sake of historical authenticity, thus underlining their fixity, pastness and otherness. Indignation often ensues when I reveal that I aim to *embody* something long considered unworthy of such effort: to make these pupils' performance styles part of my own listening, thinking, feeling and playing apparatus as a pianist today; to learn a stylistic dialect from the inside out that can then be extrapolated across other works left unrecorded by these pianists. Because the only criteria for success here is that my style copies simply have to be *copies*, this process is not mediated by current interpretations of documentary traces and the canonic identities such interpretations protect: interventions that tend to keep early recordings at arm's length from the modern musical acts they inspire.

It is indeed often argued that by centring historical sounds in such a dogmatic way I have conveniently avoided vetting them against evidence found in nineteenth-century performance treatises. This is actually more deference than evasion: a number of compilations[430] of such sources are already available, while Da Costa's *Off the Record* focuses on those texts most applicable to pianists and demonstrates their incompleteness as related to the recordings of those who penned them. Da Costa's monograph already evidences a step towards forcing historical documents to prove their value in relation to

[430] For example, see Clive Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750 - 1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

sound, rather than the other way around: a turn that is itself related to recent efforts in empirical musicological circles to shift attention to music's meaning in performance, thus "facilitating the same kind of aesthetic and interpretative study of performers that traditional musicology has lavished on composers."[431]

It is also argued that I do not handle historical recordings with even a modicum of the caution they warrant. I defer again here to the many comprehensive discussions[432] of the history of recording already available: partly because it is a topic best elucidated by those with more technical expertise than I, but primarily because when I listen to early recordings I hear music, not technology. While Roger Heaton argues that recordings are not performances, he does concede that by virtue of their relative lack of editorial interference many early recordings are perhaps something like performances in that they capture the "wrong notes, untidy ensemble or imperfect intonation [that] in live performances are, to some extent, the fragile nature of the business."[433] While the relationship between live performance and recordings was perhaps closest between the advent of electrical recording in 1925 and tape recordings in the 1940s,[434] the recordings I copy are from the years before and after this period and yet it is still difficult to argue that they signify anything other than musical acts of performance.

It is of course important to know what historical recordings can and can't tell us. Simon Trezise points out the limitations of pre-WWII recordings in detecting the range of

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[431] Nicholas Cook, "Methods for Analysing Recordings," in *Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music,* 241.
[432] In addition to chapters 7 and 9 of *Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music* and chapter 1 of Da Costa's *Off the Record*, see also Leech-Wilkinson, *Changing Sound of Music,* chapter 3, and Roger Beardsley and Leech-Wilkinson, "A Brief History of Recording to ca. 1950," *History of Recordings* (London: CHARM, 2009), http://www.charm.kcl.ac.uk/history/p20_4_1.html.
[433] Roger Heaton, "Reminder: A Recording is Not a Performance," *Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*, 217.
[434] Introduction to *Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*, 3.

frequencies audible to the human ear, meaning much of what was heard live was lost; the limited dynamic response of acoustic recordings between 1907 and 1925, meaning that pianists had to play loudly and that dynamics could only be modified by manipulating the distance between the performer and the recording horn; the tastes of modern engineers who make commercial transfers of 78s, especially as related to matters of timbral fidelity; the durational constraints of early recordings, meaning that performers often had to hurry or edit their performances; and how playback speeds can alter tempo and pitch. While Trezise argues that, "a recording does not 'show' a performance to us, for the performance that generated the recorded artifact is hidden," he does offer a fascinating account of Adelina Patti's records being played in social situations at various speeds, thereby altering both tempo and key - with Patti herself in attendance.[435] Perhaps it is wise to remember that it is we who either seek or resist the fixity of recorded sounds.

Once aware of the bizarre conditions under which many of the earliest recordings came to be, it's wondrous that they sound like music at all. Pianist Joe Batten recalls recording in a tiny room around 1900 on an upright piano without a front or back that had been hoisted onto a platform so that its soundboard was level with the recording horn. He was then instructed to play double *forte* while someone "who had nothing else to do at the time"[436] held his score aloft. While Da Costa discusses many such scenarios, including the practice of filing down of hammers to make pianos more percussive and the instructing of pianists to play without pedal, he notes that by the 1920s many pianists were recording on grand pianos unencumbered by such circumstances and that even

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[435] Simon Trezise, "The Recorded Document: Interpretation and Discography," *Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*, 193 - 96, 207.
[436] Joe Batten, *Joe Batten's Book: The Story of Sound Recording* (London: Rockliff, 1956), 33, in Da Costa, *Off the Record*, 15.

earlier some were recording at home: Adelina Patti's 1906 recordings for example were made at her home, Ignacy Paderewski plays his own Erard grand piano on his 1911 recordings, and pedalling can be heard on Alfred Grünfeld's 1899 recordings and on Pugno and Louis Diémer's in 1903 and 1904.[437]

Da Costa also argues that to deal with limited playback times pianists were more likely to make cuts than to play faster in longer works while shorter pieces "were sustainable both artistically and economically for all 78rpm records, both acoustic and electric," and thus "preserve the normal tempo intentions of the artist." As evidence he cites a number of cases where shorter works recorded by the same pianist on both discs and longer-playing piano rolls are of highly similar lengths. Take Grieg's 1903 acoustic recording of his *Bridal Procession* Op. 19 no. 2 and his 1906 Welte-Mignon piano roll of the same work for example: not only is the latter only five seconds longer than the three minute long former, but both traces evidence the same local rhythmic alterations and larger-scale tempo modifications. It is also important to note that the playback time of 12-inch disc sides was about four and a half minutes by 1903,[438] given that Ilona Eibenschütz's lightning-fast recording of the *Ballade in G minor* Op. 118 no. 3 dates from the same year and yet lasts only two minutes and thirty-eight seconds. Grieg and Eibenschütz certainly had time to spare had they wished to play more slowly. Finally, Da Costa argues that the technical limitations of early recordings weren't much more intrusive than the editorial interventions of today, and that recordings then and now are still "a partial representation of what...musicians would have achieved in concert performance, adapted to suit the limitations of the recording machinery of the day." Like

[437] Da Costa, *Off the Record*, 16 - 19.
[438] Ibid., 20, 22, 38.

Da Costa, I too would say that, "my recordings made on a good day are representative of what I can achieve in a successful live performance. At the very least, my performance style and idiosyncrasies are well preserved."[439]

All of this seems to support the argument that when it comes to performance, "if it sounds like one it is one."[440] If recordings sound like performances then it follows that they can and should be taken as evidence of performance style. It is thus strange that RIP has assumed many of the very legitimate anxieties plaguing those historical musicking spheres that are wholly reliant on non-sounding traces. In reference to repertoires pre-dating recording technologies, Bruce Haynes points out that, "totally accurate historical performance is probably impossible to achieve" and impossible "to know *when* it has been achieved." Clearly, the beauty of recordings is that they are "authentic because, quite simply, they are the real thing."[441] Perhaps however they are a bit *too* real: after quoting Haynes, Da Costa wonders if authenticity is really the point of RIP, extolling instead its usefulness for seeing old works with new eyes, for expanding one's range of expressive possibilities, and for reinvigorating one's musical intuition.[442] While RIP can undoubtedly do all of this and more, when finally in possession of something real why are we so quick to skip recreation and move directly to inspiration?

Caution naturally pervades the performances borne of such exordiums, with early-recorded pianism being experienced and applied through the same veiled, crackling and nostalgic haze that permeates so many of the earliest surviving recordings. In a recent

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[439] Robert Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording* (London: Yale University Press, 2004), 28, in Da Costa, *Off the Record*, 23, 29.
[440] Leech-Wilkinson, *Changing Sound of Music*, chapter 3, paragraph 107.
[441] Bruce Haynes, *The End of Early Music: A Period Performer's History of Music for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 10, in Da Costa, *Off the Record*, xxv, emphasis mine; and Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style,* 240.
[442] Da Costa, *Off the Record*, xxv.

lecture-performance one RIP performer demonstrated how he imbues his own recordings with the clicks, hisses and pops of old records: sounds that seem to have become conflated with late-Romantic performance style, where both are said to be "instantly recognizable as premodern" and "perfumed with the scent of a bygone era."[443] Many RIP pianists adopt a similarly perfumed approach to applying the elements of early-recorded pianism, whereby only those expressive devices that are verifiable by documentary traces or by general trends in early-recorded style are included. This approach seems similar to that bemoaned by Taruskin in relation to HIP, where "nothing is allowed to intrude into the performance that cannot be 'authenticated.'"[444] Much like the digital crackles and pops, such an approach keeps RIP style scented with pastness, without bringing it fully and stumblingly into the harsh light of the present.

The hegemony of the printed word and score has not yet fully given way to sound: if it had, our RIP performances would sound more like their historical models. Instead, and as argued throughout the present volume, such interventions (and the caution and selectivity they inspire) serve only to buttress the performance norms that protect our most revered canonic identities. So what happens when we approach sound with the same meticulousness lavished upon documents, but without allowing the latter to pre-structure what might be gleaned from the former? My style copying processes attempt to do just this, thus sidestepping such mediations: by describing rather than 'authenticating' the early-recorded performance styles of the Schumann-Brahms pupils, and by enacting the intention and extension behind those performances through pure imitation.

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[443] Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 168, and Edward Sackville-West, "Rosenthal," *Recorded Sound: The Journal of the British Institute of Recorded Sound* 1, no. 7 (1962): 214, in Da Costa, *Off the Record*, xxviii.
[444] Taruskin, *Text and Act*, 72, in Da Costa, *Off the Record*, xxvii.

To my knowledge, the only other modern performer who has systematically embraced this all-or-nothing approach to early-recorded sounds is pianist Sigurd Slåttebrekk who, in collaboration with Tony Harrison, has painstakingly recreated the nine recordings made by Edvard Grieg in 1903 as part of a project entitled *Chasing the Butterfly*. Though Slåttebrekk and Harrison analyse, recreate and re-record Grieg's performances in short takes that are then pieced together through editing (while I analyse and copy first and then record full 'one off' takes), the parallels between our respective projects are otherwise staggering: particularly given the fact that they were initiated around the same time, and with seemingly no knowledge of the other. It speaks volumes for the field of RIP however, that Slåttebrekk, Harrison and I independently came to the conclusion that early recordings were being dealt with in either dismissive or selective ways, and that these tendencies could be avoided (and perhaps also explained) by simply imitating these artefacts as a means of truly understanding the performance traditions they capture. Only through imitation would this understanding be then transformed into inspiration, or newly informed musical intuition.

Indeed, Slåttebrekk and Harrison state that by "examining the components of Grieg's playing and re-playing them: single notes, turns of phrase, longer sections, whole pieces; deconstructing, re-building, melding and forging," what was ultimately achieved was "understanding through imitation, and imitation through understanding." This understanding is a rich one however, in that performance elements are perceived, deciphered, translated, and become linked to one another, through one's own mind and body as a performer. What is at first only sensed becomes clumsily enacted: an experience that begets enhanced understanding, more focused movements, and so on.

After a while, "muscle-memory improve[s], the subconscious beg[ins] to take over, and some kind of contact [is] made."[445] In other words, as knowing becomes doing and as doing engenders ever-new knowing, our understanding of early-recorded style is "moved from the higher to the lower levels of our consciousness. Or to put it simpler: from head to body."[446] And from body back to head.

Furthermore, early recordings also speak volumes about how past musicians negotiated performances with their *own* minds and bodies: or as Simon Trezise puts it, "historical performers exercised their larynxes and arms to make music: their exhalations and muscular gymnastics live on, engraved in the grooves, metamorphosed by a hundred different movements, electrical circuits, and razor blades."[447] By listening I can imagine how they moved their bodies through time and space to produce these performances, and by copying I can experience how it feels to play in the same ways today. All of this seems to bring to life Taruskin's and Cook's respective claims that, "performances, even canned performances, are not things but acts," and that these acts are meaningful because "they are prompts to performative acts by listeners."[448]

The aim of this chapter is thus to describe a selection of recordings by the Schumann-Brahms pupils so that they may become prompts to modern performative acts: first through imitation, and later through experimentation. Unlike traditional performance analyses that compare, contrast and establish commonalities and patterns, these descriptions are purely functional: they simply seek to establish *what* is being played,

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[445] Sigurd Slåttebrekk and Tony Harrison, in the chapter entitled "Recreating Grieg's 1903 Recordings and Beyond," from *Chasing the Butterfly: Recreating Grieg's 1903 Recordings and Beyond,* accessed October 29, 2014, http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=75.
[446] Ibids., "Approaching a Performance Style," http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=137.
[447] Trezise, "The Recorded Document," *Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*, 208.
[448] Taruskin, *Text and Act*, 24, in Cook, "Methods for Analysing Recordings," *Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*, 242.

where and when, and perhaps also how and why. Software will be used, but only to clarify details that, while audible to the 'naked ear,' need extra elucidation for the purposes of producing a faithful copy. While the scores associated with these recorded performances are difficult to avoid, the key is to view them like the agar in petri dishes upon which recorded sounds are allowed to thrive regardless of whatever structuring grid might lie beneath. I also do not intend to establish a new set of general 'style rules' here. As Philip states regarding the use of *portamento* in early-recorded string playing, "it is not as if players simply had 'rules' which they applied, and which we could decide to apply too...[for] this would be to use *portamento* in a modern way." Instead, to slide like late-Romantic players we "have to abandon the notion that 'clean' playing is tasteful playing, and relearn the habit of sliding audibly at most changes of position." Indeed, the goal here is to arrive at a replicable understanding of how these pupils' performances unfold, and to then imitate them regardless of the consequences for my tone and technique: a risky undertaking that will require "redefining the borderline between competence and style."[449]

Since this is a risk I happen to be willing to take, this chapter begins with a brief assertion of how modern performance norms are borne out in performances of Brahms's *Rhapsody in G minor* Op. 79 no. 2, *Intermezzo in E flat major* Op. 117 no. 1, *Ballade in G minor* Op. 118 no. 3, and *Intermezzo in E minor* Op. 119 no. 2. This is followed by detailed accounts of my 'naked ear' and software-assisted examinations of the Schumann-Brahms pupils' recordings of the same works. Only after this process will we be in a position to call Taruskin's bluff when he states that if we really wanted to know what it

[449] Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 235.

would take to perform in a historical way, we'd "begin by imitating early-twentieth-century recordings of late-nineteenth-century music."[450] Well, that is what we shall do.

[450] Taruskin, *Text and Act*, 168, in Da Costa, *Off the Record*, xxxi.

4.2) Contemporary Brahms Style

My original intention here was to focus on Brahms's late piano works Op. 117 - 119 (1892 - 93), as the expressive content of these miniatures seemed reminiscent of Brahms's Kreislerian youth; because they came into being closest to the time many of the Schumann-Brahms pupils recorded them; because they were composed with many of those students' abilities in mind; and because their brevity and simplicity facilitated the copying of those students' styles and the extrapolation of these styles across other works. Despite being an earlier composition however, the *Rhapsody in G* Minor Op. 79 no. 2 (1879) makes an interesting point of departure: not only was it recorded by one of Clara's finest students, Adelina de Lara, but it also happens to be the very first work with which I was inculcated into the unique world of Brahmsian pianism.

During those first lessons I learned that instead of using a quick and percussive attack in fast and loud material as one might do in Liszt, in Brahms one was to play with a round, deep and resonant tone and attack; instead of focusing on producing a prominent and free melodic line as one does in Chopin, in Brahms one pays meticulous attention to the delineation of inner melodies, powerful bass lines, and rhythmic and harmonic complexities; instead of lingering on poignant details as one does in Schumann, in Brahms one maintains a steady pulse, an inner rather than outer approach to expression, and clarity of structure; and while performance style can be understood as a set of ways

of *not* performing scores literally,[451] justifiable departures from Brahms's scores are those that elucidate the detail and structure *of* those scores.

All of this might be called a contemporary style of Brahms performance: a collection of habits and patterns of manipulating tone, time and intensity applied by a majority of pianists today in ways that conform with modern performance norms in general while also being immediately recognizable as 'Brahmsian.' In order to establish a stylistic baseline against which the approaches of the Schumann-Brahms pupils can be weighed, what follows here is an account of the concrete ways that contemporary Brahms style plays out in the same works recorded by those pupils.

4.2.1) *Rhapsody in G minor* Op. 79 no. 2

To emphasize the unity of the main subject of this work, pianists tend to group its eight measures into one overarching phrase group by approaching the *rit. - in tempo* indication in m. 4 like a mid-sentence pause rather than a full stop; by taking more time over the *rit.* in m. 8 than at m. 4; and by taking unnotated time to emphasize the accents in m. 2 and m. 6, though in a staggered way, and never so much so as to detract from the structural weight of the notated slowing at the end of the phrase group in m. 8. Tonal and temporal focus is maintained throughout this subject with the help of the powerfully driving bass and ringing melodic lines. In the martial transition material in m. 9 - 13, the accented second chords of m. 9 and 11 are further emphasized with slight agogic accents; after which an adamantine rhythmic approach is established over the quickly alternating

[451] Leech-Wilkinson, "Recordings and Histories of Performance Style," *The Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*, 255.

chords, which are played with a cleanly-attacked and -released *staccato* touch; and with unnotated slowing into the fermata at m. 13.

The lyrical second subject is prepared with the slight taking of time over the first hairpin in m. 13 - 14, after which pianists re-establish their original tempo save perhaps for some slight lingering over the change of harmony in m. 16 and to prepare the apex of the hairpin in m. 19 - 20. Pianists create unity within this subject while contrasting it with its surrounding material by temporarily shifting attention away from the bass line, and by bringing out the legato soprano melody as well as the inner lines played with the thumbs of each hand. Many pianists will take time to announce the beginning of the closing material in m. 21, after which they re-establish their original tempo with help from the return of the driving bass lines of the opening. At the end of the exposition, unnotated time is often taken in m. 30 - 31 to prepare the exposition's climax, while the repeat is typically played without any major alterations, further emphasizing this section's unity and structure.

The development section of this work is usually played quite steadily, except where unnotated time is taken to emphasize local details like changes of harmony and dynamics (as in m. 69 and m. 77), and details coinciding with structural boundaries (like the hairpins in m. 72, 80, and 84). At the return of the closing material in m. 85, pianists shift attention back to the bass lines and to maintaining a steady tempo, and away from the temporal emphasis of local details, except perhaps to prepare the *sotto voce* in m. 97. Similarly, while the material in m. 97 - 108 is littered with hairpins and subtle shifts of colour, pianists still play this material steadily, resulting in a kind of anticipatory 'hanging' feeling. Finally, to elucidate overall structure, pianists tend to play the

recapitulation as a mirror image of the exposition. You can hear all of these features in Radu Lupu's recording of this work for Decca (2005) from the CD entitled *Radu Lupu Plays Brahms* in Sound Ex. 4.2.1, while following along with the Score Ex. 4.2.1.

4.2.2) *Intermezzo in E flat major* Op. 117 no. 1

The Intermezzo that opens the Op. 117 set is an intimate and introspective little lullaby that conjures nostalgic scenes of childhood and quiet domesticity, as implied by the two short lines of prose Brahms has included from Herder: *'Schlaf sanft, mein Kind, schlaf sanft und schön! Mich dauert's sehr, dich weinen sehn.'*[452] This usually prompts modern pianists to adopt a glowing, horizontal and coaxed approach to tone and touch throughout the two A sections, within a fairly regular time-feel (or pulse) that is maintained by the gently rocking short-long-short-long rhythmic pattern of the left hand accompaniment. Pianists structure the opening sixteen measures of this section by shaping them into two eight-measure overarching phrase groups, with time being taken at the end of the first phrase group in m. 8, and then again where indicated at the end of the second group in m. 15 - 16. Some local details are also subtly shaped with time, like at the beginnings and ends of smaller four-measure phrase groups m. 1 - 4 and 9 - 12 for example; at the apexes of hairpins in m. 6, 12, and 19 - 20; and at particularly beautiful changes of harmony like those occurring at the ends of m. 10 and 16. After each instance of slowing the original tempo is always re-established, though after the *poco a poco rit.* indication in m. 15 - 16 pianists do tend to play with increased temporal flexibility before

[452] Translated as: 'Sleep softly my child, sleep softly and well! It hurts my heart to see you weeping.'

slowing dramatically over the last measures of the section and making a lengthy pause over the *fermata*.

Pianists create contrast in this work's B section material by cultivating a resignedly sombre atmosphere, and by using subtle inflections of tone and time to emphasize more local details like the apexes of hairpins and the hollow chordal material in m. 26, 28, 34 and 36 - 37. This shift towards the overt shaping of local details creates contrast with the much more structurally-shaped A section material, thereby ultimately elucidating this work's overall structure. Furthermore, despite modern pianists' tendency to play this section more flexibly, its unity is preserved both because this elasticity occurs within a fairly narrow range, and because a clear sense of the underlying pulse is always carefully maintained. Finally, to underline its contrast with the B section and symmetry with the opening A section, pianists tend to shape the A^1 section's musical materials almost exactly as before, aside perhaps from adopting a slightly slower tempo as per Brahms's indication of *Un poco più Andante*, and a dreamier and more heavily-pedalled approach to tone and attack. Here is Leif Ove Andsnes's performance of this work for EMI Classics (1998), from the CD entitled: *Brahms Piano Concerto no. 1 and 3 Intermezzi Op. 117* (City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Simon Rattle), which you can listen to in Sound Ex. 4.2.2 while following along with Score Ex. 4.2.2.

4.2.3) *Ballade in G Minor* Op. 118 no. 3

In stark contrast to Op. 117 no. 1, the A section material of this work is extroverted, martial and robust, and features driving accents, staccato indications, and powerful driving left hand bass octaves throughout. This work however is rarely performed in a flashy or virtuosic manner, with pianists opting for a more solidly muscular and stoically triumphant approach where details of articulation, rhythm and dynamics are all carefully observed, and where the section's structural boundaries both big and small are clearly outlined. An unfailingly regular approach to tempo characterizes most performances of this material, except of course when preparing structural boundaries like the *rit.* - *tenuto* indications in m. 10 and 86 marking the end of the primary subject material and beginning of the second; at m. 22 and 98 to prepare the final return of the primary subject; and at the close of each section in m. 39 - 40 and after the cadence in m. 108. Meticulous attention is also paid to creating contrast between subjects, with the secondary material being played softly, with a more connected and horizontal tone and attack, and with increased temporal shaping of local details like the accented syncopations of m. 14 - 16 and 90 - 92, and the start of the crescendo in m. 18 and 94. As ever, all instances of slowing are followed by a firm reestablishment of tempo.

While there is no indication to do so, pianists tend to adopt a slightly more relaxed pace in their playing of the lyrical B major middle section: both to contrast it from the martial A section material, and to create the time and space needed to bring out its many poignant details. Most pianists shape this section's material into four eight-measure phrase groups by slowing slightly over the fourth measure of each group (at m. 44, 52, 60

and 68), and much more so over the eighth (at m. 48, 56, 64 and 72). Extra time is also taken where local harmonic and melodic twists coincide with denser textures, hairpins, verbal expressive indications, or the ends of phrase groups (as in m. 46 - 48, 50 - 56, 62 - 64 and 68 - 72). After following Brahms's *rit. - poco sostenuto* indication in m. 71 - 72 thus bringing the B section to a clear close, modern pianists thereafter gradually re-establish the intensity and pace of their tone, tempo and attack over the transitional material in m. 73 - 75 before taking time into the reprise of the A section, which proceeds exactly as before. Sound Ex. 4.2.3 is Murray Perahia's recording of this work for Sony Masterworks (2010), from the CD entitled *Brahms: Handel Variations, Op. 24; Rhapsodies, Op. 79; Piano Pieces Op. 118 & 119*, which you can listen to while following along with Score Ex. 4.2.3.

4.2.4) *Intermezzo in E Minor* Op. 119 no. 2

In the opening A section of this work, Brahms's dual verbal indications of *un poco agitato* and *sotto voce e dolce* tend to result in performances that are shifting and mysterious, though rarely vague, breathless or unmeasured. Most pianists opt for a fairly regular approach to tempo that errs on the side of *Andantino*, while illustrating the push and pull of the conflicting *dolce* and *agitato* indications by using a horizontal and connected legato attack in the right hand material, and a more vertical and detached attack in the left. As the musical material of this section is rather fluid and could easily descend into waywardness in the 'wrong' hands, pianists are particularly careful here to preserve the clarity of its many complexities of rhythm, texture and articulation; they use

subtle inflections of tone and time to both unify and contrast its main subjects; and they adhere to all of Brahms's indications to slow, always fully re-establishing their tempo afterwards.

To further enhance this delineation and demarcation of detail and structure, modern pianists will also take unnotated time to emphasize local points of interest such as the apexes and ends of hairpins (as in m. 4, 6, 16 - 17, 19, and 31 - 32); to highlight interesting shifts of harmony and time-feel (as in m. 13); and of course to emphasize internal structural boundaries in need of extra grounding (like at m. 27 - 28), or larger ones like the final few measures of the section. In all instances of slowing, time is taken both before and *into* the boundary in question. To prepare the return of the opening subject in m. 9 for example, pianists will begin to stretch time over the hairpin and *sostenuto* indications in m. 8, and they will not re-establish their tempo until *after* they have landed on the downbeat of m. 9. This ensures that the structural signposts of this section remain stalwartly upright and clearly defined. While this may seem like a rather tedious point to be driving home here, its significance will become much clearer once we begin analysing the Schumann-Brahms pupil performances.

The first half of the contrasting B section is a charming and lilting waltz whose melody is played with a warmly singing legato *dolce* tone in the right hand, and whose regularity is maintained by the gentling rocking left hand accompaniment. Pianists tend to group the materials of this section into two eight-measure phrase groups by taking a small amount of time over the fourth measure of each group (in m. 39 and 47), and much more time over each phrase group's eighth measure (in m. 43 and 51). In the more expressive second half of this B section however, pianists create contrast by now giving

the left hand much more tonal and temporal authority and by taking more time to expressively shape local details like the apexes of hairpins and the *dolce* indication in m. 60. As ever, the contrast and unity of the A section material is underlined when it returns virtually unchanged, thus elucidating the work's overall structure. Richard Goode's recording of this work for Nonesuch (1987) from the CD entitled *Richard Goode Plays Brahms* can be heard in Sound Ex. 4.2.4, while the score can be found in Score Ex. 4.2.4.

4.2.5) Contemporary Brahms Style: A Summary

So what do the above descriptions of contemporary Brahms style actually tell us? For starters, it's worth emphasizing that they are in no way intended to suggest that modern pianists play these works in the same ways all the time, nor that their performances are uninspired or conformist. They are simply a set of performance traits that do *not* tend to vary from performer to performer. As we will see, the otherness of the Schumann-Brahms pupils' performances lies not in surface idiosyncrasies, but rather in their treatment of the pillars of modern Brahmsian pianism.[453] While the norms below are allied to modern performance standards in general, the ways in which they are borne out and adhered to in those performances said to be characteristically 'Brahmsian' are highly predictable. In general, such performances are *always:*

[453] Sigurd Slåttebrekk and Tony Harrison also underline the importance of understanding the key characteristics of modern pianists' approaches to a particular repertoire when appraising early recordings, as they too have found that the most foreign features of Grieg's performance style "are not at all decoration and interesting detail, but fundamental elements, essential to the way we perceive the music itself, [and] in many cases actually serving as a premise for the composition." Slåttebrekk and Harrison, "Historically Informed Performances," *Chasing the Butterfly,* http://www.chasingthebutterfly.no/?page_id=288.

- **Literal**: Literalism in Brahms involves giving notes and rests their full and proportional value; playing materials that are notated vertically, simultaneously; never adding, subtracting or altering musical materials; reacting to every instance of notation with some appropriate and relative action; and limiting departures from the score to those that serve to highlight the score's detail and structure.

- **Detailed**: Closely related to literal playing, appropriately detailed Brahms performances are those in which a performer displays a keen understanding that every instance of notation exists for some purpose and forms an essential part of a work's meaning and structure. Brahmsian pianists strive to highlight both clarity and complexity of detail in Brahms's notation, while parallel notation is rendered either similarly or in ways staggered to elucidate structure.

- **Structural**: Structural playing in Brahms denotes a fundamental understanding that every element in a given work forms an essential building block of its small- and large-scale structure. This involves staggering the temporal and tonal weight of local details according to their structural value; maintaining consistency of approach within sections and creating contrast between them; and ensuring that both large and small structures are clearly defined through the taking of time at their outer edges, followed by the full reestablishment of tempo.

- **Temporally-measured**: The qualities of literal, detailed and structural playing in Brahms are all reliant on a highly measured approach to tempo, where enough time and space is needed to elucidate details, though not so much so as to subvert overall structure. While unnotated rushing and rhythmic alterations are not permitted, the unnotated taking of time is allowed when used to clarify structure. Through all instances of slowing an underlying sense of the pulse is always preserved, and tempo is always fully re-established afterwards. Parallel indications are to be temporally shaped in either similar or structurally-staggered

ways, while time feel is to be consistent within sections and contrasting between them.

- **Expressively/technically-controlled**: In order to meet the above criteria, Brahmsian performers must remain in careful control of their emotional and physical apparatuses. While all pianists acknowledge the emotional scope and technical challenges of these late piano works, feeling and power in Brahms are understood to be 'written into' the score, and are thus only accessible through literal, detailed, structural, measured and controlled performances of those scores. Expressive and technical control in Brahms also involves a warm, deeply connected, resonant, weighty and clear-eyed approach to tone production in all tempi; with keys always being firmly depressed to their bottoms; with soprano and bass lines ringing out clearly; and with difficult passages sounding resolute as opposed to flashy and harsh, and with lyrical passages sounding introspective as opposed to over-affected and sentimental. In so doing, Brahmsian performers cultivate a serious and even pious approach that disdains light-heartedness and fantasy.

4.3) 'Naked Ear' Analyses of the Schumann-Brahms Pupil Recordings

4.3.1) *Rhapsody in G Minor* Op. 79 no. 2: Adelina De Lara, 1951.

While the powerful bass lines of contemporary Brahmsian pianism permeate all iterations of the primary subject in De Lara's performance, she is arpeggiating many of the left-hand octaves that fall on upbeats and downbeats: by sounding their lower notes first, with their upper notes sounding with the right-hand material. Like modern pianists, De Lara shapes these eight measures into one overarching phrase group by staggering the time she takes over the accents in the second and sixth measures and the *rit.* indications in the fourth and eighth measures. Unlike modern pianists however, she rushes between these indications and further unifies this subject by eliding materials between m. 4 and the beginning of m.5, though determining exactly how requires further analysis.

In all iterations of the martial transitional material De Lara cuts the slur to the e minor chord downbeat chord of m. 9, before shortening the value of the chord that falls on the second beat of both that measure and of m. 11. In both iterations of the exposition she again elides the upbeat and downbeat of m. 11[43], thereby unifying this subject. De Lara also seems to struggle with technical problems here that I suspect are caused by a slow and horizontal attack of this subject's quickly alternating and leaping *staccato* chords. Though this warrants closer analysis, it sounds as though she is arpeggiating in m. 12[44] and 129: a technique that necessitates the close and horizontal motion of the hand, thus suggesting that she is not attacking and releasing these chords with the speed

and verticality needed to execute them cleanly. These technical problems return in the closing material in m. 144 -147, where she again seems to be arpeggiating. Those features of De Lara's performance that require extra analysis with the help of software will be tackled in the following section.

In all iterations of the lyrical second subject De Lara takes quite a bit of time over its first three hairpins while rushing the material immediately afterwards. To further emphasize the apexes of these hairpins, she dislocates the left-hand entries on the downbeats of m. 14[46] - 15[47] and 131 - 133 so that they sound before the right hand. De Lara also beautifully brings out the inner melodic material played with the thumbs of each hand here, often to the detriment of the clarity of the upper melodic line; and she cuts the right-hand slurs just before the second beats of m. 17[49] - 18[50] and 134 - 135 so that they match those of the left. At the outset of the closing material in m. 21[53], De Lara's noticeably slower tempo is further emphasized by the enormous amounts of time she takes over just about all triplet upbeat figures; by her lengthening the first notes of those triplets; and by her slow arpeggiation of their accompanying left-hand octaves. She also rushes slightly after each slow triplet upbeat, and then even more over the crescendo in m. 27[59] before slowing into the final cadence of the exposition. De Lara's playing of the concurrent triplet and sixteenth note figures in this closing material requires closer examination however, as the latter sometimes coincide with the third notes of the former.

De Lara's tempo at the outset of the development section in m. 65 seems sluggish, perhaps due to her tendency to shape its materials into smaller four-measure phrase groups, while emphasizing local details through dislocation, arpeggiation, rhythmic alteration and tempo modification. While De Lara's rhythmic alterations are limited to

lengthening of the first notes of upbeat triplet figures, her tempo modifications involve playing the beginnings and ends of phrase groups more slowly, while rushing slightly over their middles. She rushes more perceptibly however into particularly poignant or intense hairpins before slowing at their apexes and ends, like at m. 90 - 91, 93 - 94, and throughout 105 - 112 for example. She often dislocates left-hand notes (early) to emphasize the slower beginnings and ends of phrase groups, like at the downbeats of m. 69 and 77, and the upbeats to m. 72, 82 - 84, and 115; and while dislocation is audible over the hairpins in m. 72, 80 and 84, further analysis is needed to determine where the notes of each hand fall. At times De Lara arpeggiates the left hand in ways that propel temporal motion, like at the downbeats of m. 65 - 68 and 73 - 75, at the brief return of the closing material in m. 88 - 94, and during the stormier m. 102 - 112. Elsewhere she slowly rolls both left- and right-hand chords to ground the beginnings of phrases that coincide with shifts of colour, like at the downbeats of m. 93, 97 and 115 for example.

There are two curiosities in Adelina De Lara's playing of this development section: the first is what sounds like her right hand echoing the descending G - E figure of the left in m. 83, though this needs to be verified; and the second is that she retakes the tied left hand chord in m. 96. After a long *ritenuto* over m. 116 - 117 she plunges into the recapitulation which proceeds almost exactly as the exposition, except for her significant shortening of the *fermata* in m. 125; her quicker playing of both the transitional and second subjects in m. 126 - 137; what sound like rhythmic alterations in the rushed right hand material of m. 131 - 132; and her shortening of the second beats of m. 140 and 146. You can again listen to De Lara's performance of this work, now in Sound Ex. 4.3.1 while following along with Score Ex. 4.2.1.

4.3.2a) *Intermezzo in E flat major* Op. 117 no. 1: Adelina De Lara, 1951.

At first listen, Adelina De Lara's performance of this work is remarkably straightforward: nowhere, except perhaps at the outset of the A^1 section, does one hear the quiet introspection that so permeates modern performances of this lullaby. De Lara's playing has a casual and 'tossed off' quality that is due partly to her chosen tempo, which ticks along rather relentlessly; and partly to her tone and attack, which is direct rather than gently coaxed. Her playing of the A section also has a stiltedly lilting time-feel as a result of her tendency to 'swing' sixteenth note upbeats in a long-short pattern, and her subtle lengthening of downbeats and shortening of the quarter notes that fall at the ends of local slurs. While all of this needs software-assisted examination, these rhythmic alterations do seem to make her tempo accumulate over phrase groups while also undercutting the gently rocking pattern of the left hand accompaniment.

De Lara groups the first sixteen measures of this A section into two overarching phrase groups much like modern pianists do, but she achieves this partly through tempo modification: by playing more slowly at the beginnings and ends of these structures, and more quickly over their middles. She also delineates detail and structure here by using combinations of dislocation and arpeggiation in conjunction with her tempo modifications. Over the rushed middles of these phrase groups, like in m. 3 - 6 and 11 - 14 for example, she uses much more frequent arpeggiation, spreading chords quickly to propel temporal motion. At the slower outsets of these phrase groups in m. 1 - 4 and 9 - 12, she uses more dislocation and sounds the left-hand upbeats earlier than their right-

hand counterparts; while at their ends in m. 7 - 8 and 17 - 19 she widely rolls the left-hand octaves, though this arpeggiation sounds like dislocation because the lower notes of the left-hand octaves sound much earlier than their upper and right-hand counterparts. This use of dislocation at the slower ends of phrase groups intensifies at the *rit. molto* of m. 20, where the left-hand octaves are played solidly but are now truly disjointed from the right hand. De Lara's approach throughout both A sections is a master class in combinations of dislocation and arpeggiation however, and further analysis is needed to work out exactly how she uses these devices to shape local slurs in m. 1 - 4, 9 - 12, 13 - 16, 39 - 44, and 53 - 54.

After barely pausing over the *fermata* that closes the A section, one is immediately struck by the restlessness of De Lara's playing of the B section. While modern pianists subtly widen their temporal and tonal palette here to elucidate local details, thus contrasting this middle section with its more structurally-shaped bookends, De Lara creates contrast by paying much less attention to the shaping of local details (except for her arpeggiation of the right hand entries in m. 21 and 29), and by using dramatic accelerations to create long sweeping lines that are punctuated by the slower chordal material of m. 26, 28 and 34 - the downbeats of which she further emphasizes with slow arpeggiation. The wayward restlessness of De Lara's time-feel in this section is further enhanced by her tendency to dislocate many of the lowest notes of the left hand in m. 21 - 24 and 29 - 32 so that they sound earlier than their associated right-hand materials; and her dislocation of the right hand so that the first and fourth notes of each figure enter earlier than their associated left-hand materials. The push and pull of these

dislocations lends a lopsided quality to her already restless time-feel, and they tend to occur when she rushes most in m. 21 - 24 and 29 - 32.

Adelina De Lara plays the A^1 section more slowly as per the *Un poco più Andante* indication, but while modern pianists shape this section similarly to its first iteration thus elucidating overall structure, De Lara makes a few notable alterations. She now uses much more arpeggiation over the opening measures of this section, thereby further emphasizing its dreamlike character as suggested by the higher register and *col. Ped*. indication. She also adopts a much more restrained approach to the use of local rhythmic alterations and tempo modifications, and as a result her time-feel is more relaxed and measured here. Indeed, the only 'swung' sixteenth notes in this section occur in m. 46 and 48, while she seems to be holding the quarter notes at the ends of local slurs for something much closer to their full value throughout. This temporal 'straightness' thus contrasts both with the more restless B section *and* with the stiltedly lilting opening A section. Finally, closer analysis is needed to work out exactly where the notes of each hand fall during De Lara's expressive dislocation of the elaborated material in m. 50 - 51. You can listen to Adelina De Lara playing this work in Sound Ex. 4.3.2a while following along with Score Ex. 4.2.2.

4.3.2.b) *Intermezzo in E flat major* Op. 117 no. 1: Carl Friedberg, 1953.

It might be useful to briefly discuss Carl Friedberg's performance of this work here: useful in that he too was a member of the Schumann-Brahms circle; briefly in that his approach is not nearly as foreign as De Lara's. In the A section for example, Friedberg

uses almost no rhythmic alterations and restricts his use of dislocation, arpeggiation and unnotated slowing to the ends of large phrase groups, like his rather forceful dislocations in m. 7 - 8 for example. Where De Lara rushes over the middles of her eight-measure phrase groups in m. 4 - 5 and 12 - 13, Friedberg takes a small amount of time to emphasize and close the cadences contained therein, much like a modern pianist would. Furthermore, because Friedberg's legato tone is gently coaxed and his time feel is highly regular, his playing communicates that introspective glow so seemingly absent in De Lara's performance.

Like De Lara however, Friedberg plays the B section material in a much more impassioned manner than what comes before or after. He too arpeggiates the right-hand entries at m. 21 and 29; he also rushes over m. 21 - 24 and 29 - 32, though to a much lesser degree; and he dislocates the entries of the right- and left-hand figures in these rushed measures so that they sound early, but not so early so as to subvert a clear sense of the underlying pulse. Though Friedberg's temporal and tonal palette in his playing of this B section material is much narrower than De Lara's, these instances of arpeggiation, dislocation, rushing, and this more fervent approach, all seem key to each pianists' understanding of how this section should sound: an understanding that stands in stark contrast to the resignedly sombre approach heard in performances today. Friedberg also arpeggiates more frequently in the reprise of the A section, but otherwise it unfolds much as before. Because De Lara's performance of this work is much less literal than Friedberg's, I suspect that her style has more to teach us more about our investment in contemporary Brahms style. While our examination of Friedberg's performance will end here, you can nonetheless hear it in the file entitled Sound Ex. 4.3.2b.

4.3.3a) *Ballade in G Minor* Op. 118 no. 3: Ilona Eibenschütz, 1903.

Bearing in mind what can and cannot be gleaned from some of the earliest recordings, through the background noise of this recording Ilona Eibenschütz's playing still has many wonderful things to tell us about her understanding of this work. As in modern performances, her rendering of the A section material is energetic and extroverted, and is characterized by crisply and vertically attacked staccato chords and driving bass lines. Rather than sounding martial, solid and powerful however, her playing has a breathless, tossed off and ungrounded quality due to an extremely quick tempo that tends to accumulate, and her conscious blurring of structural boundaries big and small.

Indeed, when Eibenschütz does relent to mark a structural boundary, she tends to slow into its preparation rather than into and out of the boundary itself. In the opening ten measures of the A section for example, while modern pianists slow at the very end of m. 5 and into the downbeat of the new phrase after which they re-establish their tempo, Eibenschütz slows into the downbeat of m. 5 and then rushes right through the downbeat of m. 6. Similarly, while pianists today would emphasize the end of the first subject and beginning of the second by slowing into the downbeats of *both* m. 10 and 11, she slows slightly into m. 10 then immediately picks her tempo back up; she ignores the *tenuto* marking and even shortens the third beat of that measure; and then she truncates or elides material at the end of m. 10 and into m. 11, resulting in an early arpeggiated arrival of the right-hand entry of the next subject. Eibenschütz's blurring of the structural boundary in m. 10 is no accident, as she does the very same thing between the primary and secondary

subjects in the A^1 section at m. 86; at the reprise of the primary subject in in m. 22 and 98; and between the B section and the transition to the A^1 section in m. 72. In all cases, further analysis is needed to figure out exactly how this truncation and elision is accomplished.

Throughout both iterations of the A section material one also notes a lack of contrast between the first and second subjects. While modern pianists create contrast by playing the second subject more softly, with a gently connected legato touch, and by taking time to highlight its local details like the accented syncopations of m. 14[90] - 16[92] and the start of the crescendo in m. 18[94]; Eibenschütz's second subject arrives unannounced both temporally and from an articulation point of view, after which she rushes through all of its details and into the return of the primary subject. Interestingly, while the accents in m. 32 - 35 fall on the first and third beats of even-numbered measures, she emphasizes the odd-numbered measures by eliding their second, third and fourth beats through arpeggiation. As discussed in the previous chapter, these arpeggiations effectively overemphasize the unaccented diminished seventh harmonies that prepare the B section. Although she takes almost no time (and perhaps even rushes) at the close of the A section in m. 39 - 40, she does relax her tempo slightly at the end of this work starting at the *una corda* indication in m. 114.

Ilona Eibenschütz's performance of the B section of this work is similarly characterized by its hair-raising tempo and tendency towards rushing. While she does shape this material into four eight-measure phrase groups, she accomplishes this by rushing dramatically over their middles while emphasizing their beginnings and ends through slight slowing and combinations of dislocation and arpeggiation, though

software-assisted analysis is needed to determine exactly how these expressive devices are used given the brusqueness of her tempo. This means however that she tends to be rushing where modern pianists take extra time to shape the densely packed melodic, harmonic and textural details of m. 45 - 47 and 61 - 63. Notably, she does somehow find the time to emphasize the apexes of hairpins at m. 50 - 52 and 66 - 67, as well as the *dolce* marking in m. 68; and she plays quite expansively in m. 69 - 71, bringing out its tightly-packed melodic and harmonic details through combinations of rhythmic alteration, dislocation and arpeggiation that again need further analysis. Interestingly, in both m. 48 and 64 she plays the double F sharp pick up to the next phrase twice, while modern pianists view this doubling as a consequence of voice leading, and play the note only once. You can once again listen to Ilona Eibenschütz's performance of this work in Sound Ex. 4.3.3a while following along with Score Ex. 4.2.3.

4.3.3b) *Ballade in G Minor* Op. 118 no. 3: Carl Friedberg, 1949.

Yet again we have the good fortune of having a comparative recording of this work by Carl Friedberg. In Da Costa's *Off the Record*, the similarities between Friedberg and Eibenschütz's approaches here are emphasized, with the author quoting Will Crutchfield who also observes that each pianist plays the F sharp upbeats in the B section twice: "First an accompanimental F sharp with the left hand and then a fuller-toned melodic one with the right...[while] in every modern recording...this doubling is treated as an unplayable curio of notation." Again quoting Crutchfield, Da Costa observes that Eibenschütz and Friedberg both use tempo modification to expressively shape their

performances, and while Friedberg's approach is marked by slowing and 'rhetorical hesitation,' "Eibenschütz always accelerates with harmonic tension and retards with cadences." Da Costa concludes by asserting that 'the style is of one era,' thereby echoing Crutchfield who notes that, "Friedberg's performance and Eibenschütz's are as different as night and day, but night and day in the same city."[454]

While Eibenschütz indeed slows at many cadences, they are nonetheless deemphasized due to her tendency to stretch time into their preparation while rushing, truncating and eliding materials at their resolution. In Friedberg's performance of the A section of this work, his rushing over *crescendi* is always fully 'corrected' by the rhetorical pauses he makes before every downbeat, and by his slowing into the preparation *and* resolution of structural boundaries. As a result, the structural signposts of this section remain stalwartly upright and clearly defined in Friedberg's performance, while in Ilona's they are unquestionably oblique. Friedberg's performance is also characterized by much more structural contrast. His playing of the work's second subject for example has a distinctly relaxed and subdued approach to tone and time, and like modern pianists he slows for emphasis over the hairpin in m. 14, during the syncopated accents in m. 15 - 16, and at the start of the *crescendo* in m. 18.

Although Friedberg's playing of the lyrical B section is still hasty by modern standards, it is much more temporally measured than Eibenschütz's and as a result its dense harmonic and melodic details have the time and space to sing. Like Eibenschütz, he rushes over the middles of most phrase groups in the B section and slows at their ends, while slowing at the apexes of hairpins and over the final measures of the section; unlike Eibenschütz, these instances of slowing correct his tempo and the underlying sense of the

[454] Crutchfield, "Brahms," 18, 12 - 21, 60, in Da Costa, *Off the Record*, 98 and 306.

pulse is never lost. As we saw with Adelina De Lara and Friedberg's recordings of Op. 117 no. 1 however, if there are any similarities between the latter and Eibenschütz's approaches here, they lie in the B section. Perhaps this propensity for playing lyrical materials in a rushed and impassioned manner is a similarity we'd rather not underline.

While Carl Friedberg's performance of this work is far from anything modern pianists might call controlled, when compared with Ilona Eibenschütz's performance it indeed seems significantly more restrained, and as a result their performances communicate two very different understandings of how this work 'should' sound. This is however a useful case study into the pitfalls of identifying commonalities between late-Romantic pianists of similar 'schools': if Friedberg and Eibenschütz are equally representative of a Schumann-Brahms school of playing, then why wouldn't RIP pianists choose to replicate Friedberg's 'perfumed' commentary on modern Brahmsian performance norms rather than Eibenschütz's total rewrite of them? You can hear Friedberg's performance of this work in the file entitled Sound Ex. 4.3.3b.

4.3.4) *Intermezzo in E Minor* Op. 119 no. 2: Ilona Eibenschütz, 1952

Ilona Eibenschütz's performance of this work again seems driven by a sense of boundless agitation: her tempo at its outset is already harried, but as in Op. 118 no. 3 it tends to accumulate over most phrases, leaving little room for the careful contrasting and framing of its internal structures. When she does take time, these decelerations never fully correct her tempo and they again tend to occur before rather than into and out of the boundaries of phrase groups. This subversion of structural weight then becomes

compounded by her tendency to rush through, truncate and elide other boundaries. While she takes time into the *sostenuto* indication in m. 2 and at the apex of the hairpin in m. 4 for example, she then rushes through the remainder of those measures and into the following phrases. This approach thus shifts the load bearing walls of the internal structures of this section from their outer edges to their middles.

After slowing into the apex of the hairpin in m. 6 however, Eibenschütz then proceeds to cut many of the repeated figures in both hands until the return of the opening subject in m. 9, though this warrants further analysis. While she stretches time before the *sostenuto* marking in m. 8, in her approach to the return of the opening subject she begins to elide materials through arpeggiation, arriving on the right-hand entry of the new phrase early and nearly on the downbeat instead of displaced as indicated. Even though she draws out this right-hand entry for added emphasis, the weight of this structural boundary is nonetheless undercut. Eibenschütz replicates this combination of rushing, truncation, elision and rhythmic alteration in both m. 11 - 13 and its reprise at m. 90 - 93: the latter of which involves a major rewriting of Brahms's elaboration of this material. Because she cuts a full measure of this score from 91.2 to 92.2, thereafter the bracketed measure numbers in Score Ex. 4.2.4 represent her actual performance.

Where modern pianists adopt a more subdued approach to tone and time to emphasize the arrival of the F major triplet subject in m. 13, Eibenschütz carries on rushing while altering the rhythmic relationship of the hands so that the second note of the left-hand triplet coincides with the third of the right. She again modifies Brahms's elaboration of this subject in m. 93[92] - 97[96] to preserve this rhythmic alteration, now using elision to link materials at its beginning and at the beginning of the alternating

subject in m. 98[97]. In both A sections, she rushes through this alternating subject before again modifying the rhythmic organization of the hands so that the right hand begins to sound as though it falls on strong beats rather than displaced as notated. After slowing into the apex of the hairpin in m. 22 and 102[101], Eibenschütz again truncates and elides materials before arriving on another early and stretched right-hand entry in m. 27 and 107[106]. She continues to push her tempo and by m. 29 and 109[108] her hands become so disjointed that the rising left-hand figures of one measure are still sounding while the right hand has moved to the next. Nonetheless, she slows to emphasize the apex of the final hairpin and over the last few measures of the section. Throughout this section she also uses combinations of dislocation and arpeggiation to ground the beginnings, middles and ends of many phrases, though this requires further analysis - as do the aforementioned instances of truncation and elision.

Eibenschütz's playing of the opening B section material communicates a feeling of lopsided breathlessness: qualities enhanced by what sounds like her subtle over- and under-dotting of the downbeats of the right hand melody, and by her shortening of the third quarters of each measure. These rhythmic alterations warrant further analysis because aside from undercutting the regular pulse of this waltz, they seem to cause her tempo to accumulate. She rushes right through the end of the first phrase group in m. 42 - 43, again shortening the third beats of those measures, after which she plays the bass and inner right hand note early at the start of the new phrase group in m. 44, only relaxing her tempo after this phrase has begun. She then subverts the weight of the boundary between the first and second halves of the B section in a similar fashion: by rushing, by shortening

the third beats of m. 50 - 51, by sounding the bass notes of m. 51 and 52 early, and by only relaxing her tempo after the new section has begun.

Eibenschütz's tempo continues to snowball over the more expressive and hairpin-laden material of the B section's second half, and gains an urgent quality that is underlined by early bass notes at m. 73 and 74, and by the unannounced arrival of the new phrase marked *dolce* in m. 76. She blurs the structural weight of the reprise of this half of the B section by sounding only the top B on the third beat of m. 67, after which the rest of the notes associated with that beat are somehow elided with the outset of the repeated iteration of this section in m. 68. She then maintains her dizzying tempo until m. 81, after which she slows while using combinations of arpeggiation, dislocation and rhythmic alteration that need further elucidation. Finally, Ilona Eibenschütz's playing of the reprise of the A section is remarkably similar to its first iteration, as evidenced by her alterations of its elaborated subjects. You can once again hear her performance in Sound Ex. 4.3.4, while following along with Score Ex. 4.2.4.

4.4) Software-Assisted Analyses of the Schumann-Brahms Pupil Recordings

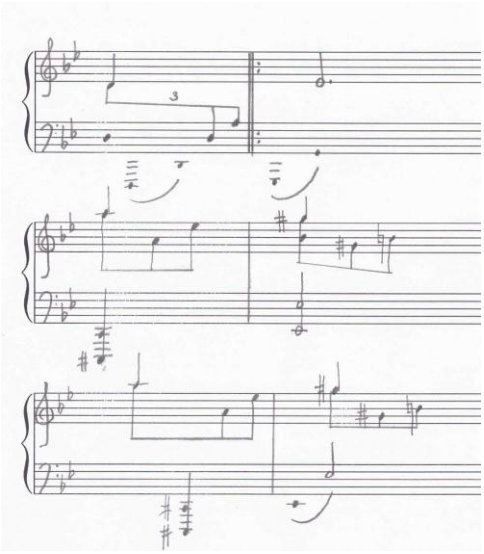
4.4.1) *Rhapsody in G minor* Op. 79 no. 2*:* Adelina De Lara, 1951

In order to better understand how Adelina De Lara shapes her performance of this work with time, Figure 4.4.1.1 shows her average tempo over each of its constituent subjects. What immediately stands out is that she slows over each statement of the exposition as well as the development, the latter of which is significantly under tempo as suspected; and while she begins the recapitulation at exactly the same tempo as the exposition, she indeed plays the transitional and second subjects more quickly than in the exposition.

Exposition	First Subject	1.1 - 8.3	107MM
	Transition	8.4 - 13.3	101MM
	Second Subject	13.4 - 20.3	91MM
	Closing Material	20.4 - 32.3	87MM
	First Subject'	32.4 - 40.3	110MM
	Transition'	40.4 - 45.3	102MM
	Second Subject'	45.4 - 52.3	98MM
	Closing Material'	52.4 - 64.3	91MM
Development	First Phrase Group	64.4 - 72.4	87MM
	Second Phrase Group	73.1 - 84.4	89MM
	Closing Material	85.1 - 96.3	76MM
	First/Second Group	96.4 - 117.3	70MM
Recapitulation	First Subject	117.4 - 125.3	107MM
	Transition	125.4 - 130.3	113MM
	Second Subject	130.4 - 137.3	107MM
	Closing Material	137.4 - 147.4	105 MM
	Coda	148.1 - 155.1	80MM

Figure 4.4.1.1: Average Tempo Values, Adelina De Lara, *Op. 79 no. 2*.

While De Lara arpeggiates most upbeat and downbeat left-hand octaves in the primary subject, with the lowest left hand note sounding early and with the right hand coinciding with the upper left-hand note, she does make a few notable variations to this tendency. By slowing down playback speeds as far as possible, I determined that on the upbeat to m. 1 De Lara plays a D octave with her right hand, followed by a broken octave with her left. The added octave probably serves to emphasize the outset of this work, as in all other iterations it is absent. Using Sonic Visualiser's spectrogram function I was also surprised to discover that in the first statement of the exposition and in the recapitulation De Lara adds a B natural below the top right-hand G# at 7.1[124.1]. Because she doesn't arpeggiate the upbeats or downbeats of m. 7 and 124, perhaps this added B again lends extra emphasis. When repeating the exposition, she grounds this material by now playing the top right hand note at 38.4 early, while at 39.1 the right-hand G# coincides with the upper note of an arpeggiated left-hand octave. For ease of copying, I've written out these variations in Ex. 4.4.1.1 below.

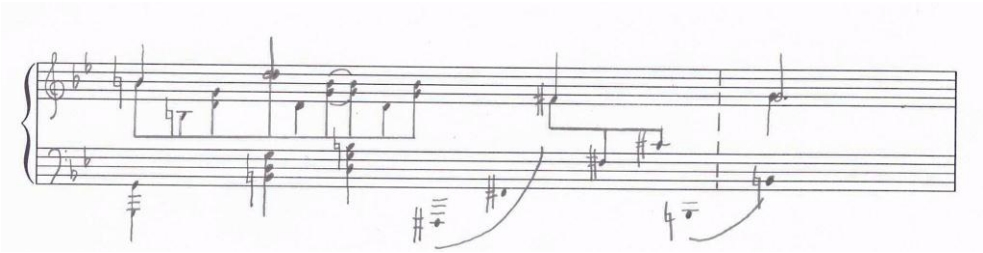


Ex. 4.4.1.1: *Op. 79 no. 2*, Adelina De Lara, 0.4 - 1.1, 6.4 - 7.1[123.4 - 124.1], 38.4 - 39.1.

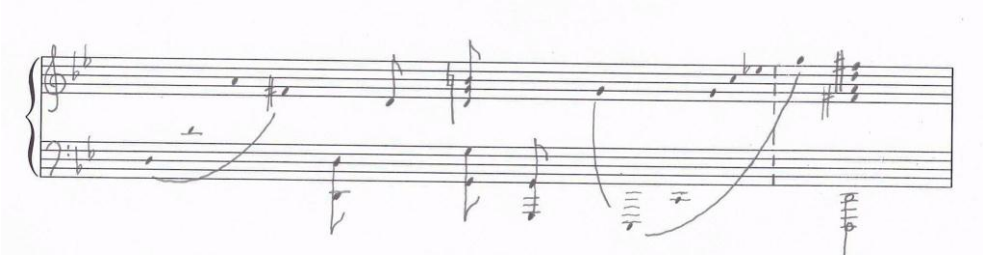
I was also able to determine that De Lara indeed staggers the time she takes over the accents in the primary subject: she takes more time into the second accent in m. 6 in the first statement of the exposition, and more time into the first accent in m. 34 upon repetition. This was calculated by measuring the time elapsed between beats three and four of m. 2 and 6: 0.653 seconds in m. 2 and 0.791 seconds in m. 6 the first time around, and 0.747 seconds in m. 34 and 0.627 seconds in m. 38 upon repetition. Surprisingly however, in the first statement of the exposition she takes nearly the same amount of time over the two *rit.* markings in m. 4 and 8, while upon repetition she takes more time over the first in m. 36: she takes 1.514 seconds to play 4.1 - 4.3 and 1.502 seconds to play 8.1 - 8.3; and 1.463 seconds to play 36.1 - 36.3 and 1.267 seconds to play 40.1 - 40.3. I was initially surprised to see that in the recapitulation there is almost no difference between her temporal treatments of either the accents or *rit.* indications, though perhaps this makes sense given that overall she plays the recapitulation quickly but also more steadily than the exposition.

Indeed, the real story here lies in how De Lara shapes each subject with time. For the primary subject, her average tempo over 1.1 - 4.1 is 107MM while by 5.1 - 8.1 it has grown to 118MM; upon repetition these values now ramp from 105MM to 125MM; and in the recapitulation this subject is indeed played faster but steadier, with average tempo values only ranging from 116MM to 118MM. In the exposition however, this means that De Lara's tempo isn't 'corrected' by the time she takes over the accents and *rit.* indications, but that it accumulates over the primary subject. This cumulative rushing has the added effect of unifying the primary subject in both statements of the exposition, while in the recapitulation this is accomplished with a quicker and steadier overall tempo.

Another unifying element in De Lara's performance of this subject is her elision of the material that coincides with the *rit. - in tempo* indication at the end of its fourth measure. In the first statement of the exposition this effect is simply a result of her somewhat early rolling of the left-hand F# octave at 4.4, with the upper left-hand note coinciding as usual with that of the right. In the repeat and recapitulation however, Ex. 4.4.1.2 below shows how she rolls the left-hand F# octave even earlier at 36.4[121.4], while now dislocating its upper note from the right hand. Then immediately after playing the right-hand material at 36.4[121.4], she again rolls the left-hand octave early at 37.1[122.1]. De Lara unifies the transitional subject of the exposition in a very similar fashion, as shown below in Ex. 4.4.1.3: after playing the last right-hand G at 10.4[42.4] she immediately rolls the chord at 11.1[43.1] from top to bottom, with its upper right-hand note landing on the downbeat.

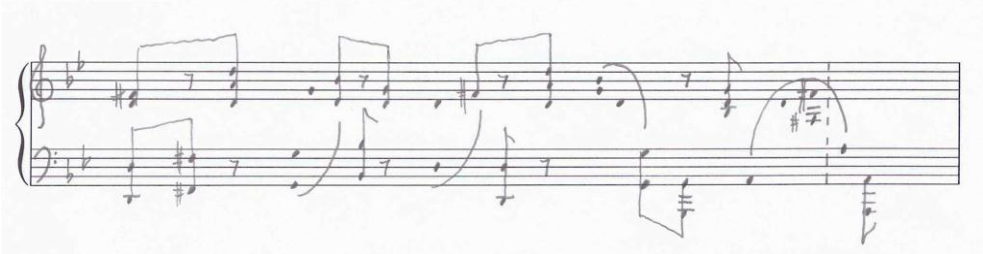


Ex. 4.4.1.2: *Op. 79 no. 2*, Adelina De Lara, 36.1[121.1] - 37.1[122.1].



Ex. 4.4.1.3: *Op. 79 no. 2*, Adelina De Lara, 10.3[42.3] - 11.2[43.2].

I was also keen to investigate whether De Lara's technical problems in the transitional material were caused by a covered and horizontal attack, as potentially evidenced by what sounded like arpeggiations. Using a spectrogram I determined that in both statements of this material in the exposition, she rolls the octave Ds at 10.3[42.3] first, followed by the A and then the F#, as shown in Ex. 4.4.1.3 above. As shown in Ex. 4.4.1.4 below, at 12.2[44.2] she plays the left-hand octave first, followed by the right-hand G, with the B and D sounding simultaneously afterwards; at 12.3[44.3] she plays the F# late; at 12.4[44.4] she plays the right-hand G and B together, followed by the D, and then by a solid left hand octave; and at 13.1[45.1] she plays the lower left hand A early, then the right hand D, then the F# octave, followed by the upper left-hand A. De Lara replicates these arpeggiations in the recapitulation, but now also plays all second and fourth beats in m. 127 and 129 as at 12.2. Indeed, given its quicker tempo and more frequent arpeggiations, it is no wonder that her technical problems worsen while playing this material in the recapitulation. While tempo may be the deciding factor regarding De Lara's technical missteps here, the *variety* of her arpeggiations does suggest that her hands are very close to the keys. While arpeggiation generally necessitates a side-to-side motion of the hand, quickly rolling each chord from bottom to top could easily be accomplished with a vertical attack and release, thus enabling the pianist to reposition her hands mid-air in order to execute the next chord cleanly.



Ex. 4.4.1.4: *Op. 79 no. 2*, Adelina De Lara, 12.1[44.1] - 13.1[45.1].

De Lara's voicing of the inner right-hand melody of the second subject is immediately apparent in Figure 4.4.1.2 below. As she plays the octave triplet upbeat at 13.4, look at the bright glow that represents the loudness of her right hand thumb, with the notes an octave higher registering but a faint glimmer. At 14.1 you can see how she further emphasizes this inner right-hand melody by playing the lower G# before its counterpart an octave higher. Finally, it seems as though this second subject returns faster as well as louder in the recapitulation: while she plays the right hand C# octave at 131.1 solidly, the loudness of her right hand thumb here registers at around -9db while at 14.1[46.1] it comes out at around -17db. While De Lara's shaping of this subject in the exposition was apparent with just simple listening, as was the speed and intensity of its reprise in the recapitulation, the beauty of visualization software often lies in how it enables us to hear with our eyes.

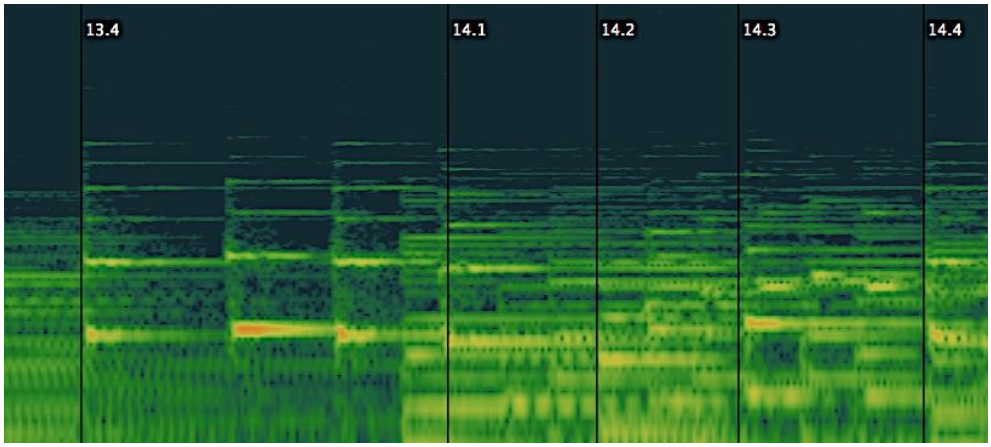


Figure 4.4.1.2: *Op. 79 no. 2*, Adelina De Lara, 13.4 - 14.1.

I was however eager to examine whether De Lara plays the sixteenth notes in the left hand *after* the triplets of the right throughout all statements of the closing material. I determined that when speeding up over the crescendo in m. 27 she does begin to play the left-hand sixteenth note octaves with the last notes of the right-hand triplet figures at 27.4, 28.2, 29.4, and 30.2; and that each rhythmic alteration immediately follows an instance of arpeggiation in the left hand. By playing the left-hand sixteenth notes slightly early, it is possible that she is buying herself extra time to compensate for not having the verticality and speed of attack needed to execute these sixteenth note octaves quickly as notated, as evidenced by her arpeggiations. While she makes this rhythmic alteration only at 59.4 and 60.2 in the exposition, in the much quicker statement of this material in the recapitulation they occur much more often: on all second beats of m. 142 -147; on the first beats of m. 143, 144 and 146; and on the fourth beats of m. 144 and 146. Interestingly, while De Lara arpeggiates less frequently in this passage she experiences many more technical problems. Perhaps what can be said therefore is that De Lara's arpeggiations form an integral part of her horizontal attack, the latter of which becomes

especially problematic in quickly leaping chords as evidenced by the frequency of her rhythmic alterations and technical missteps in faster tempi.

Among the final elements of De Lara's performance needing closer examination are her dislocations in the development section over the hairpins in m. 72, 80 and 84. In all three measures it turns out that she is simply playing each of the left-hand notes notated to coincide with right-hand notes, early. In m. 83 she is in fact echoing the left hand's falling third figure with her right hand; and in the upper melodic material of m. 131 - 132 she is lengthening every other note in a long-short-long-short-long pattern.

4.4.2) *Intermezzo in E flat Major* Op. 117 no. 1: Adelina De Lara, 1951

Looking at Adelina De Lara's average tempo values in Figure 4.4.2.1 below, one can see that in the opening A section she plays the second statement of the main subject slightly faster than the first, before slowing over the transition; that she plays the second phrase group quite a bit faster than the first in the B section, but that she does follow Brahms's indication to play this section more slowly; and that she plays the A^1 section more slowly than both the opening and B sections, only this time she slows over the whole section. Otherwise, there's not much else of interest to be found in her average tempo values here.

A	First Phrase Group	1.1 - 8.6	117MM
	Second Phrase Group	9.1 - 14.6	119MM
	Transition	16.6 - 20.6	113MM
B	First Phrase Group	21.1 - 28.6	99MM
	Second Phrase Group	29.1 - 37.6	109MM
A	First Phrase Group	38.1 - 45.6	78MM
	Second Phrase Group	46.1 - 53.6	73MM
	Coda	54.1 - 57.1	63MM

Figure 4.4.2.1: Average Tempo Values, Adelina De Lara, *Op. 117 no. 1*.

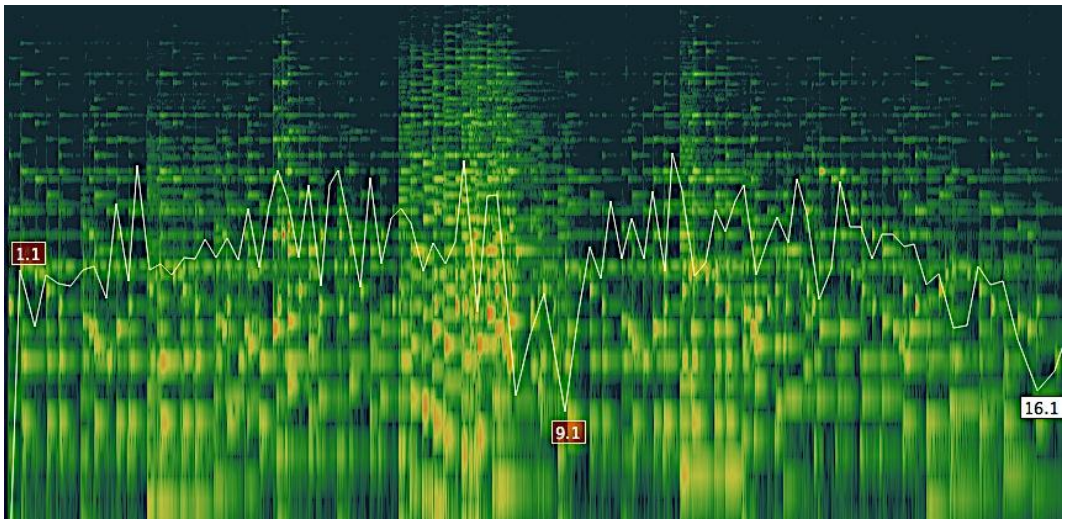


Figure 4.4.2.2: Adelina De Lara, *Op. 117 no. 1*, m. 1 - 16.

The tempo graph of the first sixteen measures of the A section as shown above in Figure 4.4.2.2, demonstrates how she uses tempo modification to create two overarching eight-measure phrase groups: by playing more slowly at their beginnings and ends, and more quickly over their middles. The bright red and orange glow of De Lara's loudness values also shows how the tonal weight of these two phrase groups occurs at the very middle of these sixteen measures: over the forcefully dislocated left-hand octaves at the end of the first phrase group in m. 7 - 8. De Lara's many local rhythmic alterations are represented here by the extremely jagged nature of her tempo graph, though interestingly

these note values even out in m. 1, 3, and 13 - 14 (even though she rushes over 13.1 - 13.4 and slows over 14.4 - 14.6), as shown below in Figure 4.4.2.3 and 4.4.2.4.

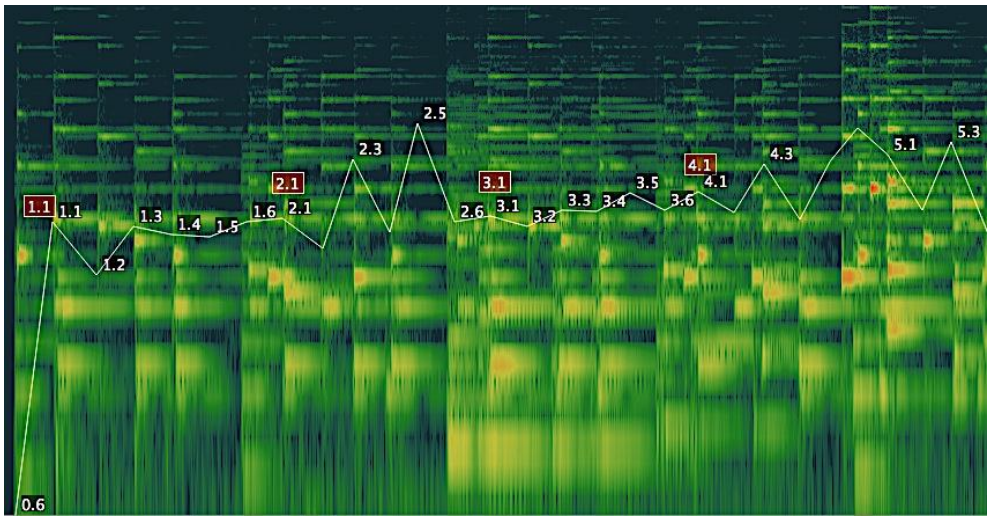


Figure 4.4.2.3: Adelina De Lara, *Op. 117 no. 1*, m. 1 - 4.

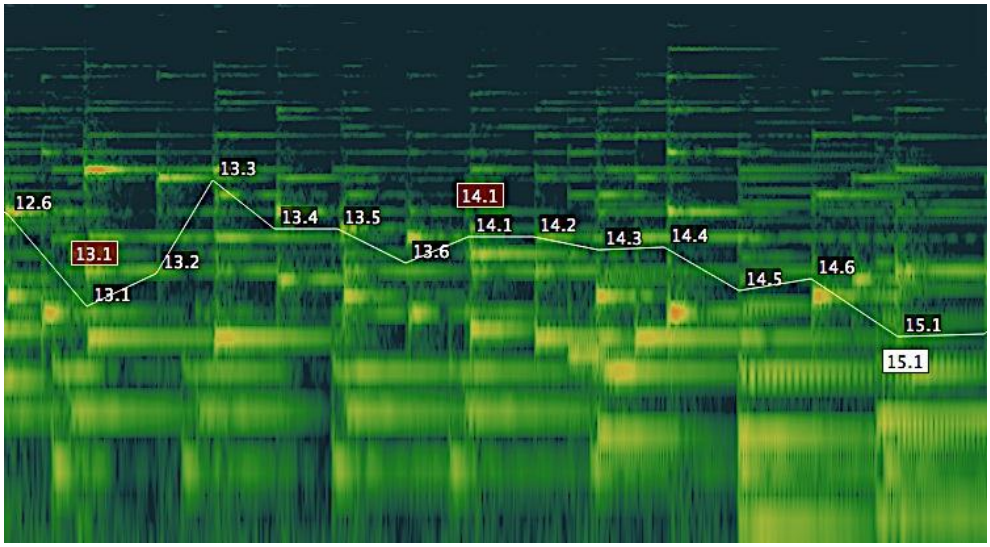


Figure 4.4.2.4: Adelina De Lara, *Op. 117 no. 1*, m. 13 - 14.

I was particularly interested however in how De Lara combines and varies the techniques of dislocation and arpeggiation in these opening sixteen measures. My initial impression was that she shapes local slurs with more dislocation at the slower beginnings and ends of the two phrase groups, while using more arpeggiation over their faster

middles. While it was clear that De Lara uses widely dislocated left-hand octaves to ground the ends of each phrase group in m. 7 - 8 and 17 - 20, at their outsets I determined that in m. 1 - 4 she indeed dislocates all left-hand upbeats so that they sound earlier than their right-hand counterparts, and that she dislocates the third in the left hand at 1.4 so that it sounds late. She then starts to use more arpeggiation as her tempo accumulates, rolling the left hand from bottom to top with the right hand sounding solidly with the left hand upper note, at 2.4, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1 and 4.3. While it was clear with simple listening that arpeggiation coincides with quicker playing at the level of the phrase group (as in m. 5 - 6), this sometimes holds true at the level of the local slur as well. Returning to Figure 4.4.2.3, we can see that the arpeggiations at 3.3 and 3.4 indeed coincide with rushing.

In the next phrase group, arpeggiation is again associated with quicker playing over its middle (at 10.4, 11.1, 11.3, 11.4, 12.1, 12.3, 12.4, 12.6, 13.1, 13.3, 13.4, 14. 1 and 14.3), with dislocation occurring more frequently at its slower beginning and end. Indeed, De Lara plays all left-hand upbeats in m. 9 - 11 early, and plays bass notes early at 15.5 and 16.6 - 20.1, after which she plays the bass octaves late at 20.3 and 20.5. She does use arpeggiation to soften rather than propel the c minor chord at 11.1, but follows this with local rushing as shown below in Figure 4.4.2.5.

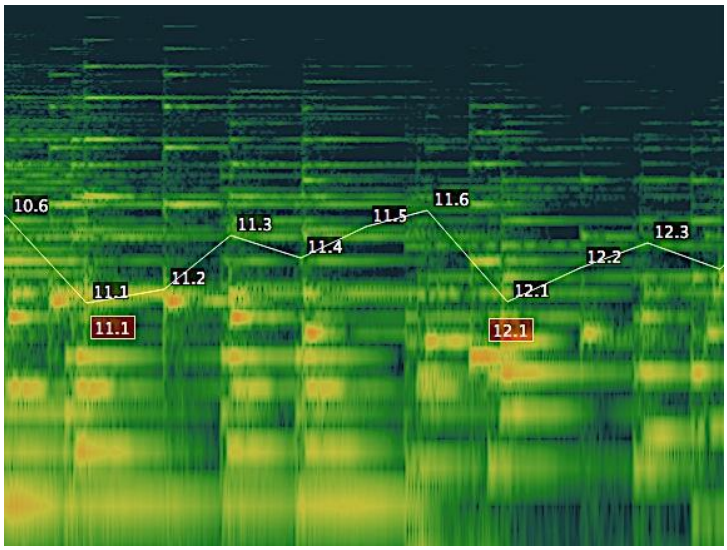


Figure 4.4.2.5: Adelina De Lara, *Op. 117 no. 1*, m. 11.

In Figure 4.4.2.6 below, we can see how De Lara once again creates two large phrase groups in the B section of this work by speeding towards their middles and by slowing over their chordal ends in m. 28 and 34. We can also see how De Lara's tempo is not 'corrected' by her slowing in m. 28, but rather accumulates dramatically over the second phrase group, which is played both faster and louder (as indicated).

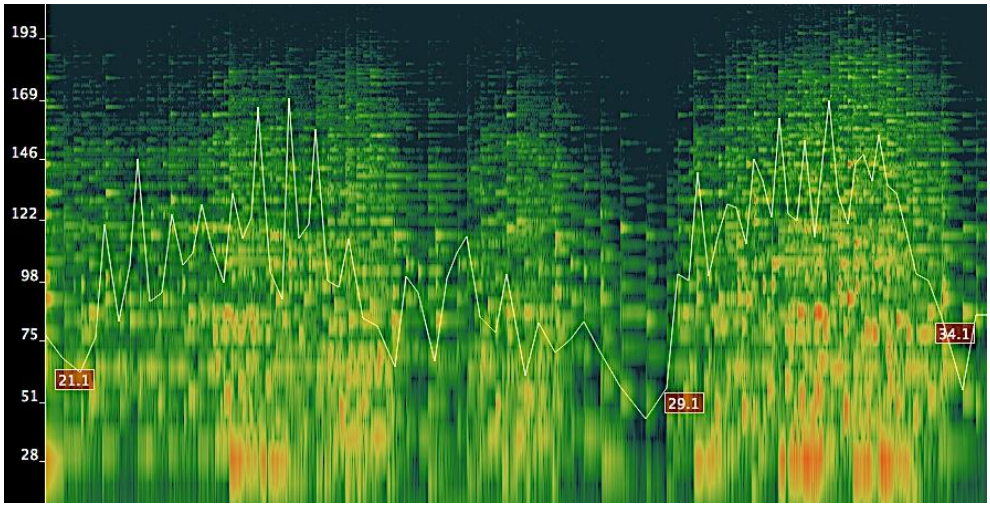


Figure 4.4.2.6: Adelina De Lara, *Op. 117 no. 1*, m. 21 - 34.

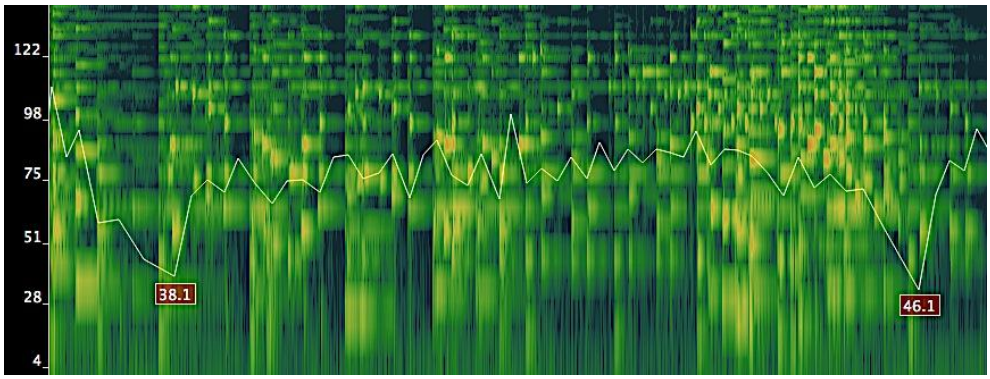
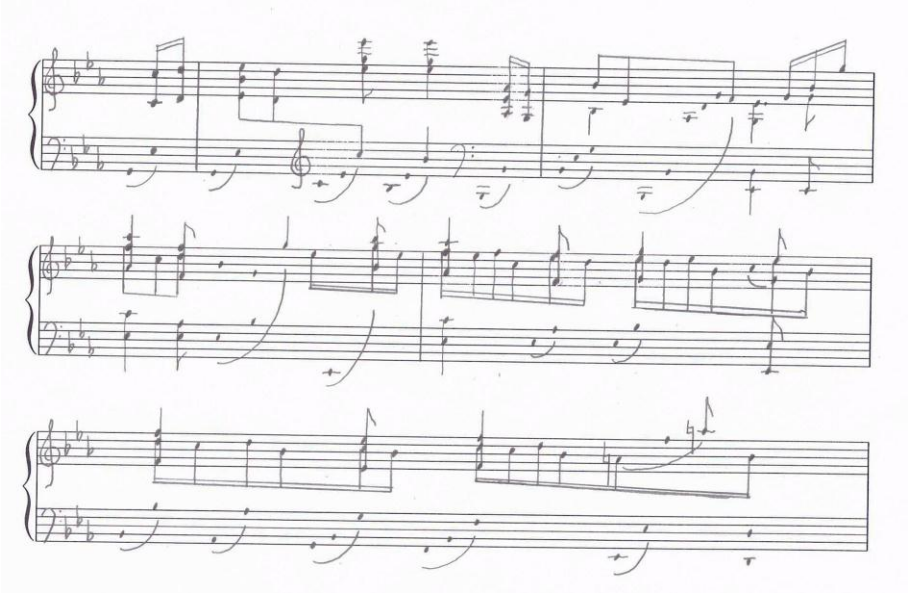


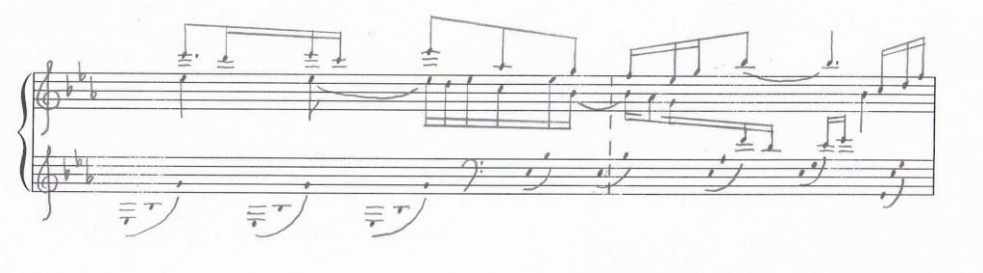
Figure 4.4.2.7: Adelina De Lara, *Op. 117 no. 1*, m. 38 - 46.

When examining the tempo graph of the first phrase group of the A^1 section as shown above in Figure 4.4.2.7, one is immediately struck by the relative steadiness of De Lara's tempo as well as her much more restrained approach to local rhythmic alterations (compare this graph for example to Figure 4.4.2.2). She also seems to be arpeggiating more frequently here as initially suspected. Indeed, De Lara rolls all left-hand materials from bottom to top while sounding the right-hand material solidly with the upper note of the left hand at 38.1 - 41.2, 43.3, 43.4, 44.3, 44.4, 45.3 and 45.4. Variations occur at 41.3, where she rolls all notes from bottom to top, but plays the appoggiatura G before the F; at 42.4, where she first plays the inner right-hand B flat with the left-hand E flat, followed by the lower right-hand G and left-hand B flat together, with the top right-hand G sounding last; and at 44.6 where she plays the lowest left-hand E flat with the lowest right-hand A, then the upper left-hand E flat, followed by the right-hand F and then the top A. The only instances of dislocation here are the early left-hand upbeat at 42.6, early bass notes at 44.1 and 44.2, and an early inner right-hand C at 43.6. You can see 39.6 - 44.6 rewritten below in Ex. 4.4.2.8.



Ex. 4.4.2.8: *Op. 117 no. 1*, Adelina De Lara, 39.6 - 44.6.

After beginning the next phrase group at m. 46 with noticeably fewer dislocations and arpeggiations (except for the ever-present early left-hand upbeats), it was unclear how De Lara was playing the material in m. 50 - 51. As shown below in Ex. 4.4.2.9, right after 50.4 De Lara cuts the top B flat in the right hand, preferring to focus on the inner melody; while after 51.1 she again cuts the upper D before playing the E flat of the upper voice and the G of the inner voice simultaneously. Finally, at 54.3 De Lara first rolls the left-hand material bottom to top, then plays the top E flat of the right hand, followed by the rest of the right-hand material simultaneously; while at 54.6 she simply sounds the lowest left-hand note early.



Ex. 4.4.2.9: *Op. 117 no. 1*, Adelina De Lara, 50.1 - 51.6.

4.4.3) *Ballade in G minor* Op. 118 no. 3: Ilona Eibenschütz, 1903

Before examining the minutiae of Ilona Eibenschütz's performance here it might be useful to take a look at her treatment of tempo in general, as she tends to shape this work with time rather than with subtle variations of dislocation, arpeggiation and rhythmic alteration. In Figures 4.4.3.1 and 4.4.3.2 below, we can see that in the A section she rushes over the first subject m. 1 - 10; that her tempo isn't corrected by her slowing into the *rit*. indication in m. 10 but rather accumulates over the second subject m. 11 - 22; that the reprise of the first subject in m. 23 is played more steadily and quicker than its first iteration; and that her tempo fluctuates wildly over the transition before relaxing slightly into the B section at m. 41.

A	First Subject	1.1 - 10.4	176MM
	Second Subject	11.1 - 22.4	198MM
	First Subject	23.1 - 31.4	188MM
	Transition	32.1 - 40.4	185MM
B	First Phrase Group	41.1 - 48.4	191MM
	Second Phrase Group	49.1 - 56.4	181MM
	Third Phrase Group	57.1 - 64.4	210MM
	Fourth Phrase Group	65.1 - 72.4	168MM
	Transition	73.1 - 76.4	183MM
A	First Subject	77.1 - 86.4	190MM
	Second Subject	87.1 - 98.4	203MM
	First Subject	99.1 - 107.4	200MM
	Coda	108.1 - 117.3	182MM

Figure 4.4.3.1: Average Tempo Values, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 118 no. 3*.

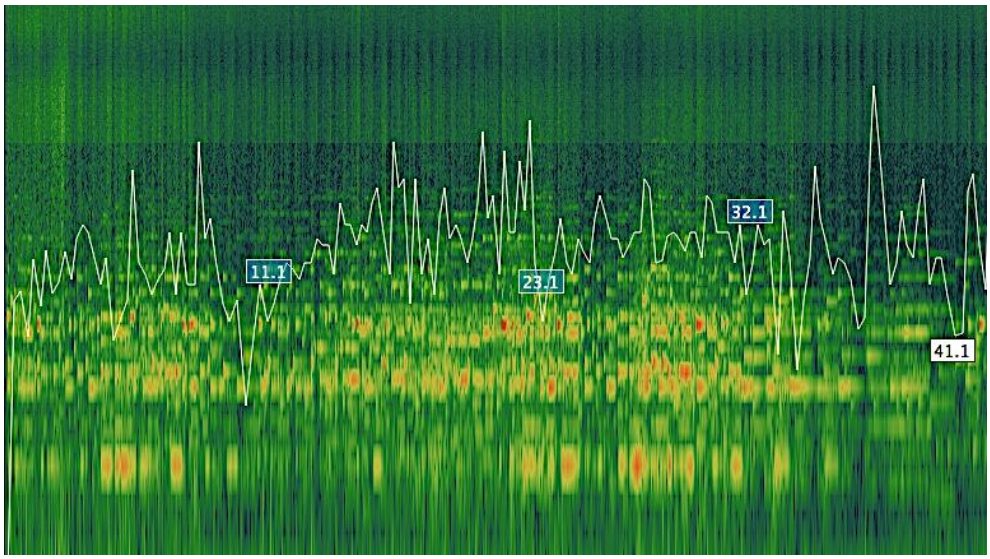


Figure 4.4.3.2: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 118 no. 3*, m. 1 - 41.

Working between the table above and now Figure 4.4.3.3 below, we can see how she takes the B section just as quickly and at times even more hastily than the preceding A section; how she rushes over the middles of each of the B section's four phrase groups; how she plays the first and third phrase groups starting at 41.1 and 57.1 much more quickly, while the more expressive and hairpin-laden second and fourth phrase groups at 49.1 and 65.1 are played ever more slowly; and how she regains momentum in the transition material at 73.1 before the reprise of the A section, which returns faster than at the outset of the work.

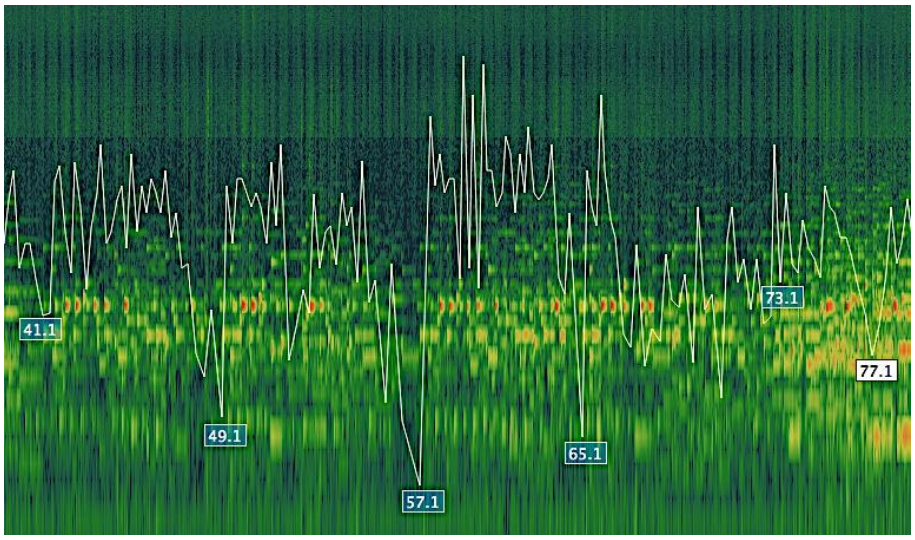


Figure 4.4.3.3: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 118 no. 3*, m. 40 - 77.

Finally, in Figure 4.4.3.4 below we can see how in the A^1 section Eibenschütz again rushes over the now quicker first subject at 77.1, with her tempo not being corrected by the *rit*. indication in m. 86 but rather accumulating into the second subject at 87.1; how the second subject and reiteration of the first subject at 99.1 are played more quickly than the initial statement of the first subject; how all three subjects are now played more steadily than in the opening A section (compare Figure 4.4.3.4 with 4.4.3.2); and how her tempo relents at the *una corda* indication in 114.1.

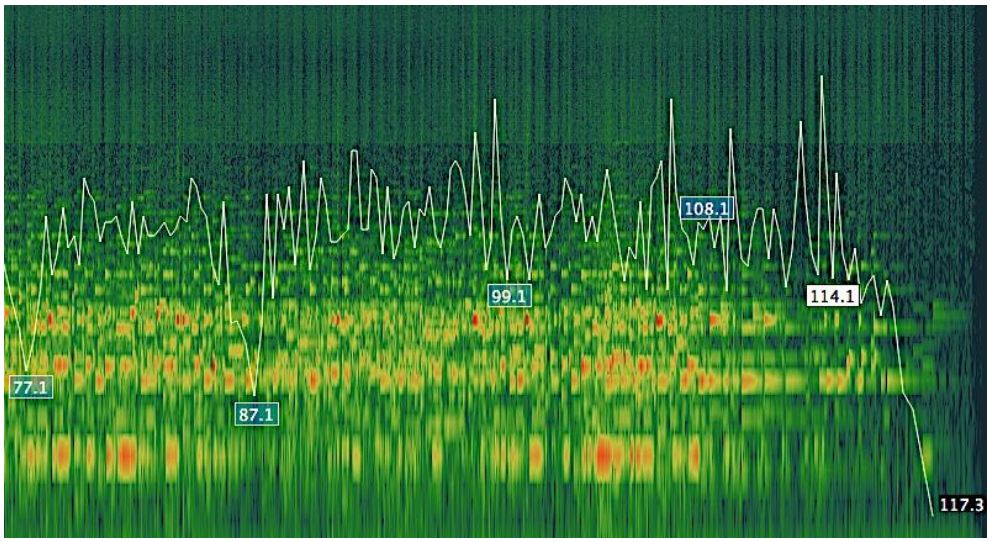


Figure 4.4.3.4: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 118 no. 3*, m. 77 - 117.

This isn't the whole story however when it comes to how Eibenschütz uses time to shape her performance. Not only do some of her most hair-raising tempi coincide with this work's lyrical second subjects and B section, but one could also say that she uses this material to 'slingshot' the temporal motion of the work. Indeed, these more expressive passages always occur between similar subjects that end up faster upon repetition. In the opening A section for example, the average tempo of the primary subject increases from 176MM in its first statement to 188MM after the second subject; while in the A^1 section the average tempo of the primary subject goes from 190MM to 200MM.

In the B section, while the first and third phrase groups are identical (like the primary subject of the A section), it could be said that the second and fourth phrase groups are more expressive, lyrical and musically varied (like the second subject of the A section). Even though the second and fourth phrase groups at 49.1 and 65.1 are played more slowly here (contrary to the A sections' faster second subjects), the former is followed by the quickest phrase group of the B section, while the latter leads to the faster transition material at 73.1 and ultimately to a quicker statement of the primary subject in

the A^1 section. Over the whole work therefore, the temporal trajectory of the primary subjects goes from 176MM, to 188MM, to 190MM, to 200MM; what lies between them of course, are the second subjects and B section.

While Brahms's writing can be parcelled into neat sections, many aspects of Eibenschütz's performance subvert such delineations. If one zooms out on the tempo graph of her entire performance as shown in Figure 4.4.3.5 below, one notices a striking double arch shape, where each arch is characterized by slower playing at its outer edges and faster playing over its middle; but where the fulcrum or slowest point of this double-arch shape occurs just before the third phrase group of the B section at 57.1. Just we saw in her shaping of local phrases in Op. 119 no. 2, here Eibenschütz has shifted the load-bearing walls of this entire work to what is essentially its mathematical centre, bearing in mind that she only slows at the end of this work starting around m. 114.

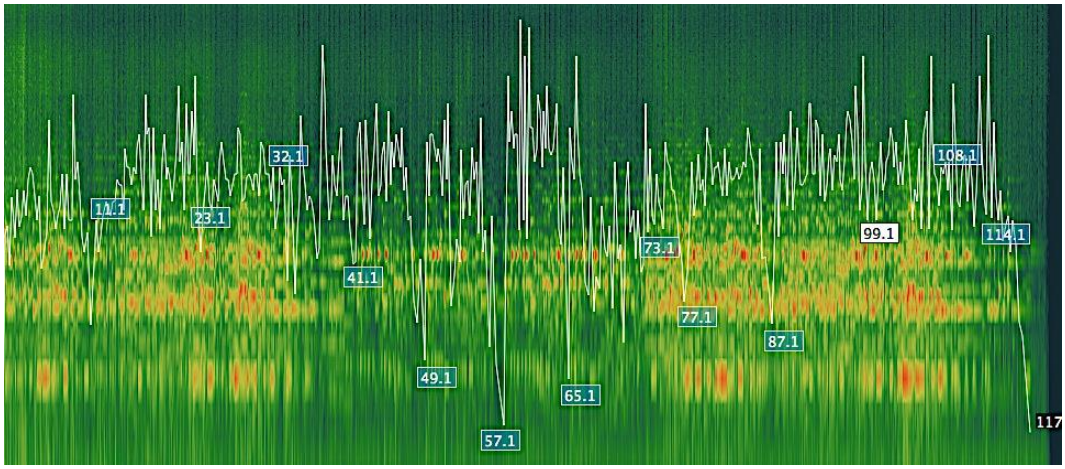
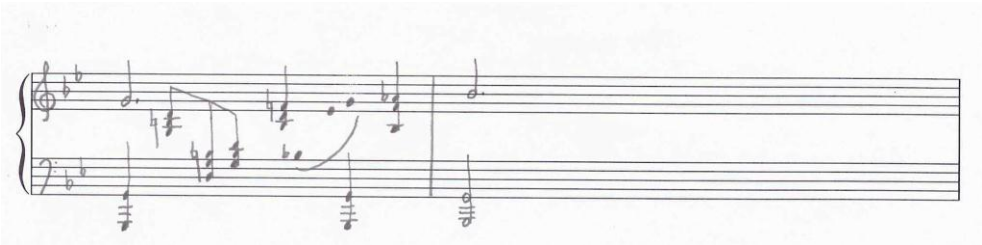


Figure 4.4.3.5: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 118 no. 3*, m. 1 - 117.

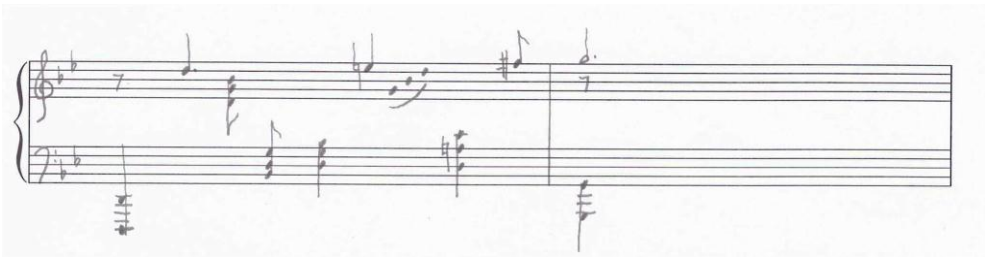
This shifting of structural weight also occurs on a smaller scale, as Eibenschütz tends to truncate and elide material at smaller internal boundaries, and often in conjunction with the few instances of arpeggiation and rhythmic alteration she does use.

At m. 10 and 86 as shown below in Ex. 4.4.3.1, she blurs the boundary at the end of the first subject and the beginning of the second by playing only the Gs at 10.1[86.1]; by shortening the value of the quarter note at 10.3[86.3]; by then immediately rolling the right-hand entry at 10.4[86.4] from bottom to top with the left-hand octave coinciding with the upper right-hand note; and by again cutting out the inner voices at 11.1[87.1], which she continues doing for another three measures. While she rushes over m. 10 and slows over m. 86, in both cases this combination of truncation, elision, arpeggiation and rhythmic alteration results in the early and unprepared right-hand entry of the second subject, thus undercutting the weight of this structural boundary.



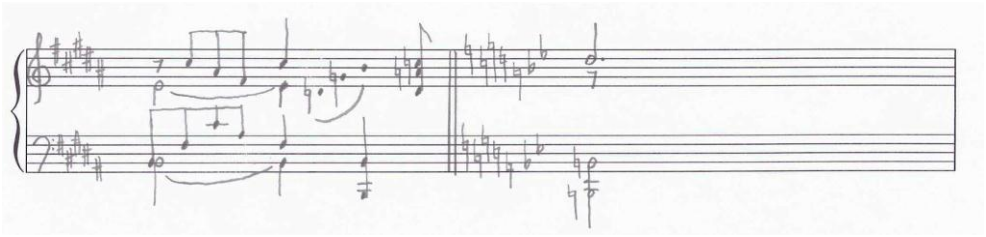
Ex. 4.4.3.1: *Op. 118 no. 3*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 10.1[86.1] - 11.1[87.1].

Where she rushes between the second subject and the restatement of the primary subject in m. 22 and 98 as shown in Ex. 4.4.3.2 below, after playing the left-hand octave at 22.1[98.1] she then plays only the top right-hand D, followed by an inner DGB chord in the right hand, which then displaces all of the left-hand chords so that the chord that should fall at 22.3[98.3] is cut. In quick succession she plays an early and shortened top right-hand E, then rolls the inner right-hand GBD triad, then plays the left-hand chord at 22.4[98.4], followed by only the top F# and then just the Gs at 23.1[99.1].



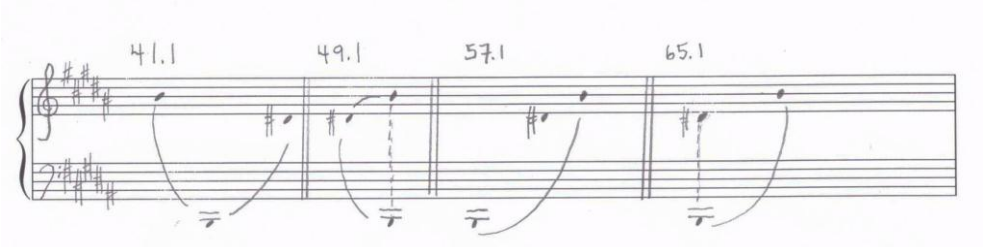
Ex. 4.4.3.2: *Op. 118 no. 3*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 22.1[98.1] - 23.1[99.1].

Eibenschütz is also rushing through the boundary between the B section and the transitional material in m. 72, as shown below in Ex. 4.4.3.3. Here too she cuts the value of the quarter note at 72.3; she plays the right-hand chord at 72.4 early, rolling it from bottom to top and playing the left-hand octave with the top right-hand B; after which she proceeds to 73.1 where she plays only the top right-hand D.



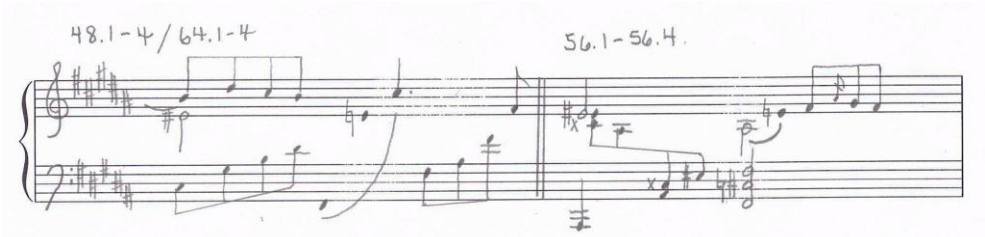
Ex. 4.4.3.3: *Op. 118 no. 3*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 72.1 - 73.1.

Ilona Eibenschütz's only other significant use of dislocation, arpeggiation and rhythmic alteration here occurs at the slower outer edges of the B section's four phrase groups. At the beginnings of these phrase groups as shown below in Ex. 4.4.3.4, at 41.1 she plays the right-hand B first, followed by the left-hand bass, followed by the D#; at 49.1 she plays the D# early; at 57.1 she plays all notes rolled from bottom to top; and at 65.1 she plays the top B late.



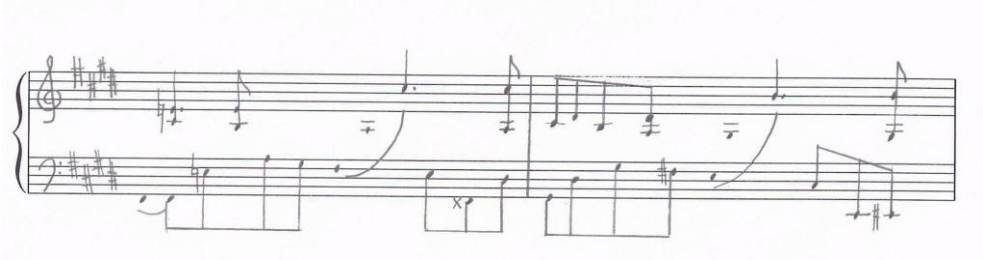
Ex. 4.4.3.4: *Op. 118 no. 3*, Ilona Eibenschütz, dislocation and arpeggiation variations.

At the ends of these phrase groups as shown below in Ex. 4.4.3.5, at 48.3 and 64.3 she rolls all notes from bottom to top; while at 56.3 she slightly delays the top E natural.



Ex. 4.4.3.5: *Op. 118 no. 3*, Ilona Eibenschütz, dislocation and arpeggiation variations.

Finally, in Ex. 4.4.3.6 you can see that Eibenschütz doesn't dislocate the left-hand bass note at 69.1 as I had initially assumed, but rather plays it twice: once early and once with the right hand. At 69.2 she displaces the BE of the right hand so that it sounds before the A of the left hand rather than with the G as notated, then she rolls all notes at 69.3 from bottom to top. At 70.1 she plays the left-hand bass with the inner right-hand C#, followed by the D# in the right hand; at 70.2 she again plays the right-hand notes before their left-hand counterparts; and at 70.3 she rolls all notes from bottom to top.



Ex. 4.4.3.6: *Op. 118 no. 3*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 69.1 - 70.4.

4.4.4) *Intermezzo in E minor* Op. 119 no. 2: Ilona Eibenschütz, 1952

Though the structure of this work's A section material is freer than that of Op. 118 no. 3, Eibenschütz's relative temporal treatment of its many constituent phrase groups still warrants closer investigation. In Figure 4.4.4.1 below one can see the full effect of her tendency to rush over most phrases; how that rushing is never fully corrected by her slowing at the ends of some of those phrases; and how her tempo tends to accumulate from phrase to phrase as a result. Her average tempo during the main subject accumulates from 89MM to 94MM upon reiteration; it then skyrockets to 125MM over the F major triplet subject; and while she continues to rush locally, her overall tempo begins to abate after the alternating subject and through the closing material, the latter of which is played around 99MM.

A	Main Subject	1.1-8.3	89MM
	Main Subject	9.1 - 12.3	94MM
	Triplet Subject	13.1 - 17.2	125MM
	Alternating Subject	17.3 - 22.3	115MM

	Closing Material	23.1 - 34.3	99MM
B	First Subject	36.1 - 43.3	168MM
	Second Subject	44.1 - 51.3	172MM
	Third Subject	52.1 - 59.3	216MM
	Fourth Subject	60.1 - 67.3	159MM
	Third Subject'	68.1 - 75.3	229MM
	Fourth Subject'	76.1 - 83.3	144MM
	Transition	84.1 - 87.3	83MM
A	Main Subject	88.1-91.3	84MM
	Triplet Subject	92.1-96.2	124MM
	Alternating Subject	96.3 - 101.3	111MM
	Closing Material	102.1-113.3	106MM
	Coda	114.1 - 119.1	58MM

Figure 4.4.4.1: Average Tempo Values, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 119 no. 2*.

The arch-like shape of Eibenschütz's playing of the A section, with its slower outer edges and faster middle, is then replicated in the A^1 section: so much so in fact, that her average tempo over parallel fragments of musical material here are remarkably alike. Compare for example her average speeds over the triplet subjects (125MM and 124MM) and over the alternating subjects (115MM and 111MM). This temporal consistency stands in stark contrast to her playing of Op. 118 no. 3, whose A section materials return much faster after the B section.

Eibenschütz's rushing over each of the phrase groups of the B section results in a similarly precipitous accumulation of tempo towards its middle, with her tempo ranging from 168MM over the first subject, to 172MM over the second subject, to 216 - 229MM

for the third subject and its repetition, and then back to 144 - 159MM for the fourth subject and its repetition. As in the A sections, Ilona slows dramatically at the end of the final statement of the fourth subject and over the transition: yet another point of contrast with Op. 118 no. 3, in that here she slows to frame structural boundaries while in the *Ballade* she consciously blurs them.

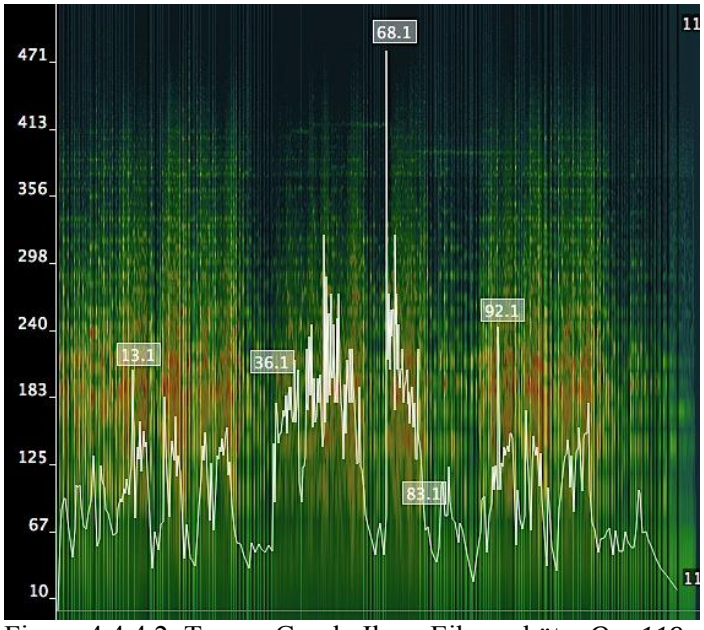


Figure 4.4.4.2: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 119 no. 2*, m. 1 - 119.

This arch shape applies not only to the A and B sections individually but to the work as a whole, as some of Eibenschütz's fastest playing again occurs over the lyrical B section material. By zooming out on the tempo graph of her performance as seen above in Figure 4.4.4.2, one immediately notices a triple-arch shape, where each of the three peaks represents the quicker middles of sections. The smaller outer peaks represent her hasty playing of the triplet subjects at 13.1 and 92.1 in the A sections, while the highest peak in the middle represents her lightning-fast playing of the repeated third subject at 68.1. It is

important to note however that Eibenschütz seems to play this B section according to a verbal tempo indication of *'Il doppio movimento ♩ = ♪'* that appeared in this work's autograph before being removed prior to publication in 1893. According to this indication, the quarter notes of the B section were to be roughly equivalent to the eighth notes of the A section. If you average her tempi during the A section's main subjects at 1.1, 9.1 and 88.1, you arrive at a value of 89MM which, when doubled, is 178MM. Remarkably, her tempo over the entire B section averages at about 181MM.

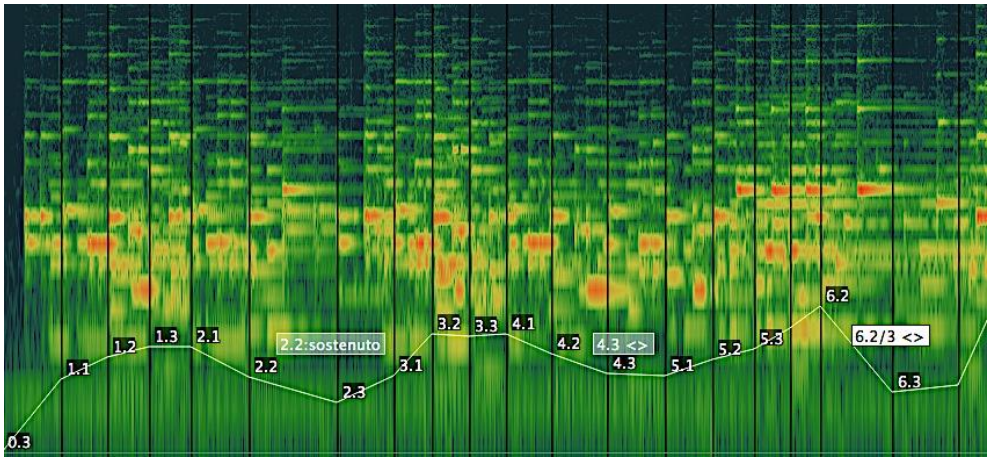


Figure 4.4.4.3: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 119 no. 2*, 1.1 - 6.3.

While Eibenschütz does slow to emphasize the major structural boundaries of this work, she tends to deemphasize the borders of its smaller internal structures. One way she accomplishes this is by again slowing before, rather than into, such boundaries. In Figure 4.4.4.3 above, you can see how she slows into the *sostenuto* indication at 2.3 before rushing through the start of the new phrase at 3.1; and how she slows into the apexes of the hairpins at 4.3 and 6.3 before rushing right through the beginnings of the next phrases at 5.3 and 7.1. At the outset of the A^1 section as shown in Figure 4.4.4.4 below, she again rushes over the main subject starting at 88.1, slows into an imaginary *sostenuto* at 89.3,

and then rushes through the start of the next phrase at 90.1 and into the F major triplet subject at 92.1 - only taking time *after* it has begun. Figure 4.4.4.5 shows how she rushes into the second half of the B section at 52.1, again only taking time after it has begun.

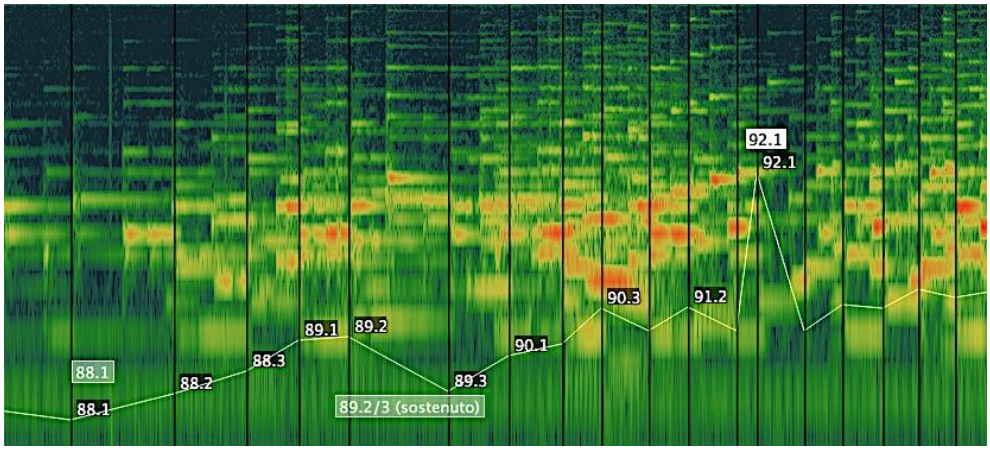


Figure 4.4.4.4: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 119 no. 2*, 88.1 - 92.1.

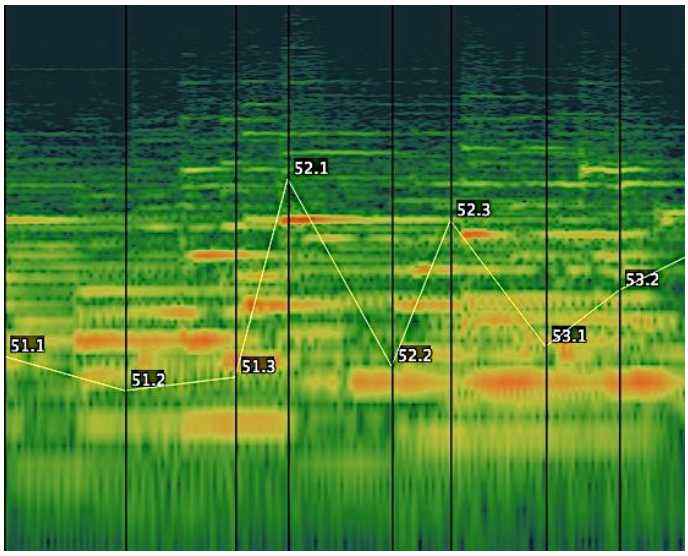
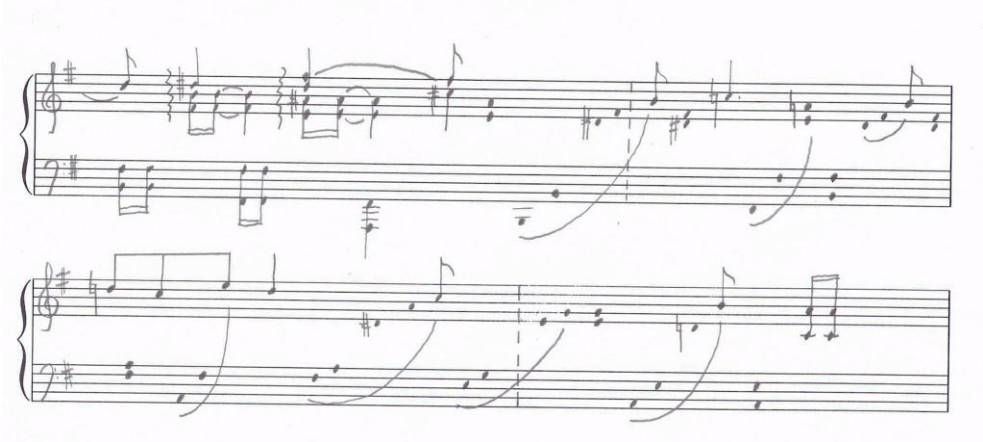


Figure 4.4.4.5: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 119 no. 2*, 51.1 - 53.1.

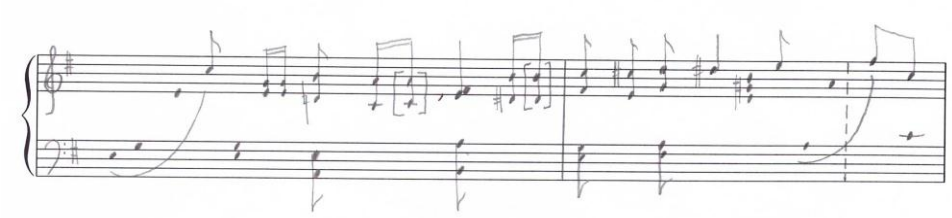
As in Op. 118 no. 3, Ilona Eibenschütz's undercutting of such demarcations often involves the truncation and elision of musical material: sometimes in conjunction with rushing, sometimes not. The first example of this is not associated with rushing, and

occurs between the apex of the hairpin at 6.3 and the return of the main subject at 9.1, as shown below in Ex. 4.4.4.1. After slowing into the apex of the hairpin, Ilona then cuts the second left-hand octave of 6.3, then plays only the inner right-hand C#, followed by only one of the repeated inner right-hand figures. She then begins to roll all notes at 7.1 early and from bottom to top, and cuts the second left-hand octave; at 7.2 she cuts the first left-hand octave and rolls the second bottom to top, after which she plays only one of the right-hand chords; and at 7.3 she cuts the second left-hand chord, then rolls the first right-hand chord bottom to top. At 8.1 she cuts the first left-hand chord and both inner right-hand chords; at 8.2 she rolls all notes bottom to top, after which she cuts the second left-hand chord and both inner right-hand chords, thus playing the top D alone; and at 8.3 she again rolls all notes bottom to top, cutting the second chords of both hands. She then starts to roll the notes of 9.1 early and from bottom to top, displacing the right-hand entry of the new phrase to the downbeat. After cutting the second left-hand third at 9.1 she then rolls all notes at 9.2 from bottom to top.



Ex. 4.4.4.1: *Op. 119 no. 2*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 6.1 - 9.2.

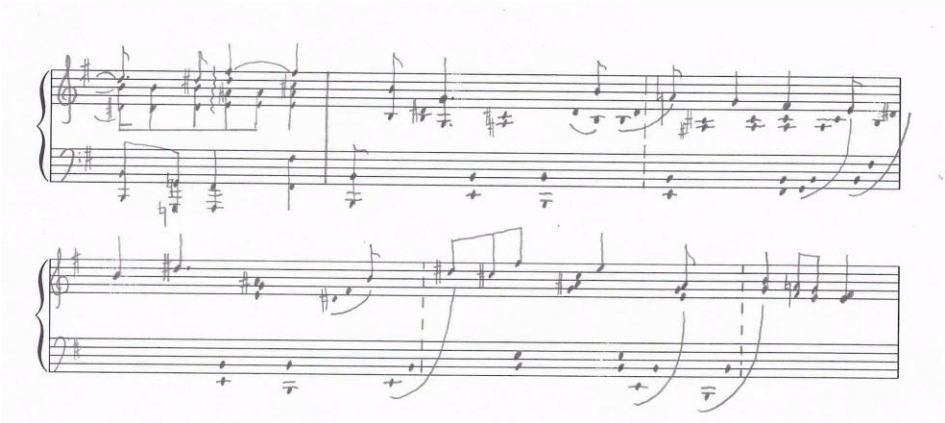
The next instance of truncation and elision occurs between the second statement of the main subject and the F major triplet subject from 11.1 - 13.1, as well as during its altered repetition from 90.1 - 92.1; and in both cases these modifications coincide with rushing into the downbeats of the triplet subjects. As shown below in Ex. 4.4.4.2, at 11.1 Eibenschütz rolls all notes from bottom to top; and at 11.2, 11.3 and 12.1 she cuts the second left- and right-hand chords (though she cuts only the second left-hand chords at 90.2 and 90.3). At 12.2 she cuts the second left-hand chord then plays only the top D#, thus cutting both inner right-hand chords; and at 12.3 she cuts both left-hand chords and plays an EG#B inner chord in the right hand, after which she plays the top E alone. Finally, at 13.1 she rolls all notes early and from bottom to top, displacing the right-hand entry of the triplet F major subject to the downbeat. Because Eibenschütz alters the reiteration of this material in the A^1 section so that it is nearly identical to that of the opening A section, I've included only one figure below with the extra cuts the first time around in brackets.



Ex. 4.4.4.2: *Op. 119 no. 2*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 11.1[90.1] - 13.1[92.1].

The next instances of truncation and elision occur between the end of the alternating subject and the outset of the closing material in both A sections from 22.3[101.3] to 27.2[106.2]. Here, Eibenschütz slows in m. 23[102] and rushes over m. 24

- 25 [103 - 104]. As you can see in the upper system of Ex. 4.4.4.3 below, at 22.3 Ilona plays all notes solidly while cutting the second inner right-hand chord. At 23.1 she plays a single B octave in the left hand and then in the right hand, followed by only the second inner right-hand chord; at 23.2 she plays a G octave with the right hand, then only one of the left- and right-hand chords; and at 23.3 she plays one left-hand octave, then plays the inner D# early, followed by the right-hand B octave, after which she rolls the second right-hand inner chord from bottom to top, eliding it with the right-hand A of the next measure. At 24.1 she cuts the second left-hand chord, plays one of the right-hand inner chords early, followed by the right-hand G and then the second right-hand inner chord; at 24.2 she plays all notes solidly, once; and at 24.3 she rolls all notes from bottom to top, once. She then rolls all notes at 25.1 once and early, displacing the top B to the downbeat.

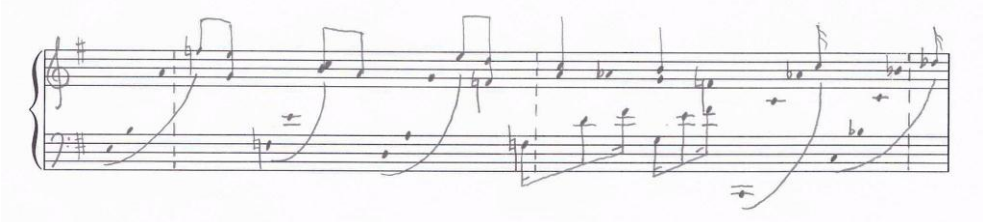


Ex. 4.4.4.3: *Op. 119 no. 2*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 22.1[101.1] - 27.3[106.3].

Now working with the second system of Ex. 4.4.4.3 above, at 25.2 Eibenschütz plays the right-hand D# alone then one of the left- and right-hand chords; and at 25.3 she plays a single left-hand octave then immediately rolls the right-hand chord from bottom to top, once. At 26.1 she begins to roll all notes from bottom to top and early, and cuts the second left-hand chord and both right-hand inner chords, thus playing the C# alone; after

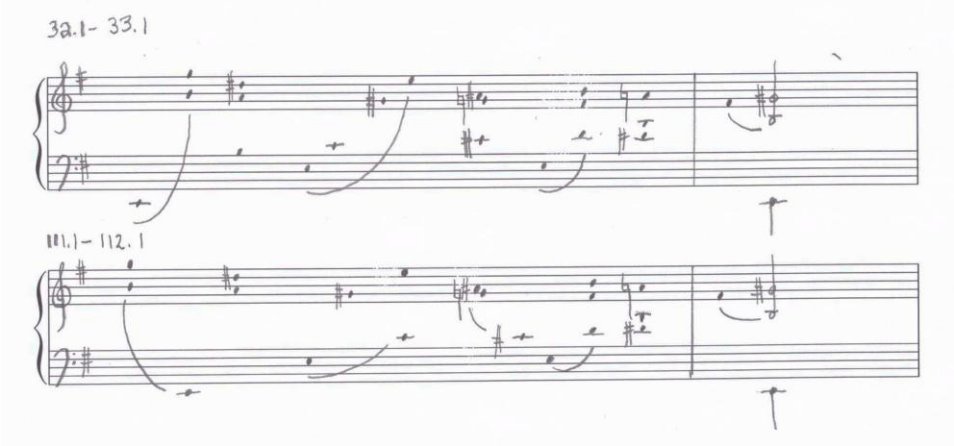
playing the right-hand F# and first left-hand chord at 26.2, she then plays the inner right-hand chord early and once, followed by the top right-hand E and then the second left-hand chord; and at 26.3 she rolls the first left-hand chord from bottom to top, cutting the second left- and right-hand chords. Finally, at 27.1 she again rolls the left-hand octave bottom to top early so that the right-hand third at 27.1 sounds displaced to the downbeat. Interestingly, while Eibenschütz seems to be truncating throughout, she tends to link materials through elision more frequently when rushing: in m. 24 - 25 in this example, and where she rushes into the downbeat of the triplet subject in the previous example.

A smaller example of this correlation between rushing and elision occurs between the F major triplet subject and the beginning of the alternating subject in the A^1 section. Here Eibenschütz elides material while playing quickly in m. 95 and while rushing into m. 97, but not where slowing in m. 96. As you can see below in Ex. 4.4.4.4, at 95.1 she rolls all notes from bottom to top and early so that the upper F is displaced to the downbeat; at 95.2 she rolls the left-hand material from bottom to top, linking it to the right-hand chord; and at 95.3 she again rolls all notes bottom to top. When she starts to slow, she now uses more dislocation and plays the left-hand F at 96.1 early, while playing the right-hand F late at 96.2. As she picks up her tempo she then rolls all notes from bottom to top and early at 96.3 so that the top D flat at 97.1 is displaced to the downbeat.



Ex. 4.4.4.4: *Op. 119 no. 2*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 95.1 - 97.1.

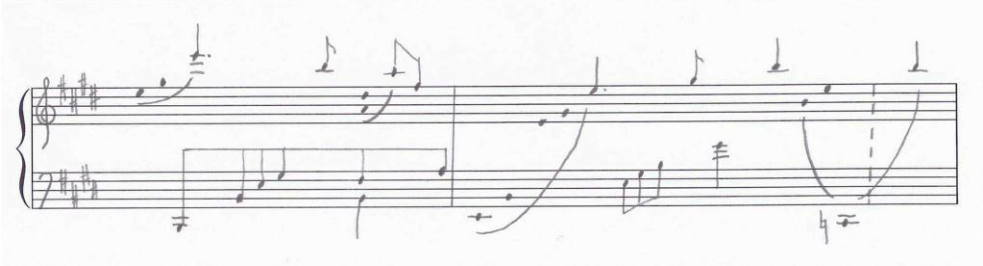
Ilona Eibenschütz uses much more dislocation and arpeggiation here to ground and highlight local details than in her performance of Op. 118 no. 3, and particularly at the beginnings and ends of local phrases as well as at the apexes of hairpins. In the A section, she emphasizes the beginnings of phrases at 1.1 and 3.1 by rolling all notes from bottom to top (in the A^1 section she only rolls the lower left-hand notes at 88.1 and 88.2 early, while rolling everything bottom to top at 90.1). She also emphasizes the ends of phrases at 2.2 and 10.2 by rolling all notes from bottom to top, and at the apex of the hairpin at 4.2 she rolls the left hand, then slowly rolls all notes at 4.3 from bottom to top. And when slowing at the apex of the A section's final hairpin as shown below in Ex. 4.4.4.5, she plays the left hand early at 32.1 (she plays it late at 111.1); at 32.2 she rolls all notes from bottom to top (at 111.2 she plays the left hand E, then the right-hand G#, the C and top E simultaneously, and then plays the left-hand C# late); while at 32.3 she plays the bass note early.



Ex. 4.4.4.5: *Op. 119 no. 2*, Ilona Eibenschütz, m. 32 and 111.

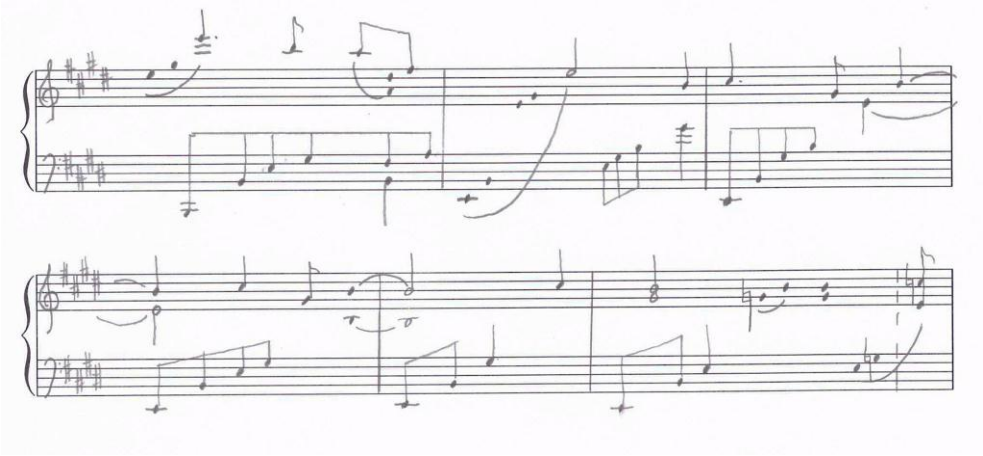
In the lightning-quick B section, most of Eibenschütz's dislocations and arpeggiations occur in the final measures of the fourth phrase, from 66.1[82.1] to

67.3[83.3]. In both iterations, at 66.1 she slowly rolls the right hand, with the bass note delayed to just before the top E; at 66.2 the right-hand B is played after the left-hand G (while the opposite happens at 82.2); at 66.3 the top A of the right hand is delayed as is the final A in the left (while at 82.3 the top A sounds early); and at both 67.1 and 83.1 all notes are rolled from bottom to top. At 67.3 (which leads to the repeated second half of the B section), the left-hand G sounds first, followed by the top right-hand B, after which the rest of the right-hand notes are rolled and elided with an early bass note at 68.1, followed by a retaking of the top right hand B. In Ex. 4.4.4.6 below you will find the first iteration of this material, while its varied repetition can be found in the first measure of Ex. 4.4.4.7.



Ex. 4.4.4.6: *Op. 119 no. 2*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 67.1 - 68.1.

In the transitional material that begins in the second measure of Ex. 4.4.4.7 below, at 84.2 Eibenschütz plays the G of the right hand late; at 84.3 she plays the E early; and at 85.3 she plays the right-hand G followed by a B octave in the same hand, which is carried over to 86.1. At 87.1 the left hand is played early, after which she adds a B in the right hand above the G#. In the final statement of this transitional material, she rolls all notes from bottom to top at 115.1; at 115.2 she again plays the right-hand G late; and she plays the right-hand notes early at 116.2 and 118.1, and late at 118.3.



Ex. 4.4.4.7: *Op. 119 no. 2*, Ilona Eibenschütz, 82.1 - 88.1.

The very last issue to clarify before this performance can be copied is the matter of Ilona Eibenschütz's rhythmic alterations in the first half of the B section. While my initial impression was that the melodic eighth notes were sometimes being played early and sometimes late, it turns out that all are played simultaneously with the left hand, except in m. 40 and 44 where they are probably delayed in order to emphasize the beginnings of new phrases. The eighths at the end of the section in m. 50 - 51 are similarly delayed for emphasis, while the only early eighth note occurs in m. 49. Thus while Eibenschütz seems to be over-dotting a few downbeats for extra emphasis, she doesn't seem to be under-dotting others in any significant way.

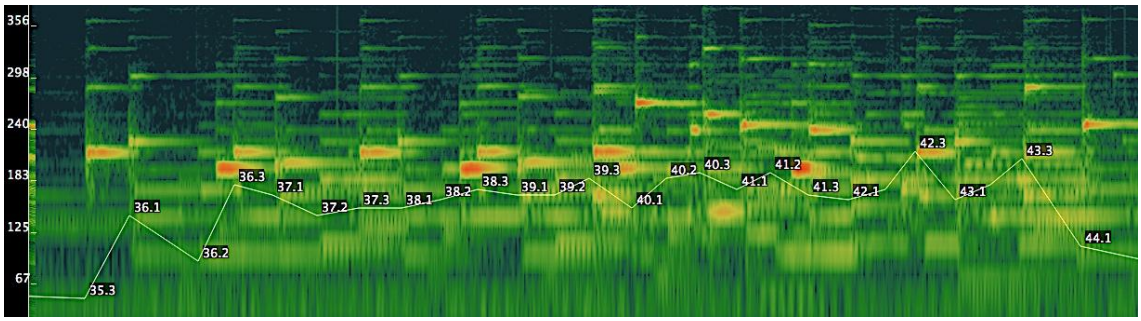


Figure 4.4.4.6: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 119 no. 2*, m. 36 - 43.

I also suspected that some quarter notes at the ends of measures in this first half of the B section were being played early. If we look at Eibenschütz's tempo graph over the first phrase group m. 36 - 43 as shown above in Figure 4.4.4.6, we see that the third beat of each measure (except 41.3) is indeed associated with an upward spike, meaning that it has sounded earlier than predicted relative to the timings of the notes that precede it. With the exception of this phrase group's opening two measures however, whose early third quarters do seem to be a result of rhythmic alteration, in general these spikes appear to be a symptom of Eibenschütz's tendency to rush over most measures, as in m. 38 - 40 and m. 42 - 43 for example. In the next phrase group as shown in Figure 4.4.4.7, here too we see pronouncedly early quarters resulting from rhythmic alteration at its beginning in m. 44, 46 and 47, and now also at its end in m. 51 - 52; with quarters coming early as a result of rushing over its middle in m. 48 - 50.

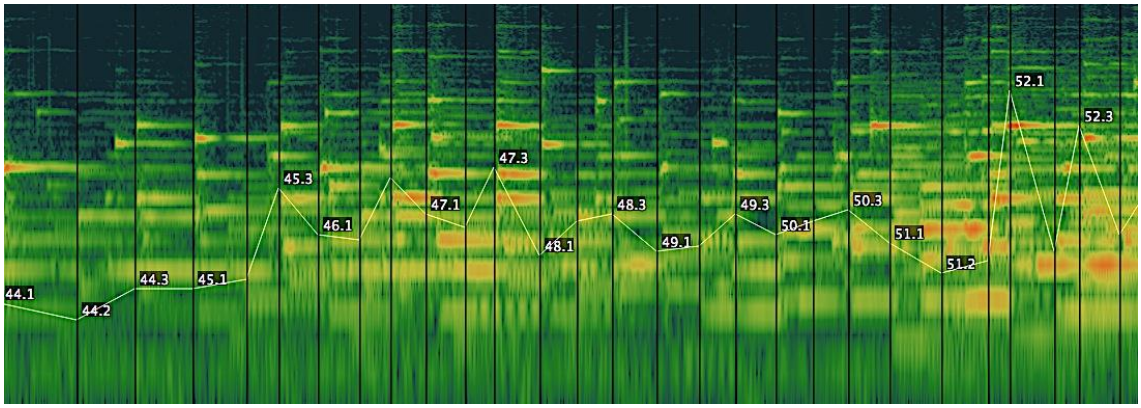


Figure 4.4.4.7: Tempo Graph, Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 119 no. 2*, m. 44 - 52.

As for the lengths of these third quarters, my initial impression that they were being shortened doesn't seem to hold true. Beats marked .1 seem generally associated here with downward dips in the tempo graph, meaning that they come later than expected - not earlier. To be certain, I calculated the lengths of these third quarters by measuring

the time elapsed between beats marked .3 and .1. As shown in Figure 4.4.4.8 below, the lengths of these quarters hover around 0.36 seconds, and while the longer values at 38.3, 43.3 and 44.3 all coincide with the ends or beginnings of phrases, the short value at 51.3 coincides with Eibenschütz's rushing into the second half of the B section. Otherwise, there's no significant pattern related to how these values either increase or decrease over time. In general therefore, the lilting and breathless feel of Ilona Eibenschütz's playing here is probably a result of her local rhythmic alterations at the beginnings and ends of phrase groups, and her small- and large-scale rushing throughout.

36.3	0.36
37.3	0.39
38.3	0.75
39.3	0.39
40.3	0.35
41.3	0.37
42.3	0.37
43.3	0.55
44.3	0.49
45.3	0.34
46.3	0.30
47.3	0.38
48.3	0.37
49.3	0.33
50.3	0.35
51.3	0.19

Figure 4.4.4.8: Ilona Eibenschütz, *Op. 119 no. 2*, lengths of third beats m. 36 - 51.