



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

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

Scott, A.M.

Citation

Scott, A. M. (2014, December 11). *Romanticizing Brahms: Early Recordings and the [De]Construction of Brahmsian Identity*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/29987>

Version: Corrected Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/29987>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/29987> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation

Author: Scott, Anna

Title: Romanticizing Brahms : early recordings and the reconstruction of Brahmsian identity

Issue Date: 2014-12-11

Propositions for 'Romanticizing Brahms'

Anna Scott

- 1) Despite many pianists' dual assertions of historical deference and creative agency, their performances sound nothing like the early-recorded performances of Brahms and his pupils.
- 2) Gaps between evidence of Brahms's musical contexts and modern performances of his works are largely mediated by relativist understandings of his Classical canonic identity, an underlying aesthetic ideology of control, and a rigid set of associated performance norms.
- 3) Historical documentary and sounding evidence of Brahms's musical contexts continues to be handled and applied in highly selective, text-centric, and contained ways.
- 4) Current understandings of Brahmsian identity, ideology, and performance norms can be elucidated and problematized by simply imitating and experimenting with the recordings of the composer and his pupils.
- 5) When modern recordings-informed Brahms style begins to sound like its early-recorded models, one achieves a mode of performance understood today as Romantic, one that reflects the historical 'record' in its entirety, and one that is as deferential as it is creative.
- 6) Sounding historical evidence reveals the utter inadequacy of scores, treatises or verbal accounts as traces of past performance styles.
- 7) What we think about canonic composers affects how we wish to hear their music performed.
- 8) Few performers ever confront the malleability, context-specificity, and disposability of widely agreed-upon understandings of composer identity, ideology, and performance style.
- 9) One of the most powerful ways of revealing tacit modes of knowing, listening, and doing in canonic repertoires is to fundamentally change the way they sound.
- 10) Changing how canonic repertoires sound catalyses a renegotiation of the hierarchical relationships upon which classical music culture is still very much based, particularly as related to the composer-score-performer-listener model.
- 11) Audiences seek a renewed relationship with performances of standard classical music repertoires, and in order to achieve this, these performances should be at least as dynamic, surprising, and diverse as their audiences.
- 12) We remake an inconvenient past in our own image in order to protect ourselves in the messy present from an inscrutable future.
- 13) In order to build, one must often first destroy.