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"Repertoire for a Swedish bassoon virtuoso: Approaching early nineteenth-century works composed for Frans Preumayr with an original Grenser & Wiesner bassoon"

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Chapter 2 Concerning Frans Preumayr's

Reisejournal, 1829–30

2.1 The manuscript

Frans Preumayr's *Reisejournal*, now preserved in the Rare Collections at the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden, was written during his European tour which lasted from October 9, 1829 until December 4, 1830.³⁷ In a short and descriptive article about the document, Swedish musicologist Jan Olof Rudén reports that this valuable manuscript was either ignored or unknown until 1972 and then bought by the Library from Hagelins Antik in Stockholm.³⁸ Remarkably, no extensive research seems to have been carried out about the journal, nor has a transcription of the entire document been completed to date.

As well as offering information about his own concert experiences and reactions of audiences to his appearances, Preumayr shares his opinions about the quality of the many performances he heard, reports of meetings and collaboration with famous musicians and composers, notes the differences among national schools of bassoon and woodwind playing, and comments on daily events in detail, all resulting in a rich and varied reflection of his time. Particularly relevant for this study are the virtuoso's remarks about his choice of instrument and concept of tone quality.

At the beginning of his tour, Preumayr frequently mentions his longing to be at home again with his beloved family and workplace in Stockholm, clearly indicating a profound attachment to Sweden. Later, while in Paris, he notes his eagerness to learn more about contemporary style from respected musicians such as Pierre Crémont, and he raves about fine performances of such

³⁷ Preumayr, Frans Carl, *Reisejournal 1829–30*, 4 vols., Rare Collections, MS 329 (Stockholm: Music and Theatre Library of Sweden, 1829–30).

³⁸ Jan Olof Rudén, 'Das Reisejournal Franz Carl Preumayrs 1829–30', *Svenskt musikhistoriskt arkiv bulletin* 9 (1973): 19–20. Rudén's bibliography includes various Swedish sources compiled by Ove Hagelin, including newspaper accounts from *Heimdall* (1829–30), *Stockholms Dagligt Allehanda* (1831) and *Aftonbladet* (1853).

singers as Maria Felicità Malibran and Henriette Sontag. A regular series of Preumayr's reports appeared in the weekly Stockholm newspaper *Heimdall* while he was underway.³⁹

Transcription and translation

The unpublished journal, numbering 841 pages in length, has been only partially transcribed by the Swedish musicologist Martin Tegen.⁴⁰ It consists of four leatherbound volumes, varying in size from ca. 16–18 cm x 19–23 cm [fig. 2.1], and is in excellent and legible condition.

Although written in Swedish, a German idiom is apparent throughout. As fascinating and informative as Preumayr's reports are, the document is not the main focus of this research and therefore will not be considered here in full detail. Nonetheless selected passages, especially those describing his extended stay in Paris, have been chosen to provide an intimate portrait of the central figure of this study and give a contextual element to compositions written for and performed by the bassoonist.

In order to facilitate reading, Swedish texts are cited in their English translations here; Tegen's unedited modern Swedish transcriptions can be found in appendix 1. The translations were created in several stages: an initial version made by a translating engine from the Swedish transcription; the next version was created with assistance of the Swedish tenor Anders Dahlin, who translated specific terms and phrases; the last fine-tuning took place with the invaluable aid of musicologist Vesmelöy Heintz. In an attempt to capture the author's meaning in an manner understandable to the modern reader, capitalization and grammar have been modified to create a more fluid text.

³⁹ *Heimdall* (Stockholm), 1830: 24, 31, 76, 96, 112, 115–16, 132, 147–48, 152, 160, 168, 199–200, and 208.

⁴⁰ Tegen completed his transcription until page 438, the point at which Preumayr announced his arrival in London, on April 27, 1830. I obtained copies of the transcriptions and manuscript thanks to the kind assistance of Áurea Domínguez Moreno, and staff at both the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden and the National Library of Finland in Helsinki.

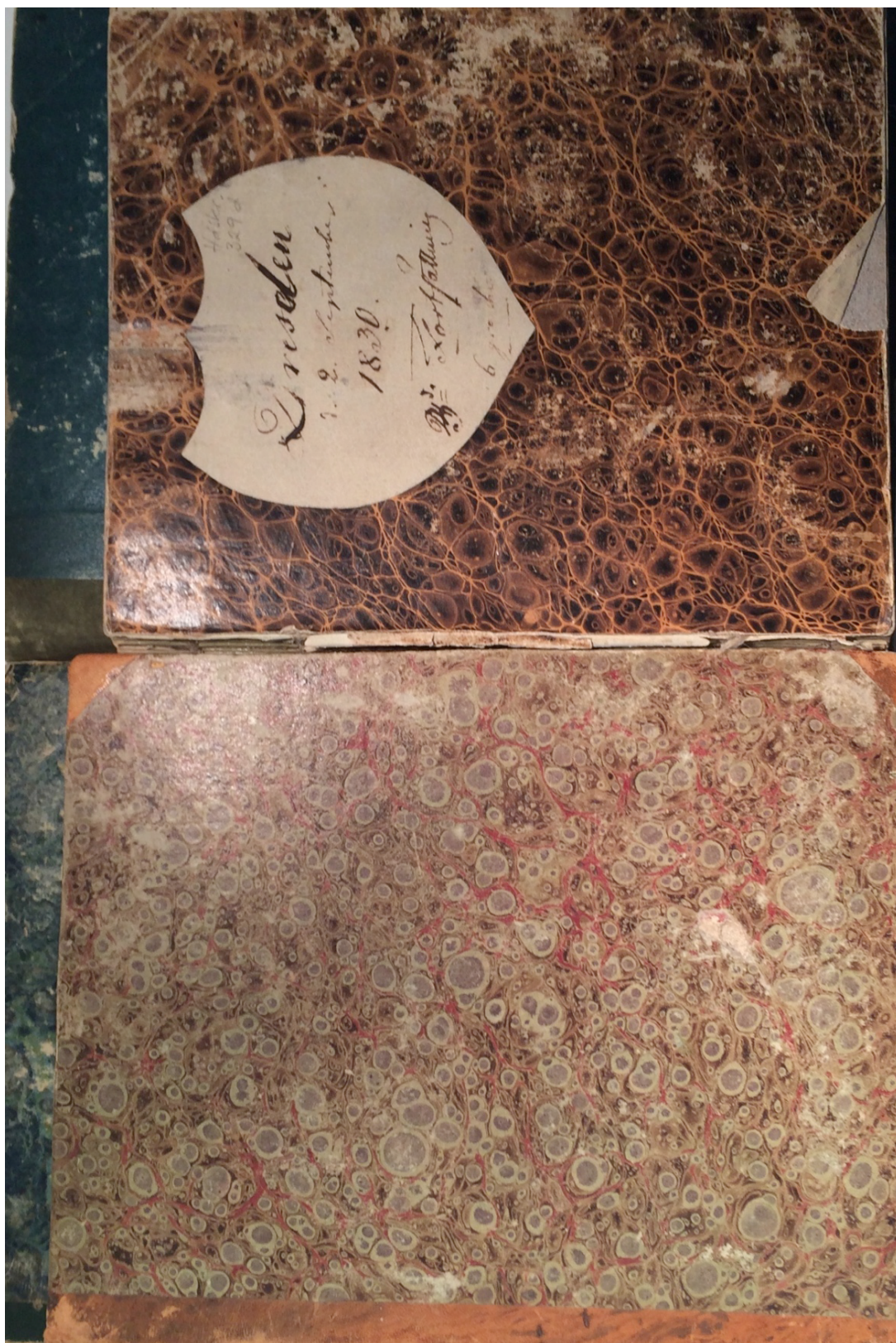


Figure 2.1. Four volumes of Preumayr's *Reisejournal*, courtesy of the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden

*Köpenhamen.
Vorder En Ricksbankaleet*

Reise-Journal

<i>Från</i>	<i>Stockholm</i>	<i>10 Octob.</i>	
<i>till</i>	<i>Köpenhamen</i>	<i>18. 2^o</i>	
	<i>Hamburg.</i>	<i>31 2^o</i>	<i>14 mil -</i>
	<i>Lübeck</i>	<i>8 Decemb.</i>	
<i>- 2 dagar.</i>	<i>Capel</i>	<i>25 2^o</i>	<i>53 1/2 mil</i>
<i>- 2 dagar.</i>	<i>Strasburg</i>	<i>29 2^o</i>	<i>110 mil / (posten 120)</i>
	<i>Paris</i>	<i>3 Jan. 1830.</i>	
	<i>Calais</i>	<i>25 April</i>	
	<i>London</i>	<i>26 April</i>	
	<i>Ostende</i>	<i>11 Aug.</i>	
	<i>Brüssel</i>	<i>11 2^o</i>	
	<i>Rotterdam</i>	<i>13 2^o</i>	
	<i>Amsterdam</i>	<i>16 2^o</i>	
	<i>Coblenz</i>	<i>18 2^o</i>	
	<i>Mainz</i>	<i>19 2^o</i>	
	<i>Frankfurt.</i>	<i>20 2^o</i>	
	<i>Gotha</i>	<i>24 2^o</i>	
	<i>Weimar.</i>	<i>25 2^o</i>	
	<i>Lipzig</i>	<i>25 2^o</i>	
	<i>Dresden</i>	<i>28 2^o</i>	
	<i>Berlin</i>	<i>11 Sept.</i>	
	<i>Lübeck</i>	<i>28 2^o</i>	

*1972
111*

Figure 2.2. *Reisejournal*, volume 1, itinerary, inner right cover

Preumayr's itinerary and organizational concerns

Frans Carl Preumayr's travels took him through major cities such as Copenhagen, Hamburg, Paris, London, Dresden, and Berlin, where he performed solo pieces by Bernhard Crusell, Franz Berwald, Édouard Du Puy, and Eduard Brendler, as well as the *Concertino militaire*, written for him by Pierre Crémont in Paris. The first twelve months of his itinerary are depicted in figure 2.2.

Details of Preumayr's journey, including luggage and accommodation arrangements, customs formalities, meals and weather conditions, give the reader some insight into the necessary organization such travels involved. Preumayr's noticeable preoccupation with the itineraries of other travelling musicians such as the violin virtuoso Nicolò Paganini is evident throughout the diary, suggesting that Preumayr was keenly aware of the financial liability of his concerts. His performances, self-arranged for the most part, would have been significantly and adversely affected if more prestigious musicians were performing in the region around the same time, thus resulting in disastrous financial consequences. It is not directly apparent how he financed his sojourn abroad; his remarks about various expenses are frequent enough to indicate that he was dependent upon earning some income.

2.2 The European journey

Departure from Stockholm

Leaving Stockholm on October 9, 1829, Preumayr travelled south for nine days in the direction of Malmö, before sailing into Copenhagen. Underway, he describes most unfavorable weather conditions and his poor health; rather inauspicious beginnings for the musician's long international tour:

Meanwhile rain transformed itself to snow and now it was a real blizzard. Observing the situation, I made the spontaneous reflection: Whoever embarks on such journeys in such weather for more or less urgent reasons is excused, but he who by whim or caprice travels away from an agreeable family in this season deserves his fate. . . . I will, with patience and privation, face my destiny. If only my health will stand by me. Instead of getting to Malmö on Friday, as I thought we would, I see no hope of getting there until tomorrow, Sunday, and may God will it so, because if I have to wait everywhere as long as this, I will never get there. Road conditions are terrible with rain and snow. After much trouble and a slow drive, foot by foot, I finally reached Ågarp. Wet through and through the thick coat all day, I felt that I had finally caught cold. Shivers and aches throughout the body were certain symptoms of it. Glad to arrive, I sought to warm myself by a good fire and a sip of cognac and felt soon thereafter somehow better. A bowl of hot *äggöl* now stands in front of me, and I hope it will do some good; then I will go to bed and as a real German, under a feather

quilt, made here.⁴¹ . . . Not a half an hour could I sleep. The quilt was too short and I froze on the chest and neck and was sweating on my lower parts. I have a fever and have taken a tablespoon of Carl's Life Essence for that.⁴²
(Ågarp, October 16, 1829; 10–12)

This depressive mood prevails as he expresses a poignant homesickness and yearning for his adopted country Sweden, crossing the border into Denmark:

In a moment I shall be separated from Sweden, a country where I have all that in my life I hold dear, and I confess that it costs me indescribably much to leave it. Farewell my dear Sweden! Farewell wife, children, parents, kin and friends! May I soon get to see you all again!!!!!!
(Malmö, October 19, 1829; 16)

The bassoon is not usually regarded as a solo instrument in the same way as violin, flute or piano, and few bassoonists pursue solo careers; the main role of the instrument and the greater part of its nineteenth-century repertoire is found in chamber and orchestral works, although numerous solo compositions exist and several were composed specifically for Preumayr. He admits to having grave doubts and uncertainties about undertaking such an ambitious journey as a middle-aged man of 47, being well aware of his “inadequacies” as a soloist. Referring to his sadness upon immigration to Sweden some twenty-five years earlier, he now laments leaving his adopted homeland and finds himself too old and lacking what might be needed to be a successful travelling performer. What motivated him to undertake such a long and strenuous journey at this point in his life? Indeed, one hopes that an explanation will appear here in his text, but none is forthcoming. Instead of the musings of a self-confident and successful musician in his prime, the following passage illustrates the extent of his worries:

From far away, I have already seen the country where I will make my first attempts abroad, if I have good fortune. Here I sit now in the town's inn and make my reflections. They are not cheerful, as I am not in a position to lift my mind and for the second time the same sad feelings occupy me as when I (and Carl) left my father, and all that was dearest to me then. To make such a journey, much more suited to a

⁴¹ *Äggöl* is egg beer, a traditional remedy against the common cold.

⁴² “Carl's Life Essence” was presumably a health-promoting concoction made by his brother, Carl Johann.

younger age than mine and the conviction of my inadequacy, knowing what is now required of an artist, diminish my courage all the more, the nearer I approach my target. All reasoning is in vain, and I am not able to not dispel the dark clouds burdening my mind.
(Malmö, October 18, 1829; 14–15)

Copenhagen: Meetings with Ignaz Moscheles and other artists

Arriving in Copenhagen on the evening of October 19, 1829, ten days after departing Stockholm, Preumayr had his first encounter with the renowned pianist and composer, Ignaz Moscheles, a protégé of Beethoven and later a teacher of Felix Mendelssohn. Moscheles developed strong contacts with Sir George Smart of the Philharmonic Society in London, as well as other cultural circles hosting concerts, for which he regularly recruited musicians from the Continent.⁴³ As an important and influential musician, the pianist undoubtedly took note of the fine bassoonist from Stockholm, confirmed by his subsequent invitations to Preumayr for appearances in Paris and London later in the same concert season.⁴⁴ Other musicians on the touring circuit at that time, the soprano Anna Milder-Hauptmann and flautist Joseph Guillou, also had concerts scheduled in Copenhagen in the coming month and Preumayr notes that this could prove to be unfortunate timing for his own plans.⁴⁵ Preumayr mentions a performance of these soloists at the court, commenting that Moscheles' playing was appreciated the most.⁴⁶

⁴³ Jerome Roche and Henry Roche, 'Moscheles, Ignaz (Isaac)', *GMO*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/19185> [accessed October 10, 2014]. Born in Prague, Ignaz Moscheles' (1794–1870) career began in Vienna. A well-known piano virtuoso, one of his extensive tours brought him to London, where he became a member of the London Academy of Music in 1822, and co-director of the Philharmonic Society in 1832. He accepted the post of director at the Leipzig Conservatory after Mendelssohn's death in 1847.

⁴⁴ Preumayr, 181. See figures 2.5 and 2.6 in this chapter, 62–63.

⁴⁵ Christopher H. Gibbs and F.A. Marshall, 'Milder-Hauptmann, (Pauline) Anna', *GMO*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/18669> [accessed October 10, 2014]. Anna Milder-Hauptmann (1785–1838) was a well-known soprano who appeared primarily in Vienna and Berlin. Françoise-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens* (2nd edn.; Paris: Didot Frères 1867), 160–61. Joseph Guillou (1787–1853) was a student of François Devienne in Paris; he went to St Petersburg in 1829 as principal flautist.

⁴⁶ This report must have been based on opinions Preumayr heard from others; he arrived in Copenhagen a few days after the concert of the three musicians had already taken place.

At dinner, I made the acquaintance of Moscheles, who unfortunately for me, would leave the next morning for Gothenburg. His concert here will be on November 15, and a sensible man uses his time well. Madame Milder-Hauptman shall give her concert on November 8. Next Sunday, Mr. Guillou, flautist, will give a concert. The situation is not good for my prospects . . . I made the acquaintance of Mr. Guillou, who has already stayed here five to six weeks. . . . The concert at the court was last Saturday, where all three let themselves be heard. Milder pleased the least, Moscheles, the most.
(Copenhagen, October 20, 1829; 18–19)

Preumayr's initial reaction upon hearing more details about the current competitive concert schedule in Copenhagen was one of great disappointment, but he nonetheless made several appearances there at private soireés, performing, among other pieces, Berwald's Concert Piece, Du Puy's Quintet and Crusell's ("Pappa's") Concertino, all of which generated various complimentary comments, despite intonation problems between the bassoon and fortepiano:⁴⁷

I played Dupuy's Quintet, which was well received. Then a quartet of Onslow followed, and I played the Concertino of P[appa's], which pleased them indescribably. A fine dinner followed, where champagne was not lacking, to which a glass of recommendation was lifted: a toast to my prosperity. With Mr. Waage Pedersen, I acquired an effective friend in case of my return, and a concert.
(Copenhagen, October 23, 1829; 24)

In the evening Guillou and I went . . . to Mr. Brun, who lives ½ mile out of the city. There were many people . . . I played the Potpourri from *Preciosa*, but was too high in pitch to the fortepiano.⁴⁸ Four amateurs sang very well together, then I played B[erwald's] Concert Piece, which everyone enjoyed very much.
(Copenhagen, October 22, 1829; 22–23)

He performed at another event, where the music director of the opera, Claus Nielsen Schall (1757–1835) was present.⁴⁹ The skills of a bassoon colleague named Keyper impressed

⁴⁷ Bruce Haynes, *A History of Performing Pitch: The Story of "A"* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 327–41. See Haynes' discussion about the subject of pitch for woodwinds. It is not surprising that Preumayr mentions having tuning problems; pitch was not at all standardized at that time, even within a single city, and travelling wind players suffered the consequences in such situations.

⁴⁸ The piece referred to is: *Potpourri sur des Thèmes de Preciosa par Carl Maria von Weber, op 18*, arranged by Charles Koch. A modern edition of this work has been published by Accolade Verlag.

⁴⁹ MuSa, <http://musicsack.com/PersonFMTDetail.cfm?PersonPK=100028530> [accessed August 2, 2014].

Additionally: Nils Schlørring, 'Schall, Claus Nielsen', GMO,

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/24748> [accessed June 28, 2015].

Claus Nielsen Schall (1757–1835) was a composer, violinist and dancer, and was also the musical director at the Opera in Copenhagen from 1818–34.

Preumayr as being limited and unrefined, although he was happy to receive a good bassoon bocal from the man, apparently attempting to alleviate some of the tuning problems he was experiencing.⁵⁰ It was common to have several bocals or even a second wing joint on hand in various lengths to enable adjustment to changing pitch circumstances. In exchange for the bocal, he gave Keyper a reed and some new fingerings, which were noted by his colleague, the second bassoonist. The reed was apparently of no use to Keyper; it was probably too heavy or resistant:⁵¹

“Now Keyper should play something,” demanded Schall. He performed something rather old and I did not like his playing: “*Thud-thud*”.⁵² At the end, Keyper and I played a couple of small duets.
(Copenhagen, October 22, 1829; 23)

On the 24th in the morning, . . . Took farewell of Prof. Schall, who paid me many compliments and said he never heard such bassoon playing before . . . I went to Keyper with my bassoon to try some bocals. The sad fact was that nothing was in tune and I wanted solutions; Keyper offered me one of his two old, good bocals. He gave me one as a present. I gave him a good reed, which he, like all others, couldn't play because of weak muscles. Furthermore, I showed him some fingerings that he didn't know, but which he, together with the man who plays second, took careful note.
(Copenhagen, October 24, 1829; 24–25)

Although he had not been able to secure a formal date for a concert in the Danish capital, he was optimistic that he had already established a good network and built up an abundance of good will that would enable him to arrange a real performance upon a future return to that city.

Preumayr left Copenhagen on October 25, after having spent only a week there.

Everywhere I have been met with kindness, friendship and benevolence, and the Andersens (both brothers) did me many favors. Although the main object of my visit to Copenhagen so far has not been realized, I am convinced, that should I come back,

⁵⁰ MuSa, <http://musicsack.com/PersonFMTDetail.cfm?PersonPK=100054804> [accessed November 2, 2014]. Frantz Jacob August Keyper (1792–1859) was a bassoonist, organist and composer in Copenhagen.

⁵¹ At least this is Preumayr's implication, as he says that Keyper's lip muscles [embouchure] were too weak to be able to control the reed.

⁵² “*Thud-thud*” is Preumayr's description of the sound of the heavy and primitive tonguing of the bassoonist Keyper.

because of my little efforts and willingness, have paved the way for all of the benefits a traveling artist could expect in Copenhagen.
(Copenhagen, October 24, 1829; 25)

Arrival in Hamburg: Disconcerting news about Paganini's schedule

Arriving in Hamburg at the beginning of November, Preumayr was temporarily disheartened by the report that the violinist Nicolò Paganini was expected to arrive in town shortly.⁵³ This would have been an unfortunate event as far as his own intentions were concerned, as Preumayr was aware that this famous virtuoso would certainly capture all public attention. He skeptically describes what others reported, not yet having experienced a performance of Paganini's himself, and is finally relieved that their paths would evidently not cross in Hamburg after all:

At two o'clock I went home and ate dinner at the hotel. My neighbor, an Englishman, mentioned that Paganini would arrive this week. This was a new blow. Although I'm curious to hear him, it's sad for me as well; everyone else is hoping for an engagement. . . . The beast Paganini could have stayed away longer.
(Hamburg, November 1, 1829; 31)

During the dinner conversation, I learned that Paganini is now in Magdeburg. He will never be able to please, only amaze, and those who heard him once, it is said here, do not want to hear him again. He is supposedly a swine in appearance and a great player who loses what he earns.
(Hamburg, November 2, 1829; 34)

It is now said that Paganini will not come here so soon; I have drawn the longer straw, because he will not come here before me.
(Hamburg, November 5, 1829; 39)

Preumayr describes what Wilhelm Braun, a respected friend and colleague, had to report about the virtuoso, this time in a more neutral tone:⁵⁴

⁵³ Edward Neill, 'Paganini, Nicolò', *GMO*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40008> [accessed October 11, 2014]. Paganini began an extended tour of Austria and Germany in 1828, taking him through most major cities.

⁵⁴ Werner Braun, 'Wilhelm (Theodor) Braun', *GMO*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/03873> [accessed October 10, 2014]. Wilhelm Braun (1796–1867), oboist from Ludwigslust, was the brother of Preumayr's colleague Carl Braun, principal oboist in Stockholm. The Braun family was a dynasty of musicians, primarily oboists.

W. Braun is captivated by Paganini's playing. He states, and with much knowledge of the facts, that it is impossible to describe P's talent. Language has no words which can express the effect his playing has. Inhuman difficulties are conquered with utmost ease; he invests the *Adagio* with one of the saddest feelings. (Hamburg, November 19, 1829; 82)

Further discouragement in Hamburg

Preumayr made the acquaintance of a distant relative, a bass singer named Woltereck at the Stadttheater, who advised him to contact someone administrating local artists.⁵⁵ The concert schedule in Hamburg seemed to be already quite filled up for the season and Preumayr was clearly not encouraged by his initial meeting with a certain Herr Minister Signeul, who saw very little possibility for the Swedish bassoonist to perform at any major event, although he suggested that some "small occasion" might arise. Preumayr countered this in a noble fashion, saying he was not necessarily in Hamburg with the intentions of performing, and if he would, then certainly only at the best venue and occasion befitting his reputation and that of the Royal Orchestra in Stockholm. In the end, the air of an insulted artist seems to have made some effect on Herr Signeul, who eventually invited the bassoonist to perform in Altona:

Woltereck has invited me to their office about my affairs, and I am convinced that he can be very useful for me as he has been here a long time and has many acquaintances. . . . This morning on November 2, I made my visit to Minister Signeul, when Woltereck did not appear at the appointed time. There I got to hear everything which might discourage one to give a concert here in town. . . . He mentioned that here there are already so many concert givers, and that next Saturday, Mr. R., 1st Violinist in the Orchestra, is giving a concert and that many lists of subscriptions are circulating to which relatively few subscribe. Then I found it best to let him know that I am not so exceedingly anxious to give a concert, and that my journey would be more for health and pleasure . . . in addition to business, I wanted to enjoy myself. As I had already heard, that gentleman would be stingy and not do much for his compatriots. I found that I didn't need to concede much. He then mentioned that it might serve to play at some small occasion or other that deserves something, whereupon I replied that I was not interested in a few small occasions. I owed it to myself, my name, and the orchestra of which I am a member, that either I shall give a concert in a first-class hall or just won't bother. When he heard such language, he became practical and offered me his services whenever useful to me. (Hamburg, November 2, 1829; 31–33)

⁵⁵ MuSa, <http://musicsack.com/PersonFMTDetail.cfm?PersonPK=100194819> [accessed October 3, 2014]. Friedrich August Andreas Woltereck (1797–1866) was a bass-baritone singer in Hamburg.

Attending the theatre

Preumayr spent more than a month in Hamburg, where he made acquaintances and gathered references, building up the professional and social network required for the organization of his own rehearsals and concert, additionally attending performances at the theatre or concerts in the evenings. His critical reports about theatre productions, such as Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and *Don Giovanni*, contain not only detailed descriptions about each singer, the orchestra and the conductor, but also commentary on the staging and scenery, often comparing these to similar productions in Stockholm. An experienced opera orchestral musician and himself a conductor, his views are generally positive, with the exception of some musical details and his description of an overly-active *Kapellmeister*:

I have now seen *Die Zauberflöte* here and enjoyed it very much. Woltereck is an excellent Sarastro. His voice is incomparable; he goes with strength down to C in the first duet with Pamina. Madame Kraus Wranitsky is an excellent singer, but almost too old for the role of Pamina; she sang the Cavatina in 6/8 quite masterfully. Oh, if we had just such a singer with us [in Stockholm]. The Queen of the Night was pretty good too, but she took no risks in the D major aria. She changed a staccato passage. When she forced her voice, it became very ugly. Papageno, I found nothing to say about. Tamino was good. The work is performed here very brilliantly. Scenery and costumes are very beautiful and totally different from ours. Sarastro first appears in hunting gear with spears, then in another costume, very fine, but not priest-like; the other initiates are not either. They look like wizards with high caps. The caps and gowns are white with red and golden edges . . . Some in blue troll costumes with long blue harpoons, the others in red . . . with long red rods with flames on the top. The last scene is infinitely brilliant. . . . Scenery is magnificent. The music was, on the whole, good, although several errors occurred. Many tempi were taken slower, but nothing of any benefit to the music, I thought. Mr. Krebs fussed much with both hands.
(Hamburg, November 2, 1829; 35–37)

Preumayr already described Krebs' mannered conducting in detail a few days earlier:⁵⁶

⁵⁶John Warrack, 'Krebs, Karl August', *GMO*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/15500> [accessed July 24, 2015]. Karl August Krebs (1804–80) was born in Nuremberg, and studied in Vienna with Scheible and Seyfried. After a short period as third *Kapellmeister* at the Kärntnertortheater, he moved to Hamburg in 1827, taking on a post there until 1850.

Mr. Krebs appeared to be an ambitious *Kapellmeister*. His whole body was moving but especially the arms and head. For every entrance, both for the songs and in the orchestra he gave a sign with his hands . . . he . . . danced, indeed he gesticulated appallingly, and for me this disrupted the illusions of the play. This method has the appearance of charlatanry, but unfortunately seems to be a necessity nowadays. (Hamburg, October 31, 1829; 29)

Rehearsals and performances

At a private social event, Preumayr's performance touched the hostess to the extent that she couldn't help shedding tears listening to the beautiful tone of the bassoon. It is not known which pieces he presented that evening, but he writes that he hopes audiences will appreciate Crusell's Concertino, his "war horse", from start to finish:

Mad. Pacius is supposed to have honored me with a few tears during the performance, moved by the tone as she claims. I marvel that my tone, diluted by champagne, would be so sad. Maybe I became a little melancholy without knowing it myself. It would be funny if at the beginning my audience became so upset that they did not want to hear the rest. . . . One thing, however, I wished that everyone would hear from the beginning until the end, and it is Pappa's Concertino. It will be my *cheval de bataille* [war horse]. (Hamburg, November 18, 1829; 77)

Preumayr was finally able to procure a date for his own concert, set on December 2 1829, in the Apollo Saal. Before that came to pass, he appeared at the Musikverein in Altona with the *Adagio* and *Rondo* from Du Puy's Concerto, the first opportunity he actually had to present himself publicly on this journey. He mentions that he has had enough time for preparation and that his instrument is finally functioning. Preumayr had complained earlier that the leather pads under his keys were not completely sealing the tone holes; he evidently could remedy this problem and stop the air leakage, which would account for the instrument not "speaking well":

This was the first time that I performed in front of a large audience of strangers on this trip. Several such occasions should give me the experience I need. How beautiful the *Adagio* of Du Puy is! The rest of the pieces were the first *Allegro*, *Andante* and the *Minuet* from Beethoven's C-major Symphony [no.1], an aria from *Titus* with a miserable tenor, a solo for fortepiano by Kalkbrenner, . . . the *Finale* from the above-mentioned symphony, *Overture* from *Othello* by Rossini, then my piece After the concert I was invited to dinner and drinks, but I did not accept. I went home in a fine and large wagon and am glad that I came home early once again at 10:30 in the

evening. This was good, for in my absence a message arrived with notice of the rehearsal tomorrow morning for the series concert in the Apollo Saal. Since beginning to play again, and with that I am pretty happy, I have become more skilled. It came in handy that I was rather diligent here whenever I had time. I have also made an advantageous change on my bassoon. It now speaks quite well, a condition that previously annoyed me.

(Hamburg, November 26, 1829; 98–99)

He performed the same concerto in another series concert in the Apollo Saal a few days later, but on this occasion he was rather dissatisfied with the results. Chastising himself for his fears, he practiced afterwards at night as punishment. The 10 *Louis d'or* he was paid the next day was the first fee he had earned thus far on his tour:

A moment ago, I came home from the concert, which was way too packed, just as our series concerts, because it costs so little. As far as my playing is concerned, I was not particularly satisfied, as fear got hold of me again and robbed me of at least 2/3 of my abilities. I'm so mad that I could flog myself that I cannot overcome such fears. It seems as if nothing would ultimately succeed for me to be as tranquil as all the others. . . . Although I was tired after today's events and solos, I punished my vile flesh with another hour of practicing at night. If the fear is derived alone from uncertainty, I shall seek to gain confidence. . . . Today in the morning on the 29th, a messenger came from Doctor Busch, one of the Apollo directors with the fee, 10 *Louis d'ors* -- and I don't deny that I particularly enjoyed the beautiful-looking gold pieces.⁵⁷ I immediately put them with my ducats and hid them. These are the first earnings on the trip. May they draw more behind!

(Hamburg, November 28–29, 1829; 102)

As the date of his own concert in the Apollo Saal approached, Preumayr was preoccupied with the difficult task of organizing an adequate ensemble of professionals. This was accomplished during the regular and obligatory social calls and meals, as he reports here:

⁵⁷ Concerning the value of these coins, Dr. Michael Matzke, curator at the Kurator Münzkabinett, Historisches Museum Basel says: "The payment in *Louis d'or* still in 1829 is unusual, but for a commercial city like Hamburg not too surprising, considering also that in the early nineteenth century there was a certain shortage of new money. The *Louis d'or* was the old French standard gold coin from the seventeenth century and abolished after 1794, hence practically abolished by Napoleon's reforms. Its latest type, the *Louis d'or neuf*, had ca 6.8 gr. gold. This means the payment was quite high, representing 68 gr. of gold, vaguely corresponding to 20 ducats. But it is hard to find corresponding values nowadays . . . because the monetary economy of the early nineteenth century is very different from now."

I met Woltereck and we ate at Mr. Lindenau's, a previously-mentioned violinist, to ask him to assist in my concert, which he promised to do. Then to Mr. Pedersen, also a violinist, who was not at home. There are so many music societies and private concerts, as well as the theatre everyday, that it is difficult to get a capable orchestra together. It is therefore necessary to include some amateurs, which also does not cost anything.

(Hamburg, November 26, 1829; 98)

Cold temperatures and tuning troubled Preumayr at the rehearsals.⁵⁸ Additionally, the fortepiano he had arranged was suddenly withdrawn, causing him more last-minute inconvenience and expense. The program consisted of an overture, again Du Puy's *Adagio* and *Rondo* from the Concerto, several concert arias with Madame Kraus (Wranitsky), and his own Swedish songs with orchestral arrangements, which he admittedly found boring:

At the rehearsals it was terribly cold and the violins would not willingly tune down, so as before, I was too low. Tomorrow I hope it will be more accurate.

(Hamburg, November 27, 1829; 100)

Began my rehearsal half past twelve in the Apollo Saal. Everything went well enough, but there were misunderstandings with the Overture and embarrassment about a fortepiano, which Mr. Cranz promised, but was missing. Both problems were nevertheless solved and the rehearsal was over at two. My Swedish songs did not really please me with orchestra. They are, what is called "flau"[dull]. I now just wish that tomorrow might be over and I will be happy. The only question is whether or not to take the trouble to deal with little things nevertheless necessary for a concert, but a man also deserves to have something left over.

(Hamburg, November 30, 1829; 106)

With no instruments have I had so much trouble as with a piano. Cranz had promised me quite distinctly to send one of his instruments to the hall; just as I was going to the rehearsal the message came. Mr. Schmidt got one, but the owner, very scared about it, withdrew it immediately probably because a string broke. Today I had to run around so as to not be missing one again, and to get a tuner. Finally will get hefty bills from all sides.

(Hamburg, December 2, 1829; 108)

Astounded by the local custom that dictated the distribution of a generous amount of free tickets to ensure an audience, Preumayr complains:

⁵⁸ Wind instruments subjected to cold temperatures may be initially low in pitch, and only get higher when sufficiently warm.

It's incredible that you get praise if you give free tickets. It is amazing how many free tickets one has to give away; it's not a matter of one or two, but rather 8–10–12 to each. That way you can get the hall full, but get nothing on the purchase price paid for free tickets. Oh dear, what miserable prospects I find . . . Sig[neul] was right about the concerts here.

(Hamburg, November 30, 1829; 105)

Today, on December 2 early in the morning, many came around to get free tickets. . . . It is the custom to do that here when giving a concert. . . . All are such great music lovers and like to visit concerts with free tickets, but paying – no. Bah–

(Hamburg, December 2, 1829; 108)

Several concert reviews appeared after Preumayr's appearance in the Apollo Saal, but still rather irritated about the practice regarding free tickets, he does not go into detail about their contents and dismisses them with a slightly sarcastic note:

Newspapers *Der Freischütz*, *Exchange Halle* and *Correspondent* have honored me with reviews and as I roughly understood, a new article will be in *Der Freischütz* next week. When one has not sent in an article to praise himself (like Moscheles learned to do) one might well read such without blushing. Who can stop people from writing what they want? Men scribble things. May as well get something for the many free tickets you have to give them.

(Hamburg, December 4, 1829; 111–12)

After all the expenses, taxes and free tickets were deducted, Preumayr complains about a meager financial profit from his concert in the Apollo Saal. He remains optimistic about his future undertakings, however, and recognizes the potential for improvement, noting that he would profit from any performing experience. He does not mention any more musical details about this event and seemed satisfied to leave it and Hamburg behind him when he received an invitation to visit Ludwigslust:

On the 3rd in the morning Mr. De Chapeaurouge came to invite me to dinner today or on Saturday. I could accept neither. He congratulated me that the hall had been so unusually full. I was about to laugh, but he was right, for usually it is quite empty. In short, the whole income was 308 marks, 12 schillings. Since the costs accrue to 245 marks, 10 schillings, after deductions 63 marks, 2 schillings remains. This is now called "a good concert"! No, Hamburg is now awful in this case. Many great and famous artists have visited and now it is folly to give a concert here. For me it was still not so useless. I have become a little known; praise and acclaim, I suffered no

lack, neither verbally or printed. All beginnings are difficult! It will surely go a little better later on. Today got I received a letter from [Wilhelm] Braun with the invitation to come to Ludwigslust and let the Grand Duke hear me My bad concert has not robbed me of my courage – no! Good night!
(Hamburg, December 3; 109)

At 7 in the evening . . . direct to Ludwigslust with the same horses. Tomorrow evening I hope to arrive. I am quite happy to go there. Farewell, nasty Hamburg!!
(Hamburg, December 7, 1829; 116)

An invitation from Ludwigslust

After his long stay in Hamburg, Preumayr was relieved to receive confirmation of the invitation from his friend Wilhelm Braun to participate in a concert in Ludwigslust, at the court of Friedrich Franz I, Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, where musical activities had a long history with eminent musicians such as Franz Benda and Antonio Rosetti.⁵⁹ An ambitious program was planned, including a *sinfonia concertante* for oboe and bassoon by Carl Braun, Bernhard Crusell's Concertino, and two movements from Édouard Du Puy's Concerto. A preparatory rehearsal was planned the day after his arrival and Preumayr was anxious about the condition of his embouchure; he immediately rehearsed with Wilhelm Braun upon his arrival in Ludwigslust, who informed him that the fees would unfortunately have to be shared with a visiting violinist from Berlin, Mr. Müllenbroek:

A little while after, W. Braun came to me. He had ordered a room for me and asked me to come out as soon as I had dressed myself. He informed me also, that the rehearsal for the court concert would likely be on Saturday evening, the day after my arrival, thus the 9th. This was somewhat soon and I was afraid that the lips would not take it. But it could not be changed now. The Double Concerto, and the *Adagio* and *Rondo* would even be included. Took therefore my bassoon for one hour of playing with B[raun] did my lips good and I became less anxious for myself. B[raun]

⁵⁹ Sterling E. Murray, *The Career of an Eighteenth-Century Kapellmeister: the life and music of Antonio Rosetti* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014), 164. “By 1784, the north German composer and music critic Johann Abraham Peter Schultz was able to characterize Ludwigslust as a celebrated centre for religious music. When Duke Friedrich died in 1785, he was succeeded by his nephew Friedrich Franz I Under the new duke's patronage the Mecklenburg-Schwerin Hofkapelle reached even greater heights. . . . Friedrich Franz was intensely interested in a variety of music. By the time he hired Rosetti, the older focus on German oratorio had been expanded to include a broad range of *galant* orchestral and chamber music. The duke was himself a capable musician.”

mentioned that unfortunately . . . a violinist Müllenbroek . . . from Berlin had arrived and thus the fee would be shared. This was less agreeable to me.
(Ludwigslust, December 8, 1829; 117)

In Ludwigslust, the report he gives about the orchestral rehearsal with the other soloists Madame Braun (soprano), Mr. Müllenbroek (violin), and Madame Thech (alto), is mixed. Preumayr was favorably impressed by the first two, if somewhat concerned about soprano Braun's nervousness. Crusell's Concertino made a good impression, and although he felt comfortable playing with Wilhelm Braun, he found serious fault with Madame Thech's abilities and those of an unnamed flautist. The program also included a movement of Beethoven's Symphony no. 1:

At 4 we went to rehearsal, where I met several old acquaintances. It started with an overture by WB[raun], *Rondoletto*, Mullenveins, an aria from the midst of *Die Stumme*, etc. by Mad. Braun. Charmingly performed – Mad. Braun has a really beautiful voice and sings with great taste, purity and nicety. Her coloratura falls like pearls, and she pleased me very much, although she might not be numbered among the top singers. Meanwhile, she pleased me far more than all the ones I've heard before, with the exception of Mad. Kraus [Wranitsky].⁶⁰ It is a pity that the Mad. Braun is so scared, she is now almost sick with fear. Then Mad. Thech sang an alto aria from *Semiramis* with choir. It was so badly performed that I do not want to talk about it. . . . Concertino – which pleased everyone – Concert Piece by Müllenbroek, his own composition – similar to Spohr's, but well played. – Concertante, W. Braun plays many things like his brother, that I believed myself to be at home. Finally Finale of Beethoven C-Major Symphony [no. 1], beginning with a March. . . . A worst flute, I have never heard. Our Ebeling is a god in comparison.
(Ludwigslust, December 9, 1829; 118–19)

On the day of the performance, Preumayr mentions his lack of self-confidence again and worries about cadenzas. The concert at the court was not nearly as successful as the rehearsals had been, and he even describes it as the worst he has ever heard, due to the nervousness of his colleagues. In particular, Madame Braun was quite hindered by her stage fright, and her distress afterwards is noted in detail by the bassoonist. Preumayr did not yet feel satisfied with his

⁶⁰ Preumayr mentions hearing Madame Kraus (Wranitsky) in performance in *Die Zauberflöte* in Hamburg; she also sang in his concert on December 2, 1829 [see pages 30 and 33 of this chapter].

performance of Crusell's Concertino, although he felt more at ease with Dupuy's *Adagio* and

Rondo from the Concerto:

Here I sit now, ornate as a peacock, waiting for the court wagon. The usual destructive feelings have already overpowered me and I fight with hands and feet against – Cadenza, cadenzas, they are hard things for such a cowardly fellow like me. (Ludwigslust, December 12, 1829; 125)

As I didn't get home before after 12 o'clock in the night I had no strength to sit up yet and write. I return, therefore, now to December 13 at 9 am . . . to the continuation of my, God knows, not particularly interesting stories. The concert here at the court, is now also over, just like everything passes. . . . This court concert was not great, in my opinion! Well, it was actually the worst I have heard on such an occasion. At the rehearsal, everything went pretty well, but on the last evening every single number was more than bad. B[raun] accompanied us poor guests badly. My accidental comrade, who otherwise seemed to be endowed with a happy countenance, quivered when he had finished. This evening we were thus three who were dominated by the same abominable feeling. That fact had the effect on me that I was completely tranquil and when we did *Adagio* and *Rondo* from [Du Puy's] Concerto, I was quite at ease. Pity that I was not in this state with [Crusell's] Concertino, which I so far have not played well even for my own pleasure. Most of all, Mad. Braun was still lamenting. She was more scared than anyone I've ever seen. Her voice was rather thin, whereas at the rehearsal it was strong and rich. The *Overture* and everything else went pretty badly Hall is quite beautiful and the music makes a good effect. . . . After the concert . . . we were invited to supper at Mother Braun's, which became a sad scene. Madame Braun, the younger, was so sorry about her singing, she wept bitterly and asked her husband to stop her from ever singing again, and she wanted to beat her head at the stove to end her singing immediately; she was close to having convulsions. We had all we could do to calm her down a little, which eventually succeeded.

(Ludwigslust, December 13; 125–26)

Despite this initially unpleasant experience, Preumayr decided to apply to perform again in Ludwigslust a week later with the Musikverein, and did so this time with more satisfying results. He repeated the same two movements of the Du Puy Concerto, which were well-received, and Beethoven's Symphony in D major, no. 2 was also played. Approached by the Grand Duke, he reveals his travel plans to Paris:

On the concert program was Beethoven's D major Symphony, . . . after that I played Du Puy's *Adagio* and *Rondo*, and then the duet from [Spohr's] *Jessonda* followed. Mr. Stocks is a miserable tenor and I think I would have sung better. *Overture* of

Mozart in C major, a Cavatina from [Rossini's] *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. . . .

The respect for the nobility is so great that no one dared applaud. It is more verbal praise that I reaped. The Grand Duke and His Consort, both came to me after last number and thanked me and asked me if I would be traveling to Berlin. My response – to Paris – they wished me both happiness and success. By the way, not many people were there and the income thus even quite insignificant. My sojourn will be covered though, and I have had a few entertaining days. What this concert has rendered, I will know tomorrow.

(Ludwigslust, December 20, 1829; 136)

Considering all of the problems of giving concerts in large cities like Berlin, Preumayr complains that it is very difficult to earn anything as a touring musician, but in his later calculations he sees he has earned more in 14 days in Ludwigslust than during five weeks in Hamburg.⁶¹ He decides, however, not to alter his itinerary and commences his journey southward on December 22, in the direction of Paris, via Cassel.

This Müllenbroeck, . . . who is engaged at Königstädter Theater, talks about how bad it is in Berlin for a concert giver; that there is absolutely nothing to gain. . . . It's the same way in all big cities now as in Berlin. Well, I've already had a telling example from Hamburg, which put me out considerably. It would be wise to give the major towns a detour and keep to the small, whence we have several. As for me, I must surely now follow my pre-arranged plan. My recommendations are now so pledged, and God grant that it will not be a repetition of Hamburg, because then I will be destroyed by my debt and should be playing for 100 more years. Alas! It is difficult to earn anything nowadays!

(Ludwigslust, December 20, 1829; 123–24)

A visit to Louis Spohr in Cassel

Preumayr arrived in Cassel on Christmas day, where he planned to visit the composer and violinist, Louis Spohr (1784–1859). He reports that Spohr was primarily interested in hearing news about his operas, discussing his business in Stockholm, and appeared to be a cold and discourteous person:

We did however visit Spohr, who received me, although rather busy, as he was teaching a pupil. He asked me which of his operas had been performed in Stockholm? I replied, "*Jessonda* and *Zémire*. . . ." "It is thus correct that *Zémire* has been done in Stockholm?" he asked. "Yes, of course.", I answered.

⁶¹ Preumayr, 137.

“Then I shall write to the management in Stockholm to get what is due to me.” . . . As for the rest, he seems like a cold and unfeeling human, like a great ox of a figure . . . inspiring a punch to the ear rather than a courteous word. We lingered for a long time and left with an unpleasant impression of him.
(Cassel, December 26, 1829; 143–44.)

After briefly contemplating a public performance in Cassel, Preumayr did not proceed with this idea, recognizing the extent of organizational difficulties that he would likely encounter.

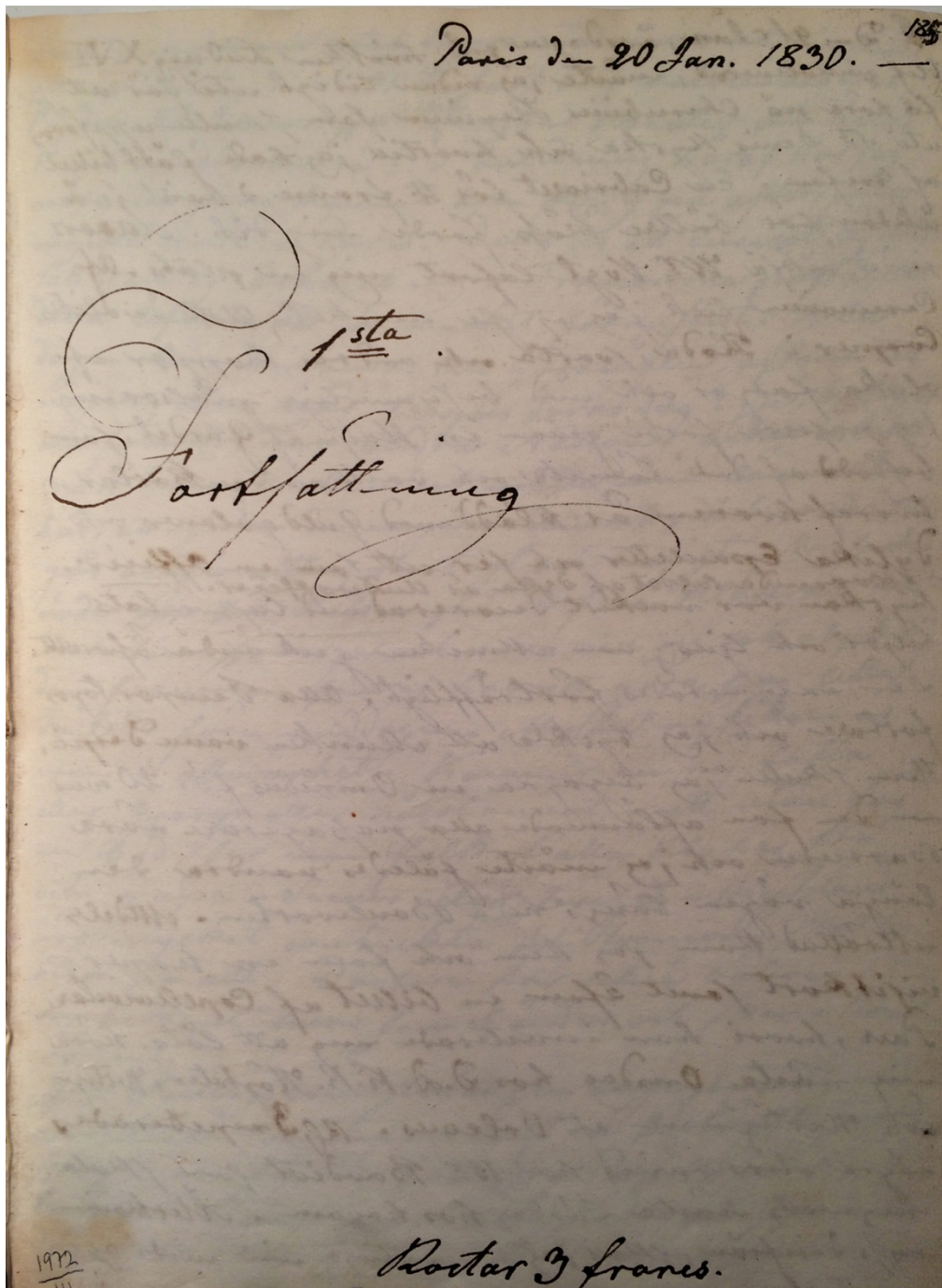


Figure 2.3. *Reisejournal*, volume 2, title page

Arrival in Paris and a new instrument case

After a cold, arduous journey taking him through Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Kehl, Strasbourg, and Verdun, Preumayr arrived in Paris on January 3, 1830, and spent the first few days settling into his living quarters, paying visits, presenting his letters of introduction, and taking care of errands, one of which included having a new bassoon case made. He was concerned that his fragile instrument could be too easily damaged, leaving him in a most awkward position. For this, he visited the luthier Frederic Guillaume Adler,⁶² who in turn arranged a meeting with François-René Gebauer, one of the most important bassoonists in Paris.⁶³

I just had to have a solid bassoon case made. Hundred times I have been afraid that the damned sinister post coach driver would crush my poor bassoon, . . . if something had happened, I would be left standing there alone. No, rather afford it and be tranquil, although it looks like I would earn nothing with it.
(Paris, January 4, 1830; 157)

The need of a wooden case for my bassoon brought me to the luthier Adler, a pretty decent German. He wanted to introduce me to Gebauer, principal bassoonist and asked me, therefore, to dinner on Saturday in the company of Gebauer.
(Paris, January 7, 1830; 160)

Introduction to French bassoon colleagues

The meeting took place as arranged, and Preumayr was introduced to four bassoon colleagues with whom he dined and with whom he could favourably measure his abilities by playing new trios by Gebauer and an arrangement of cello duets.⁶⁴ Judging by the curiosity shown and the reactions of the French players to his bassoon and reeds, it was clear that substantial differences existed, specifically concerning instrument models, reed styles, and the concept of tone quality,

⁶² NLI, 3. Frédéric Guillaume Adler (ca.1808–54) was a well-known woodwind instrument maker of German origin in Paris.

⁶³ Hervé Audéon and David Charlton, 'Gebauer, François René', GMO, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/43729> [accessed October 3, 2014]. The famous composer and bassoonist, François-René Gebauer (1773–1845) was a member of the orchestra at l'Opéra, and professor at the Paris Conservatoire.

⁶⁴ James B. Kopp, *The Bassoon*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 94. Also: *Orchestres de l'Opéra et l'Opéra-Comique*, <http://www.artlyriquefr.fr/dicos/Orchestre.html> [accessed April 10, 2015]. The other bassoonists present were: Antoine Nicolas Henry (1777–1855) from the l'Orchestre de l'Opéra-Comique, also known for his performances of the Anton Reicha Quintet series. Two others were from the l'Opéra: Pierre Marie Testard (1792–1845) and Jean Simon Louis Dossion (1779–unknown).

the latter which will be discussed in depth below in reference to newspaper reviews.⁶⁵

Preumayr writes that the French players used reeds like “straw”, which could either mean that these were scraped very thinly, or that they resembled primitive plant stalks, enabling a wide dynamic range but compromising in tone colour and producing what he described as “miserable sounds”.⁶⁶ Preumayr’s style of reed was perhaps one that tended towards a darker, rounder timbre.⁶⁷

This difference in taste, still evident today between contemporary German and French woodwind players, was already a strong subject of debate in the nineteenth century, as pointed out by instrument restorer and scholar Rainer Weber.⁶⁸ Although instrument builders are not specifically mentioned here by Preumayr, it is quite probable that the French bassoonists were

⁶⁵ See chapters 3 and 5 for detailed descriptions of historical reed research and reed styles.

⁶⁶ A thinly-scraped reed may have tendencies towards being “reedy” and “buzzy” in its timbre, but these characteristics could also be found in a heavy reed with only a thin portion of the tip vibrating.

⁶⁷ See Preumayr’s comment about the bassoonist Keyper in Copenhagen in this chapter on page 27.

⁶⁸ Rainer Weber and William Waterhouse, ‘Early Double-Reeds’, *G&S*, 54 (May 2001), 238–39.

“In the nineteenth century a ‘Berlin School’ was identified, whose best known representative was probably Carl Bärmann (1780–1862). It is his style of reed-making that Joseph Fröhlich described in his treatise of 1829. These reeds were described as being decidedly narrow, with a tone praised for its flexibility and elegance, especially in the upper register. Bärmann must have set great store on quality of tone. It is known that he slightly roughened his reeds with a file on the inside surface of the tip in order to produce a velvety tone. He also expressly recommended that each player should make his own reeds. However his contemporaries often found shortcomings in his tone, complaining that it lacked fullness in the bottom register. Georg Wenzel Ritter (1748–1808), with whom Mozart was friendly, also came from this school. The ‘Paris-London’ school stood in clear contrast to this, according to contemporary reports and reviews. Their reeds were described as being broader and more powerful. The most important representative of this other tendency in German-speaking lands was probably Carl Almenröder (1786–1843), famous for his tutor and as an instrument-maker. His reed-making was reported on by Weber in the periodical *Caecilia* in 1826. Almenröder’s reed was described as being wider than the Saxon and Berlin models, which were ‘too thin and narrow at the wire’.

Three years later Fröhlich stated categorically in his tutor that Bärmann had declared his opposition to reeds that were too wide. Almenröder’s reeds were able in this way to produce a fuller tone, especially in the low register. The English bassoonist James Holmes was praised in 1819 in the columns of the *Leipzig Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* for the fullness and soft quality of his bottom register. Naturally enough there were encounters between the representatives of both schools. For example, in 1814 Bärmann was compared with Anton Romberg (1771–1842) of Stuttgart when they performed a concerto together for two bassoons: ‘Romberg’s tone was fuller, more Italiane and clearer than that of Bärmann.’ Contemporary reports also testify to the fact that the use of broader reeds did not prejudice the upper register. It was thus purely a question of tone-colour.

Together with the considerable differences in design of instrument between the French and German systems that still persist, there were thus also basic differences in the design of reed, not only within the confines of country but individually between player and player.”

using Savary or Adler models, favored there at that time.⁶⁹ In any case, at least one of the bassoonists, Mr. Henry, had a bassoon equipped with a low B key, a feature that Preumayr did not have on his own instrument; he does not seem to be very interested in this novelty, however. Throughout his entire stay in Paris, Preumayr frequently writes that he is open to new ideas and humbly admits to his shortcomings; the self-critical vein, so prominent earlier in his diary, seems to have slightly diminished. Nonetheless, he was clearly unimpressed by his Parisian colleagues, which in turn gave him the motivation to promote himself as a soloist to a certain Mr. Baudiot.⁷⁰

At 4, I went to the luthier Adler, who had invited me to dinner. There, I met four of the best bassoon players in Paris: Gebauer, Henry, Dossion, Testard. At 6 we ate . . . an excellent dinner and drank good wine, even champagne. As soon as we rose from the table, they all put their bassoons together to play new trios by Gebauer. I was terribly surprised to hear such miserable sounds from the top bassoon players. They were not lacking skill, nor the *forte* or *piano*, but the *forte* was abominably blaring and *piano* pretty weak on those straw-like reeds that they all use. They then asked me to play a trio; . . . I did not make many or significant errors, though the trio was new to me and they complimented me; they were quite flattering. They examined my reeds, grabbing them from me, so that I was anxious about them; studying my bassoon in- and outside, surprised that I had no low B key. . . . Mr. Henry, who fancied his own talent, had arranged cello-duets for bassoon, which we tried. [They were] rather impractical, but I still had the pleasure to play my part no worse than he who had studied it. He seemed to be most in love with his low B key and played the rest of it like a schoolboy. “Aha, my old fellow, I thought, you are not better than that.” Immediately tomorrow at the concert, which is given by top artists on the first Sunday in every month, I will play a solo, and . . . without that stupid fear. . . . even if it does not give benefits, it will at least not be damaging. At 11 tomorrow morning I will meet Mr. Baudiot and go to listen to the Mass and I will present my solo to him.
(Paris, January 9, 1830; 161–63)

⁶⁹ BNF, http://data.bnf.fr/15897591/jean-nicolas_savary/ [accessed October 5, 2014]. Jean-Nicholas Savary *jeune* (1786–1853) was a woodwind maker and bassoonist in the orchestra at the Théâtre-Italiens. Additionally, information from James Kopp: ‘Frédéric Berr and the Savary Bassoon of 1836’ [paper presented at the conference, *Exakte Kopie oder im Sinne historischer Vorbilder*, at the Hochschule für die Künste, Berne, Switzerland, on February 24, 2012].

⁷⁰ Hugh Macdonald and Valerie Walden, ‘Baudiot, Charles-Nicolas’, *GMO*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/02344> [accessed October 10, 2014]. Charles-Nicolas Baudiot (1773–1849) was a cellist, composer, and teacher at the Paris Conservatoire, as well as a member of La Société Académique des Enfants d’Apollon, where Preumayr made his first solo appearance in Paris.

First concert experiences in Paris, as performer and listener

Preumayr's proposal to Charles-Nicolas Baudiot was successful, and he made his first public appearance in Paris for La Société Académique des Enfants d'Apollon the following Sunday, on January 10, 1830, playing the *Adagio* and *Rondo* from the Dupuy Concerto, after which he was awarded a medal for being a very distinguished artist.⁷¹ Earlier that day, he enjoyed listening to a mass by Luigi Cherubini (1760–1842), and was introduced to the composer and other prominent musicians present:

Sunday . . . was a very great day for me. According to plan, I met Mr. Baudiot and followed him to dine at the royal chapel where I got to . . . hear some divine pieces from a new Mass by Cherubini, indescribably well-performed . . . in the arias . . . Mr. Baudiot then presented me to the gentlemen Cherubini, the Chaplain Pautade, Vougt, Baillot, Habeneck and several of the most distinguished artists, who showed me the greatest courtesy. From there we went to La Société des Académique Enfants d'Apollon where I was introduced to the whole party and I was received with applause. . . . I played Du Puy's *Adagio* and *Rondo*. . . . I did well in front of such an assembly, and I was not afraid. It was good enough and I reaped much acclaim. A moment afterwards I was taken up to the chairman's table. The chairman expressed the entire assembly's gratification and presented me with a medal, "*Réservée aux Artistes à plus distingués*", accompanied by much applause.
(Paris, January 10, 1830; 163–64)

Dining with several of his new acquaintances from two days earlier, Preumayr was offered a ticket to attend a performance of Giuseppe Rossini's *Tancredi* at the Théâtre-Italien on January 12, with both legendary singers Maria Malibran and Henriette Sontag in the leading roles, an experience which made an enormous impression upon him.⁷² He admired their skill and

⁷¹ Université Lumière Lyon 2, <https://sites.univ-lyon2.fr/musiquefr-18/salles/paris/salleconcert/salon/enfants.html> [accessed October 24, 2014]. "La Société Académique des Enfants d'Apollon was established in 1741. From 1784 at least one public concert per year was given, run by its own members. The inauguration took place on 27.05.1784, Rue Dauphine, in the Hall of the Museum. The annual concerts were free, but required the possession of a ticket. It closed its doors in 1790, but was reorganized on September 14, 1806 and was able to continue all its musical activities until 30 June 1880."

⁷² OLO, https://openlibrary.org/books/OL24811776M/L'Opéra-Italien_de_1548_à_1856 [accessed August 3, 2014]. Also: Maria Felicità Malibran (1808–36), a Spanish mezzo-soprano in the role of *Tancredi*, and Henriette Sontag (1806–54), a German soprano in the role of *Amenaide*, were described as "*duo merveilleux*" by Castil-Blaze in *L'Opéra-Italien de 1548 à 1856*, 403.

expression, describing the performance in a most complimentary fashion, wishing he could share this most enjoyable experience with those at home in Sweden:

Who was Tancredi? Madame Malibran. Who was the Mistress? Miss Sontag. . . . Bravo screams and applause began from all sides. My joy was such as nobody can imagine. My seat was good, . . . Alas! My God! I have never in my lifetime had such pleasure from any music. I have never heard such singing. I cannot possibly say who pleased me the most. . . . The crowd seemed nevertheless to think that Mad. Malibran took precedence, as two flower bouquets were thrown at her with a great cheer. But when Miss Sontag came back on stage again shortly afterwards, she too was received with much acclaim. . . . The song is everything – accompaniment, little or nothing. Recitatives were accompanied by fortepiano, violoncello and a double-bass. What purity, . . . taste, . . . ease and confidence. What force, where needed, and what moderation of their voices! Alas, I can not say what I felt. I was absolutely delighted, ecstatic, and it's not just because I heard them for the first time. The audience who had already heard them before had the same delight as I did. There was even a good tenor - but everything else was standing in the shadow. Once again, I have no words to describe the impression that these two singers made on me. In a duet between Tancredi and Mistress there was a cadenza which was divinely beautiful and sounded like two equal instruments not separated by a hair's breadth from each other. . . . Flower bouquets which lay on stage remained until the end of arias, but then Miss Sontag took them up and handed them over to Mad. Malibran. This gesture stole the hearts of the French The curtain had hardly gone down when shouting started for both singers, who didn't want the crowd to get impatient, but came forward hand in hand and bowed three times. I clapped so much my hands stung. Never have I had such musical enjoyment and how willingly I wished my friends at home had such! (Paris, January 12, 1830; 168–69)

On January 14, 1830, Preumayr had the opportunity again to hear Sontag and Malibran sing together in a performance of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, the former singing at the Théâtre-Italien for the last time. He found the orchestra to be exceptional, particularly the wind players:

Miss Sontag, Donna Anna, sang like an angel and is regarded as an excellent actress. Mad. Malibran as Zerlina was inimitable and Miss Heynefetter as Elvira charming. . . . One can not hear a better cast than this. Bunches of flowers were thrown to Miss Sontag afterwards. She sang the aria in F major so divinely that it might be impossible to sing it better. . . . All string instrumentalists are excellent, and the best wind players are at l'Opéra and Théâtre-Italien. (Paris, January 14, 1830; 172–73)

Performing at soirées

Preumayr spent almost five months in Paris, an intensive period to which he devoted approximately 300 pages of his diary. The cultural metropolis offered ample opportunity to attend many opera and ballet performances, and Preumayr took in as many of these as possible.⁷³ Soirées, where many musicians would perform in one evening, were also a regular activity for him, either as spectator or performer. The pianist Moscheles, whom he had already met earlier in Copenhagen, engaged him for such an event at the last minute, and he was irritated about being erroneously announced as a bassoonist from Denmark before even agreeing to participate:

I learned that . . . Moscheles already announced that I would play on his soirée on Tuesday, without asking me further about it and I had not yet given him any definite answer. Meantime I'm stuck. . . . On January 25 I was visited by Moscheles, who made his guilty admission that he wrote announcing "first bassoon from Denmark". (Paris, January 23–25, 1830; 191–93)

The vile jew M[oscheles] has still not amended posters regarding me as promised and they will see that newspapers call me a bassoonist from Denmark. This really exasperates me that Moscheles could be so stupid, though I had left him my card with the correction. Frenchmen are in this case very ignorant; they know no more about Sweden than Denmark. If they review me as bassoonist from Denmark, I will announce myself as coming from Sweden. (Paris, January 26, 1830; 198)

Preumayr admits, however, that no one in Paris could rival Moscheles' genius, and perhaps realizes that it would be advantageous to keep this important contact in view of his future trip to London:

If I have ever heard anyone with taste and with the utmost precision performing everything, it's him. Paris abounds with pianists: Hertz, Pixis, Kalkbrenner, etc. But all must yield to him. . . . Moscheles stood there like a God with his talent. . . . He showed all what his genius was capable of, he totally defeated the mechanics [of the instrument] and he was richly rewarded by the audience by clean, undivided praise. (Paris, January 19, 1830; 180–82)

⁷³ Preumayr attended, for example, performances of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* [four times], *Othello*, *Moses in Egypt*, *Le Comte Ory*, and Nicolo's *Joconde*.

A general problem Preumayr encountered while performing at soirées was related to the length of his pieces. It seemed that a composition was often cut to an extent that what remained of the piece was absurd; his frustration was compounded by the fact that the spaces where these events were held were often very inadequate; crowded halls with poor acoustics and a superficial atmosphere were disappointments. During a rehearsal of Crusell's Concertino for a concert the next day, he reports:

And now it was my turn – I pulled out the best I had – everybody liked the composition Concertino [from Crusell]; musicians and art lovers said this Concertino is very dear and beautiful – but . . . it is too long. If you tire the nobility with a piece which is too long, it displeases them, and I agreed, as the time was lacking to arrange it differently, to start off with the chord of the theme in F major.
(Paris, January 26, 1830; 195–96)

And on the same day, rehearsing a potpourri with Moscheles for his soirée, he also decides at this moment that a performance of Berwald's Concert Piece would neither be properly appreciated nor appropriate at such events, and he would therefore not perform it publicly in Paris:

Here, Gudnås [endearing term for his wife], I encountered the same misery. Everything was too long - I had myself already made cuts, but it made no difference; Moscheles and several other well-known, talented artists asked me to cut more. The taste is so: one wants to have a little from everything, therefore, there shall be many pieces selected. Moscheles and I helped each other now to cut it so preposterously that at least half is gone. . . . This fatal circumstance combines with another, equally sad, that here there are no large halls. The orchestra is usually in a small room with several doors. The audience sit in the rooms to the right and left, in front and behind. . . . No! Here one is sitting like a fashion doll and if you cannot accept that, you remain in the darkness; that can not be suitable for the B[erwald].
(Paris, January 26, 1830; 196–97)

On January 27, 1830 he performed Crusell's Concertino at Duc d'Orleans palace with Maestro Ferdinando Paer, an Italian singer and conductor, and Madame Malibran, among others. Despite the unpleasant circumstances of the venue, he appeared to be pleased with himself on

this occasion. He received compliments all around, but comments on this polite habit as being a very French custom, and therefore not to be taken too seriously:

Both singers and players suffered terribly in the room and I became really anxious. . . . My number was the third piece and thank God! I had a fair amount of courage and it went better than I expected. I was more pleased or rather, less dissatisfied with myself today than yesterday. Mr. Paer, Grasset, Ceprera, Berr and everyone else paid me many compliments. On this occasion I spoke with Mad. Malibran and Mad. Pizaroin. . . . I thanked these ladies for the great pleasure their talents gave me and they thanked me back very politely. Compliments from such excellent artists are flattering, but you can expect them from the French. They give compliments in general.

(Paris, January 27, 1830; 200)

At another similar event, Preumayr publicly revealed the name and place of his instrument's maker – Grenser in Dresden – the first concrete indication in this journal that his bassoon stemmed from the famous woodwind workshop [see chapter 3]. According to Preumayr's account of their enthusiastic reactions, this audience had never heard the instrument played so well and in this manner, and Preumayr enjoyed feelings of triumph and satisfaction. He delighted his hosts Count and Countess Meroué and their guests with a piece by Friedrich Berr and as an encore, a set of variations.⁷⁴ At the same time, he realized that although there was no financial gain to be realized from these performances in Paris, the sense of pride acquired was well worthwhile. Reflecting on this state of affairs to his wife, Sophie, he explains that musicians can often obtain glory but seldom become rich, despite all their efforts:

Time: it is now 1:30 in the morning and just now, I came home from a soirée at the Countess Meroué's. The soirée began with a poorly-sung aria by a bass amateur, who had even played bassoon in his younger years. [It was] followed by an even worse duo between the same bass and a lousy tenor. Then came a better duo between Miss. Maillard and Count Mandors. After this, I would then play. While I put together my

⁷⁴ The first piece was Friedrich Berr's *Fantaisie pour le Basson, avec acc. de Piano, où de l'Orchestre, sur la Cavatine de Marie*. A modern edition is published by Accolade Verlag. The second work was probably Charles Koch's *Fantaisie et Variations pour le Basson avec acc. l'Orchestre où de Pianoforte sur des Thèmes de l'Opera, La Dame blanche*. Preumayr presented this work earlier in Paris, during a soirée at Dr Heller's on February 11, 1830. See: Preumayr, 196–97.

bassoon, the aforementioned amateur came and was curious to know where my bassoon had been constructed. Upon my answer, “in Dresden, at the Grenser factory” he said, “There were no good bassoonists there.” I then played a few notes to try the reed, and he was strengthened in his conviction and knew enough. I smiled inwardly to myself about his imagination. I properly mustered courage and presented myself at the piano, where a large and fat Mr. Petit was ready to accompany, which he did quite badly. . . . I played ‘*Air variée Marie*’ from Berr with a couple cadenzas. . . . I sought make the melody sing as much as possible, which was fairly successful. Ten times applause was heard during the very first part, . . . and bravo shouts after every variation and at the end also general and loud cheering cries . . . every room where I passed through to return to my bassoon case, the applause was renewed and I felt really flattered. Not long after, . . . Mr. Amateur, who had second thoughts about my instrument, asked me on behalf of the Society to play another piece. . . . I resumed with my B-flat major variations. The entire instrument’s range was used . . . and I must confess to myself, though unwillingly, I enjoyed the most perfect triumph an artist can ever attain. . . . Now I heard on all sides that such a bassoonist had never yet been heard in Paris, that, and until now it was not known what this instrument is capable of and that it was found that it can produce a decent melody and God knows what else everyone said. Miss Maçon, the same who sang at Moscheles’ soirée, was very friendly – she will travel at the beginning of next month to London, her native country, and has promised that she will introduce me to the top musical houses. . . . The count and countess thanked me at least ten times and I also wanted to be polite in my way. I said that if they ever were lacking a piece for their soirées, I would gladly oblige, upon which they replied that in that case, they would gladly remove several others. So we exchanged pleasantries of no significance here in the great and superb Paris. . . . None of all these enthusiastic men care about the concert costing anything – many excellent artists have already experienced this – “What is honor?” you ask, my dear Sophie, in the letter I got today – Much and nothing – if one volunteers good reviews for us, we gain honor – the passage of time has divided the two benefits of glory and wealth – Nowadays, one can often achieve the first, but more rarely the latter. Enough of these philosophical remarks . . . and therefore, good night!

(Paris, February 19–20, 1830; 260–63)

Although originally planning to organize a concert of his own, the administrative problems concerning financial matters and scheduling proved to have been too great for Preumayr to overcome. The rental of an appropriate hall was too expensive, some well-known musicians (without whom the likelihood of an audience was small) were not available on a specific date and lastly, a deficit most certainly could have been expected. After an extended effort, he realized that it would only be possible to perform at various soirées; he was finally also invited

to appear in the series Concert Spirituel, administered at this time by the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire.⁷⁵

Preumayr meets Friedrich Berr

Friedrich Berr, a reputed German composer, bassoonist and clarinettist working in Paris, was not an unknown figure to Preumayr.⁷⁶ Dining together at midday, Berr enthusiastically offered to show the bassoonist a recently-completed solo work, even going as far as to retrieve it from the publisher and to dedicate it to Preumayr. The promised concertino, or rather a rondo with variations based on a theme by Rossini, was however no masterpiece according to Preumayr, and he does not mention if he performed it there any time afterwards. The two musicians had a common interest in military music for wind band and Preumayr went away from the meeting with a renewed sense of motivation. He regrets not having come to the French capital earlier, as his playing would have certainly profited from this exposure; nonetheless, he vows to take all opportunities to learn more, and notes that even the famous Miss Sontag had regular coaching from Italian singing teachers:

[Met] in the morning with Mr. Berr, first clarinettist at the Théâtre-Italien and even the first in Paris, soon to be a professor at the Conservatory. As he is a very reputable composer, I am interested in becoming more acquainted with him. . . . We went and had lunch together and talked a lot about composition. He holds dear the compositions of Pappa's and Pappa's clarinet duets When I complained about the lack of good bassoon music, he mentioned that he had composed a concertino recently and already given it to a publisher. I regretted that I would not get to see it during my stay, . . . but he wrote immediately to the publisher to send the concertino

⁷⁵ Olivier Morand, *Les derniers feux des concerts spirituels parisiens (1816–1831)*, thesis (Sorbonne, 2002). Thèses, École nationales des chartes, <http://theses.enc.sorbonne.fr/2002/morand> [accessed on October 27, 2014]. Additionally: WP, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concert_Spirituel [accessed on October 18, 2014]. This is not to be confused with the original series in Paris from 1725–90. “Concert Spirituel . . . a regular feature at the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire shortly after it was founded in 1828 and remained so for most of the nineteenth century. They were frequently benefit performances featuring notable soloists.”

⁷⁶ Pamela Weston, ‘Berr, Friedrich’, *GMO*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/02885> [accessed August 20, 2014]. Friedrich Berr (1794–1838) was a German bassoonist, clarinettist, and composer. Professor at the Paris Conservatoire, he was additionally director of the Gymnase de Musique Militaire and wrote methods for various instruments, including one for the bassoon, *Méthode complète de basson*, in 1836.

back, and said that with my permission, he would dedicate it to me. This was quite flattering for me and tomorrow I will get it. I have some *Airs* and *Variations* of Berr's and a couple are quite beautiful. His compositions here are much sought after and publishers pay him well. He composes and organizes all the wind music used in all regiments. In addition, he publishes a music journal. . . . Mr. Berr is such a *bon garçon* . . . and everyone knows him well. . . . I find now more than ever that I have to put my nose to the grindstone. One month here has given me completely different ideas about instrumental performance, though I find that I can rival . . . a lot of colleagues.

Alas! If I had only come here 15–20 years ago! A few months around here would have made a difference in my playing. But one is never too old to learn. If work can help, I will not lose a good opportunity to learn something. [Even] Miss Sontag has often taken lessons with skilled Italian singing teachers.

(Paris, February 3, 1830; 217–18)

In the afternoon I met accordingly with Mr. Berr, who had already received the *Concertino* back. We went to a nearby cafe, where we could be undisturbed and go through it; it is not really a concertino, but much more *Air variée* with an *Allegro*. The melody is by Rossini and is one of his most popular.

(Paris, February 4, 1830; 218–19)

Preumayr describes an agreeable meeting with the Viennese composer Hieronymus Payer (1787–1845), who was later helpful with improving the accompaniment for Berr's work:

I made a pleasant acquaintance with a Mr. Payer, a Viennese whose name I know from some insignificant compositions for wind music. He's a . . . stocky man, a little more than 50 years: good, honest, with his heart on his tongue . . . one of those people who you get to know at first sight. After we had eaten an excellent dinner and rested and talked for a while – I played my variations in B-flat, which he accompanied splendidly. Payer paid me many compliments and was delighted to once again hear enjoyable bassoon playing. He hates most bassoonists' mannerisms and tone.

(Paris, February 7, 1829; 223–24)

At 10 in the evening I joined my Viennese at the piano to try Berr's so-called *Concertino*, but alas! It is not worth much. A few variations are good, but the whole thing is not brilliant; at the end, a variation is difficult and ineffective. The piano part is miserably arranged. The honest Payer has invited himself to make the necessary changes and improve the accompaniment.

(Paris, February 15, 1830; 249)

The *Concertino militaire* by Crémont

Around the same time as his meeting with Berr, Preumayr visited Pierre Crémont, whom he already knew from an earlier visit to Stockholm of the composer;⁷⁷ their collaboration on a solo composition for bassoon was renewed. This piece met with Preumayr's hearty approval from the very beginning, although he had reservations about several technical passages, particularly the lack of occasions to breathe:

Mr. Crémont received me with the same friendship he showed me in Stockholm and reminded about the concerto that he had started for me there, and offered now to compose for me. He spoke with enthusiasm about his sojourn in Stockholm, . . . Right away he said he will start for me and the next Thursday we can already try out what has been completed until then.
(Paris, February 1, 1830; 211)

Today . . . at 10 in morning I was already was at Crémont's, who lives outside the Barriere de Clichy, past the new Tivoli. . . . I had the bassoon along for trying what was written down for the first solo. If everything goes as in the beginning, it cannot fail. . . . Crémont gave me many compliments about my tone and my playing, and said it was a pleasure to write something for me.
(Paris, February 4, 1830; 218)

Monday at 10 am I went as planned to Crémont We tried out all that was finished, and I think this composition is attractive; however, I fear that this concertino is even too long for Paris Crémont even honors me with a dedication and will have the composition published later. Next Thursday . . . it shall be finished. I want to get it soon and intend to rehearse it with him.
(Paris, February 8, 1830; 225)

I had the opportunity to go early to Crémont to retrieve the last sheets of the score. Everything was now ready and we are now finished with the entire concertino. It is really beautiful and will certainly please the *le Tambour*.⁷⁸ There are several places, in particular passages, which could be changed somewhat to make them easier for the fingers when the main tonality is E-flat major. As string player who composed something for a wind player will never be quite satisfied; he believes that one has lungs and lips of iron. One hundred times I have asked Crémont to remember to write opportunities to breathe, but healthy and long melodies lead on to passages and one

⁷⁷ François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens* (2nd edn.; Paris: Didot Frères 1867), 214. Additionally: WP, http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Crémont [accessed October 20, 2014]. Pierre Crémont (1784–1846) was a violinist, clarinetist, composer and conductor at the Théâtre de l'Odéon.

⁷⁸ Parts for timpani, bass drum and cymbals are scored; this combination was commonly known as "Turkish music" and added for a military effect. See: Anthony Baines and Stanley Sadie, 'Janissary' music, in Alison Latham (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e3528> [accessed July 29, 2015].

can see red, yellow and black before coming to the trill. I'm afraid that I cannot get through it, and yet I am forced to use it in my concert if it comes to that.
(Paris, March 3, 1830; 301)

Continuing to work with Crémont on completing the piece, Preumayr's primary motivation for his extended sojourn abroad is most clearly communicated here, specifically to further develop his own musical sensibilities by exposure to all the cultural experiences Paris has to offer and to learn from respected musicians, such as Payer and Crémont, how to increase his abilities as a performer. Ruefully, he observes that he could not realize all of his potential earlier but now is eager to take this opportunity to do so, despite his age. The modest and sincere characteristics of this musician are obvious in the following passage, written in an earnest and idealistic mood, as he expresses his deep wish to develop his artistry:

At 10 in the evening went to my Viennese, the unassuming Payer and I will try the finished part of Crémont's Concertino at the piano – also other things, that Payer undertook to arrange. . . . When it is completely finished, I will ask Crémont if I may study it with him. I'm not embarrassed to take instruction and advice of such excellently skilled artists like Crémont and Payer, who know the current prevalent taste . . . and, therefore, the best advice is to follow the spirit of the time. For Those Who Sit at Home quietly and peacefully, it might not matter, but for Those Who Travel, there is not any other alternative, he must follow that path or go home. Now that I am out here, I will make every possible effort to follow the general stream and if I could just stay here a year, I would then reap many benefits. However, I will profit from this as much as I can and still develop further. With my still-lively inclination to make progress on the path of art, though at an already advanced age, I find myself in more musically happy circumstances, and want to progress further. My soul is open and available for a deeper impression of our divine art, but the seed, which was covered by a hard-trodden ground in younger years, was delayed growing – and the fruit did not ripen. However – this thought, this conviction should not reduce my greed for learning. With diligence and perseverance and with attention to what pleases, I can still profit a lot. Paris is the most useful capital city for any artist and he who regrets his trip here or laments over what it might have cost, is a fool who does not deserve to see or hear anything.
(Paris, February 22, 1830; 271–72)

After preparations with accompanist Payer and Crémont, Preumayr's dress rehearsal with the orchestra for the Concertino apparently went well enough, although he reports that his reeds were behaving unpredictably, he was feeling physically weak and was generally anxious about

the lack of rehearsal time allotted for the orchestral accompaniment. Tickets organized for Crémont remained unused; the composer was otherwise engaged:

Tried my reeds when I arose early in the morning . . . They did not obey me and God knows how it will go – I am already worried . . . At 9:30 I appeared at the rehearsal – they were doing a Beethoven symphony. After that I rehearsed the Concertino, during which my concentration was required for my part, as well as the orchestra's. They had to hurry, as always at the concert rehearsals and I was not allowed to take [more time], which I wanted. All praised me nonetheless, for the tone and singing. Weak and frail in body, thus tired in the lips, I had not the strength to come up to the high tones, which play an important role in the Concertino and I presented myself worse than I otherwise could. The Concertino seemed to work, but some wanted the bass drum removed. The choirmaster . . . left me two tickets, which I offered to Crémont, but he could not use them.
(Paris, April 6, 1830; 377–78)

A performance of the young Franz Liszt

Later that same evening, Preumayr attended a soirée of Charles Lafont, a well-known French violinist and composer.⁷⁹ He heard the young Franz Liszt there, who must have been nineteen years old at that time. In a scathing report about the pianist's performance, Preumayr notes that he was compelled to leave the room, unable to tolerate any more of the disturbing theatrics of this “fool”, describing the sweaty and copious movements of a young, crazy-looking musician. Here Preumayr reveals his skepticism of and distaste towards the growing popularity of a showman's virtuosity for virtuosity's sake. In contrast to all the positive feelings expressed two months earlier about the cultural opportunities to be found in Paris, his tone now hints of a weariness of the French scene and he seems ready to move on:

The first part of this grand concert program, was a solo for flute with accompaniment of piano and violoncello, a composition by Lafont; I did not think much of it, nor was it brilliant for the soloist . . . Then came an Italian duet, a thousand times already heard, . . . and afterwards a youngish man played who looked like a real fanatic or a runaway and crazy student. Probably, as he was playing the piano with accompaniment of a violin and bass, it was his own composition. . . . His acting and

⁷⁹ Boris Schwarz, ‘Lafont, Charles Philippe’, *GMO*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/15815> [accessed October 4, 2014]. Charles Philippe Lafont (1781–1839) was a French violinist and composer, known for his “contest” with Paganini.

playing was the most affected I've ever heard – he worked so hard with the body that sweat poured from his forehead, and his head rolled around like a madman with eyes facing the ceiling. Now and then he glanced at the ladies, probably to see if such high sensitivity and expression communicated themselves. As for myself, I felt really bad after these endless follies, and with pleasure I observed that the audience, too, every single one, with visible impatience waited for it all to end. Dejected and sincerely chagrined by this fool, whom I think is called Litz [sic], if I'm not mistaken, . . . I hurried . . . away, convinced that I had not missed the slightest from the twelve remaining pieces. God spare me from such concerts and companionship at soirées! I'm starting to come to the point that when hearing music I think of escaping it like the plague.

(Paris, April 6 1830; 380–81)

The premiere, reviews, and reflections on “French” vs “German” sound

The next day, April 7, 1830, Crémont's *Concertino militaire* was premiered at the Concert Spirituel; Preumayr was not entirely happy with his performance, although it seems to have been generally well-received. He is relieved however, to have “the worst test” behind him and is curious to read concert reviews, particularly as a bassoonist from the German school:

I won't bother to make a description of every number – symphony – choral, overture, performed excellently. My solo, Crémont's *Concertino*: I was not altogether pleased with it; a few low notes did not come out right out for me – but the high, all the better – I won a lot of acclaim. The worst test is now past; now wait to see how it is assessed? But if Frenchmen do not willingly tolerate any foreigners, here you have plenty of evidence.

(Paris, April 7; 385)

According to audience reactions at previous soirées and the two reviews included below, as well as in individual conversations that Preumayr reports, there was clearly considerable controversy about the characteristics of the German tone quality of the bassoonist in comparison to that of his French colleagues, and for that matter, regarding the tonal concept of the other woodwind instruments, as well. The differences were those of taste: what one considered beautiful and pure was regarded as weak and unnatural to another. Preumayr copied the following entry from the *Journal des débats* into his journal, concerning his performance at

Moscheles' soirée on January 26, 1830.⁸⁰ The writer insists that each woodwind instrument must protect its innate natural characteristics in color and states that Preumayr's sound resembles the English horn while playing in the high register:

Mr. P[reumayr], bassoniste de Roi de Suède, nous a rendu cette galanterie en jouant une *Fantaisie sur l'Airs de la Dame blanche*. On entend rarement le basson placé en première ligne dans les concerts. Cet instrument si précieux pour l'orchestre, peut aussi figurer avec avantage dans le solo. Mr. P[reumayr] possède un beau talent sur le basson; il doigte avec agilité dans le milieu comme dans le deux extrémités ou les difficultés sont bien plus grandes; il tire un son flatteur de son instrument, mais ce son qu'il a voulu rendre doux et rond a perdu son énergie et son caractère. On croirait entendre un cor anglais quand la mélodie est dans les ton élevés. . . . Il faut que le hautbois conserve sa voix mordante et même un peu nasarde; c'est la sa physionomie s'il imite la flûte ou la clarinette, il cessera d'être hautbois, et l'harmonie aura un interprète de moins. Je pense donc que l'agrément de l'embouchure de M. P[reumayr], dans le ton élevés, ne serait pas incompatible avec un accent plus vigoureux et même un peu de rudesse d'attaque dans le basses.⁸¹
(Paris, January 30, 1830; 205–06)

Agreeing that the reviewer has given criticism from which he can profit, Preumayr readily admits that he must strive for more control and consistency in all registers of the instrument in order to maintain a rich sound color throughout. Nonetheless, he cites the unfavorable conditions in the crowded hall and a “weak accompaniment”, vehemently defending his choices and also giving his own opinion about the quality of the French woodwind playing he has thus far heard. He finds that the Parisian woodwinds sound bright and buzzy and not at all to his taste. The French clarinet tone he describes as being “razor sharp” and “piercing” and no rival to that of his father-in-law's, Bernhard Crusell:

⁸⁰ Preumayr, 205–06.

⁸¹ “Mr. P[reumayer], bassoonist of the King of Sweden, has given us pleasure by playing a *Fantaisie sur l'Airs de la Dame blanche*. We rarely hear the bassoon in a position of prominence in concert. This important instrument of the orchestra may also appear advantageously in solos. Mr. P[reumayr] has a fine talent on the bassoon; his fingers are as nimble in the middle as in the two extreme registers, which are much more difficult; he draws a flattering sound from his instrument, but in making his tone soft and round, it has lost energy and character. It sounds like an English horn when the melody is in the high register, . . . An oboe must retain its biting and even somewhat nasal voice; this is its nature; if imitating the flute or clarinet, it would cease to be an oboe, and the *harmonie* has one interpreter less. So I think the beauty of Mr. P[reumayr's] embouchure in the high register would not be inconsistent with a stronger focus and even a little more attack in the bass.” [Translation courtesy of Guy van Waas]

This article, which I read through several times to really comprehend the terms and deal with them, is of use to me. I must learn to observe what is now lacking, namely, a rich tone over the instrument's entire register. It seems that the reviewer did not remember. . . an insufferable congestion, embarrassing position, weak accompaniment and quite plainly and simply said, an unfavorable hall. Had it remained in the evening as it was in the rehearsal, there would have been no reason to complain about too little volume. Concerning the comparison with the English horn, I must say that here they have never heard another bassoon tone than that of the present bassoonists that is so poor and small and weak and buzzy in the low tones and sharp in the high and pathetic in middle register, so I, by all means in this world, would not wish to take it on. . . . However, people are used to such bassoonists and one believes that it is the correct way and therefore find fault with it, if it is different. Concerning Mr. Vougt's *hautbois*: he has without a doubt a rare skill, accentuation on every note; if it is beautiful? The worst oboe playing I've heard can be called nasal with a vengeance. It is said that each instrument should retain their natural tone quality. Should the oboe be nasal? Should the bassoon be buzzy and yelling? In that case, we Germans do injustice to the French. The baroque taste should not deceive us. May they keep their bad taste, we maintain ours. . . . It is even so with clarinettists. Their tone is razor sharp and piercing, if you want this . . . oh well, I willingly bestow a half dozen of all these clarinettists against one of Pappa's tones. The French are too many too full of themselves and find faults in others. . . . I hope meanwhile that I will have several opportunities to expose myself to their critique and for my own amusement will give in to both boldness and added volume of the tone.

(Paris, January 30, 1830; 205–06)

The following review, also copied into Preumayr's journal, concerns the debut of Crémont's *Concertino militaire*; the reviewer, Castil-Blaze, although commenting positively on Preumayr's agility and lyrical style, was not satisfied with his tone quality in the high register, suggesting that the root of this problem lay with bassoonist's ambition to go half an octave beyond the usual range of three octaves. He advises Preumayr to "cut the four new strings of his lyre" and return to a smaller range:

Mr. P[reumayr], bassoniste suédois, nous a fait entendre un Concerto composé par Mr. Crémont. . . . Ce concerto, est bien conduit; il renferme de traits disposés avec art pour employer toutes les ressources d'un instrument dont la tablature immense égale maintenant celle de la clarinette, trois octaves et demie. Mr. P[reumayr] est d'une grande habileté sur la basson; il doigte la dernière octave avec une rapidité imprenante, et galope Chromatiquement en des lieux où l'on n'arrivait qu'à pas comptés, après avoir posé le grapin. Les traits les plus scabreux ne ralentissent point sa marche; il chante fort agréablement; sa poitrine fournit du souffle comme un sommier d'orgue; mais je n'ai pu accoutumer encore mon oreille au son qu'il tire du

fagotto. Ce son est rond, à la vérité mais court et peu vibrant; c'est un son de cor anglais dont la douceur uniforme est bientôt importune. On ne peut pratiquer avec autant d'aisance haute de basson. Sans se servir d'une anche très forte; et pour obtenir trois ou quatre notes de plus à l'aigu on décolore, on sacrifie plus d'une octave au grave. Les Virtuoses du Nord ont adopté cette qualité de son; elle favorise singulièrement les enterprises d'escalade et d'agilité et place plus souvent les bassonistes parmi les recitans d'un concert. Les raisons et le beau talent de Mr. P[reumayr]. ne sauraient me persuader. Coupez s'il le faut, les quatre cordes nouvelles de votre lyre, decapitez la, il lui restera trois octaves encore, et l'oreille charmée par des résultats sonores bien autrement satisfaisans, retrouvant les sons larges du diapason élevé qui contrastent avec les accens vigoureux et légèrement acerbes du grave, ne réclamera point sur la suppression des quelques notes aiguës, suppression qui n'aurait lieu que dans les traits rapides, ces notes pouvant toujours être obtenues avec les précautions que l'anche faible demande. J'ai applaudi Mr. P[reumayr] de toutes mes forces, et ne crains pas d'avouer que j'épiais les Bassons de l'orchestre pour retrouver les sons accoutumés, et que je trouve préférables dans la symphonie comme dans le récit. [Preumayr copied this report from *Journal de débats*]⁸²
(Paris, April 11, 1830; 400–02)

Preumayr obviously did not consider taking Castil-Blaze's advice in any case, and vows that he would certainly never imitate the French style of bassoon playing:

So this is his, Mr. Castil-Blaze's, opinion. He deceives himself much, if he thinks I will follow his advice. *Je ne couperai rien de ma lyre et je n'adopterai jamais la methode des bassons français.* I'll cut nothing off my lyre and never adopt the method of the French bassoonists.
(Paris, April 13, 1830; 402)

⁸² “With Mr. P[reumayr], Swedish bassoonist, we heard a concerto composed by Mr. Crémont. . . . This concerto is well presented; it contains features that artfully exploit all the resources of an instrument whose huge range now equals that of the clarinet, three and a half octaves. Mr. P[reumayr] has great skill on the bassoon; he negotiates the last octave with impressive speed and gallops chromatically to dizzying heights. The trickiest sections don't impede his progress; he sings pleasantly; his chest supplies air like an organ bellows. But I could not yet accustom my ear to the sound he gets from the fagotto. This tone is round, that is true, but dry and with little resonance. It is like the sound of an English horn whose uniform sweetness is soon unwelcome. One cannot exploit with ease the high range of bassoon without using a very strong reed and in order to obtain three or four more high notes, one sacrifices the quality of sound of more than one octave in the low register. The Virtuoses of the North have adopted a quality of sound that particularly favors climbing higher with agility, and puts bassoonists in the foreground of a concert. The reasoning and the fine talent of Mr. P[reumayr] could not convince me. Cut if necessary, the four new strings of your lyre, behead it, have three octaves again, and charm the sound with results far more satisfying. To obtain the broad sounds of the high register, which contrast with the strong and slightly bitter accents of the low, it is worth sacrificing a few high notes, a sacrifice which only needs to be made in fast passages, and which can always be obtained with the precautions that the weak reed demands. I applauded Mr. P[reumayr] with all my heart, and don't mind admitting that I, noticing the sounds to which I am accustomed of the bassoonists in the orchestra, find these preferable both in orchestral and solo playing.”
[Translation courtesy of Guy van Waas]

Just how nationalistic this topic became for Preumayr was noted in another comment, attributed to the Dresdner pianist and composer Karl Traugott Zeuner (1775–1841):⁸³

Zeuner even gave me compliments about my tone; see, he is German.
(Paris, April 18, 1830; 422)

Triumphant finale and farewell to Paris

On the morning after the concert Preumayr received visits from bassoonists Henry and Gebauer, who both offered their congratulations; the latter presented him with a concerto and invited him for another gathering with colleagues:

Mr. Henry, bassoonist, came to thank me and no sooner had he left after a long . . . chat . . . Mr. Gebauer arrived, with his bassoon and music under his arm. He, too, made me many compliments and left me a score, containing a bassoon concerto of his, which he dedicated to me. Moreover, he invited me for duets and breakfast in the morning on Good Friday at 10.
(Paris, April 8, 1830; 386)

After a day of music-making with Parisian bassoonists, Mr. Gebauer declared that Preumayr had deservedly earned the unofficial title “*le vrai père des bassons*”, which he himself had held for many years. Finally having overcome the deep fear and doubt which had plagued him earlier on his tour, Preumayr finds himself in a position to confidently and happily accept his own artistic level and recognized status as a virtuoso:

On Good Friday I trotted over with my bassoon at 10:00 to Gebauer, where there was a breakfast of fish and omlette. Several amateur bassoonists eventually presented themselves. Gebauer brought out one of his new Duo Concertantes and chose the hardest in A-flat major. When I glanced at the first part, I made a little fuss and said it was too difficult to play at sight. Since I therefore had paid my dues to modesty, I said that I wanted to try it as well as I could. I felt that I had a fairly good embouchure. Without bragging, I wanted to see who played the duo’s first part (sight-reading) as well as I did for the first time. I was pleased with myself for my performance and my tone was soft, round and strong. I was overwhelmed by compliments and today I finally had the satisfaction that all these bassoonists regarded my tone as the best they’ve ever heard, and faulted their own severely. They then played a trio while I rested. Then I sight-read another trio, which even went as

⁸³Jennifer Spencer and Michal Musgrave, ‘Zeuner, Karl Traugott’, GMO, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/30935> [accessed October 8, 2014].

though I had played it twenty times before. May I be forgiven if I was sincerely delighted to feel that I was better than the others.

(Paris, April 9, 1830; 387–88)

Old man Gebauer had so far not made any comparisons yet between the others and me. In the evening, he could retain himself any longer and said that none of the mentioned bassoonists were comparable with me. He had for several years been considered as “*le père des Bassons*”, but that he in all possible fairness and with great pleasure . . . is of the opinion that this title belongs to me. He took me by the hand and told the party “*voilà, le vrai père des bassons*”. . . . The other bassoonists were more reticent and perhaps a little envious, their imagination and self-love has gotten a slap. I am glad that the worst test on my entire trip turned out reasonably well - the rest are a balance of trifles – if the Paris journals write further good reviews about me it will make my reputation and it will be valid everywhere.

(Paris, April 10, 1830; 393–94)

Preumayr spent the rest of the month preparing for his departure for London; organizing his affairs, sending luggage and making farewell visits to the many friends and acquaintances he had acquired in the last months. On his 48th birthday, April 24, he left Paris and arrived in London on April 27, 1830. At this point, Tegen’s transcription of the journal ends; several of Preumayr’s solo performances in London are, however, documented in the following newspaper accounts.

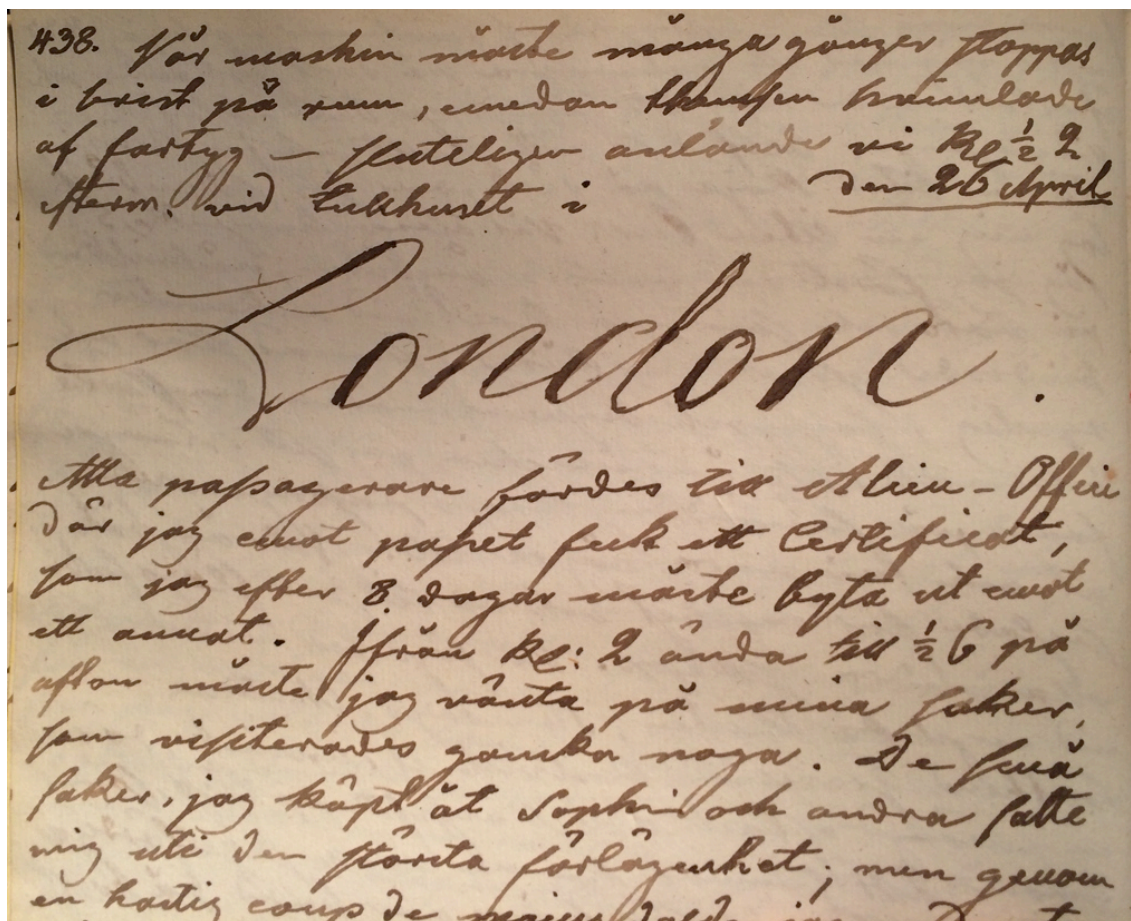


Figure 2.4. Reisejournal detail, page 438

The London concerts and reviews

Six or more concerts featuring the bassoonist took place in London; in two programs, Preumayr performed Crémont's *Concertino militaire*.⁸⁴ In a letter confirming his participation in the seventh concert at the Royal Philharmonic Society on May 31, 1830, Preumayr writes that he is very flattered to have the opportunity to be heard, and that the fee is less important than the honour. He is therefore happy to receive a “modest” payment of 10 guineas:

Monsieur! C'est avec la satisfaction la plus flatteuse que j'accepté l'occasion vivement désirée, de me faire entendre au Concert Philharmonic du 31 de ce mois. Contant moins par l'interêt pecuniaire que sur l'honneur d'avoir joué quelque Solo dans Votre Réunion incomparable, circonstance qui a joute puis amment à la reputation, je me donnerai au terme modest de 10 Guinéas. -- -- Acceptéz les

⁸⁴ William Ayrton, *The Harmonicon*, (1830), 304, 306–07.

sentiments les plus distingués, avec les quels j'ai l'honneur d'être Monsieur Votre
 Servant, Fran. C. Preumayr, 1^o Basson de S. M. le Roi de Suède et Norwège. –
 London. 18 Mai, 1830.⁸⁵

The Philharmonic Concerts.

SEVENTH CONCERT, Monday, May 31, 1830.

ACT I.

Sinfonia in D	BEETHOVEN.
Aria, Signor Lablache, "Largo al factotum," (<i>Il Barbiere di Siviglia</i>)	ROSSINI.
Concerto, Piano-forte, Mr. Cramer	MOZART.
Duetto, Madame Stockhausen and Signor Donzelli, "Ah, si tu," (<i>Guillaume Tell</i>)	ROSSINI.
Overture, (<i>Lodoviska</i>)	CHERUBINI.

ACT II.

Sinfonia in E flat	SPOHR.
Duetto, Signor Donzelli and Signor Lablache, "Parlar, spiegar," (<i>Mosé in Egitto</i>)	ROSSINI.
Concertino Militaire, Bassoon, Mr. Preumayr (principal Bassoon to the King of Sweden and Norway)	CRÉMONT.
Scena, Madame Stockhausen, "Mi sospinge," (<i>Zemira e Azor</i>)	SPOHR.
Overture, <i>Zauberflöte</i>	MOZART.
Leader, MR. F. CRAMER—Conductor, MR. CRAMER.	

Figure 2.5. Advertisement for Philharmonic Concert⁸⁶

The advertisement for Preumayr's first appearance in London at the Philharmonic series on May 31, 1830 is depicted in figure 2.5. A varied program was offered, where orchestral numbers (Beethoven's Symphony No. 2, Cherubini's *Overture* from *Lodoiska*, Spohr's Symphony in E \flat major and Mozart's *Overture* from *Die Zauberflöte*) framed various arias, a solo piano and Crémont's *Concertino militaire* [fig. 2.6].

⁸⁵ Letter from Frans Carl Preumayr, bassoon player, to William Watts, Secretary, Philharmonic Society, 1830. (British Library, RPS MS 359, 'Original Letters': Patey-Pyne (ff. 256), 1819-1913, folio 212). [This information was kindly provided by James Kopp.] "Sir! It is with the most ingratiating contentment I welcome this eagerly desired opportunity to be heard at the Philharmonic Concert on the 31st of this month. Being exceedingly exalted by the prestige of playing a few solos for your incomparable Society - an accomplishment that elevates one's stature greatly- more than by the monetary compensation, I will dispense my art for the humble fee of 10 Guineas. -- -- Please accept my most distinguished sentiments, with which I have the honor of being at your service, Fran. C. Preumayr, 1st Bassoonist of His Majesty, King of Sweden and Norway. - London. 18 May, 1830." [Translation courtesy of Mélodie Michel and Olivier Picon]

⁸⁶ Ayrton, 303.

1830]	THE SECOND DECADE	103
SEVENTH CONCERT. MONDAY, MAY 31		
ACT I		
SYMPHONY in D (No. 2)		<i>Beethoven</i>
ARIA, " Largo al factotum " (Il Barbiere di Seviglia)		<i>Rossini</i>
	MR. F. LABLACHE.	
CONCERTO for Pianoforte		<i>Mozart</i>
	MR. J. B. CRAMER.	
DUET, " Ah, si tu " (William Tell)		<i>Rossini</i>
	MME STOCKHAUSEN and MR. DONZELLI.	
OVERTURE, " Lodoiska "		<i>Cherubini</i>
ACT II		
SYMPHONY in E ♭		<i>Spohr</i>
DUET, " Parlar, spiegar " (Mosè in Egitto)		<i>Rossini</i>
	MESSRS. DONZELLI and LABLACHE.	
CONCERTINO for Bassoon, " Militaire "		<i>Cremont</i>
	MR. F. C. PREUMAYR.	
SCENA, " Mi sospinge " (Zelmira)		<i>Spohr</i>
	MME STOCKHAUSEN.	
OVERTURE, " Die Zauberflöte "		<i>Mozart</i>
	Leader, MR. F. CRAMER. Conductor, MR. J. B. CRAMER.	

Figure 2.6. Concert program for Philharmonic series⁸⁷

Preumayr copied out a most complimentary public comment [fig. 2.7] that noted:

Among the instrumental performances the most novel was a solo on the bassoon by M. P[reumayr] whom [sic] the programme announced to be first bassoon to the King of Sweden. He is evidently a master of his instrument, and his performance afforded considerable gratification.

(London, May 22/23 [?] 1830; 499)

⁸⁷ Myles Birket Foster, *The History of the Philharmonic Society of London 1813–1912* (London: John Lane, the Bodley Head, 1912), 103. Also: <https://archive.org/details/historyofphilhar00fost> [accessed August 3, 2014].

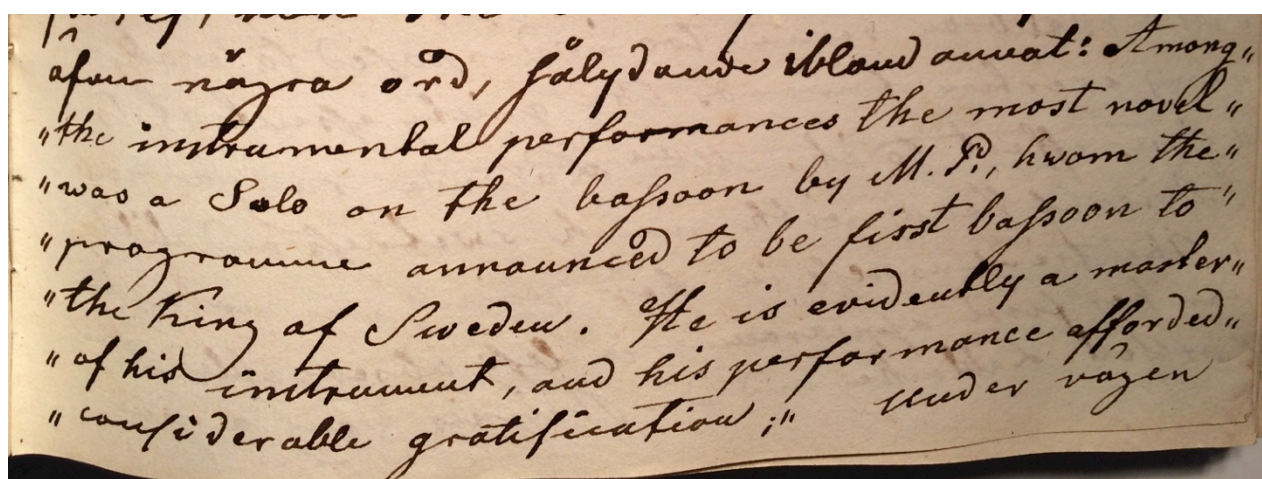


Figure 2.7. Reisejournal detail, page 499

A review published in *The Harmonicon* referred to both Preumayr's appearance in Mr Begrez's morning concert at the King's Theatre on May 31, 1830 and the Philharmonic series later that day.⁸⁸ It praised Preumayr's rich tone and abundance of technical facility, and was also pleased with his composition entitled *Recollections of Sweden* (a collection of folk songs, composed by himself). Preumayr meticulously copied it into his journal [figs. 2.8 and 2.9]:

Mr P[reumayr], who now performed for the second time in London, is a bassoon player of the highest qualifications. His tone, unlike most that we have heard abroad, is full and rich, in quality resembling that of our countryman, the late Mr. Holmes, whose unmatched excellence will long be remembered. His execution is much greater than can ever be called into use for orchestral purposes, or in accompanying, though now and then it may be allowed free play in a concerto and his taste seems pure. His music, too, differing from many things of the kind which are contrived to show attainments that few really value, was clever, pleasing, and of a modest length. His merits were clearly understood by the audience, and the pleasure he afforded was not concealed from him. If he remains in England, he will undoubtedly prove a valuable acquisition.

(London, July 10, 1830; 560–61)

⁸⁸ Ayrton, 304.

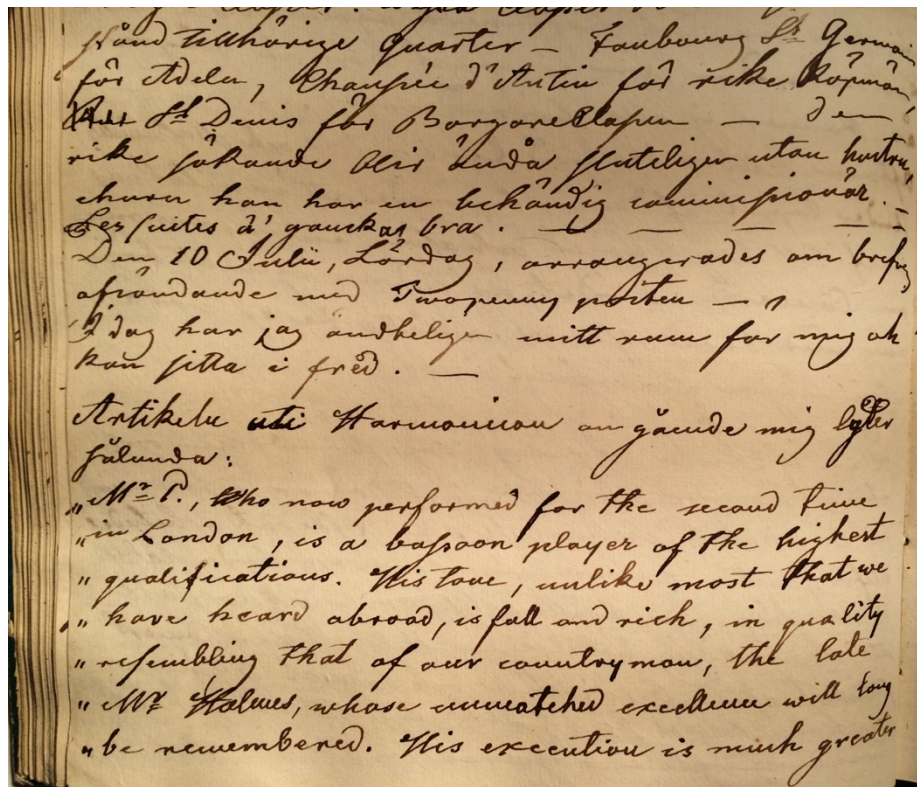


Figure 2.8. Reisejournal detail, page 560

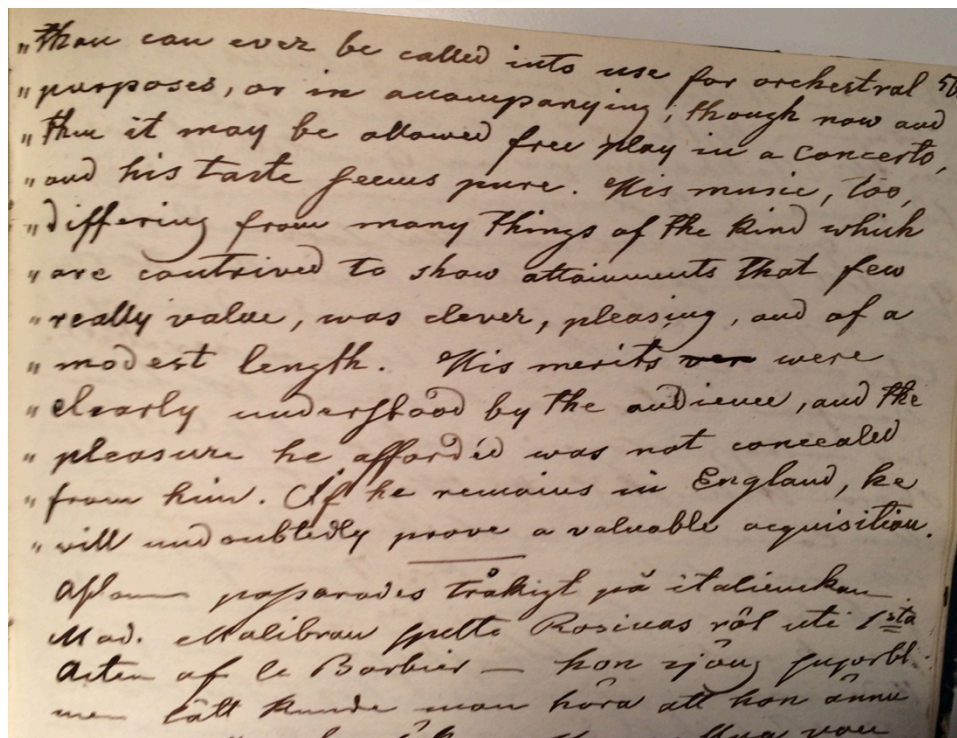


Figure 2.9. Reisejournal detail, 561

Preumayr's fame evidently spread as far as India. Another review, this time from a publication in Calcutta referring to the Philharmonic concert in May, confirmed previous opinions about Preumayr's singular virtuosity, citing perfect intonation, and mentioning his range to eb^2 . The report ends with a perceptive comment that a malfunctioning reed was apparently the cause of a “buzzing noise” affecting his otherwise pleasing tone:

Mr. Preumayr is possessed of a good tone and considerable execution upon his instrument; we have heard no one who preserves the same accuracy of intonation on the bassoon, with anything like a comparable taste or command over passages of difficulty. The music he selected was good. He ascended to the E-flat in the fourth space of the treble stave with facility and made the whole of this imperfect instrument appear more equal than we ever yet heard it. In some parts the quality of the sound was infused by a buzzing noise, which, we presume was attributable to a defective reed. Mr. Preumayr's performance was loudly applauded.⁸⁹

Another concert took place at the King's Theatre, on June 30, 1830 where Preumayr performed Henri Brod's Trio with flute and piano, and *Recollections of Sweden*, in addition to Crémont's *Concertino militaire*. According to a newspaper report beforehand, the program consisted of two parts; various well-known artists such as Moscheles, Malibran, and Lablanche were also scheduled to perform [fig. 2.10]:⁹⁰

Part I	Part II
<i>Overture</i> , Weber	<i>Variations</i> , Madame Malibran, Hummel
<i>Aria</i> , Miss Riviere	<i>Fantasia Sur les Motifs de Guillaume Tell</i> ,
<i>Duo</i> , Signor Santini and Signor De Begnis (Rossini)	Violoncelle, Mr. Ronselot (Ronselot)
<i>Concertino militaire</i> , bassoon, Mr. Preumayr (Cremont)	<i>Terzetto</i> , Madame Stockhausen, Mr. Begrez and
<i>Duo</i> , Madame Malibran and Signor Lablache (Rossini)	Signor De Begnis, (Martini)
<i>Concerto</i> , pianoforte, Mr. Moscheles (Moscheles)	<i>Trio</i> , piano flute and bassoon, Mesers. Cianchettini,
<i>Duo 'Non palpitar'</i> , Madame Stockhausen and Mr. Begrez	Sedlnizek, Preumayr (Brod)
(Mayer)	<i>Aria 'Il Pirata'</i> , Signor Donzelli, (Bellini)
<i>Quartetto</i> , Madame Malibran, Stockhausen, Signor Donzelli, and	<i>Polonaise</i> , Guitar, Mr. Schulz (Giuliani)
Lablache	<i>Duo</i> , Miss Riviere, Signor Santini
<i>Fantasia</i> , violin, Mr. Eliason (Eliason)	<i>Recollections of Sweden</i> , Bassoon, Mr. Preumayr
In the course of the Concert Madame Stockhausen will sing a	Leaders: Mesers. Spagnoletti and Mori; Conductor,
<i>Swiss Air</i>	Mr. Cianchettini

Figure 2.10. Program from June 30, 1830

⁸⁹ June G. Allas, ‘Philharmonic Society–Seventh Concert, Monday, May 31’, *Oriental Observer* (Calcutta), October 24, 1830, sec. Arts and Entertainment.

⁹⁰ Anonymous, *Morning Post* (London), June 23, 1830, issue 18574. See also: Áurea Domínguez Moreno, *Bassoon Playing in Perspective: Character and Performance Practice 1800 to 1850*, (Helsinki: Studia musicologica Universitatis Helsingiensis, 26, 2013), 226–27.

Preumayr reaped enthusiastic praise from several reviewers in London, in contrast to the partially critical tone of some of the Parisian reports about his appearances. A writer from the *Morning Post* in London mentioned Preumayr's virtuosity, specifically referring to his extraordinary range, musical taste and beautiful tone quality:

Preumayr is the best performer on the bassoon that we ever heard, taking tone, taste and execution into consideration; he makes nothing of a rapid flight from the lowest B-flat in the bass to E-flat, fourth space in the treble, three octaves and a half!⁹¹

Another observer in London, reported that, unlike his peers, Preumayr was capable of playing well in awkward tonalities, and had technical facility up to the tone eb^2 , higher than what was usually demanded of bassoon compositions:

Keys in which, to other bassoon players, passages are impracticable, are to him nothing: but not content with a facility or command within the bounds of former *fagotto*-music, he has extended his domain of flourish, and actually can arrive at will upon E-flat (4th space treble), and rest there as long as he pleases.⁹²

Preumayr's return to Sweden as "the greatest bassoonist in Europe"

Preumayr's journal entries covering the last legs of his journey taking him through The Netherlands and Germany still remains untranscribed. On December 4, 1830, he returned to Stockholm, where he was hailed as "*der grösste Fagottist Europas.*"⁹³ By all accounts, Preumayr seems to have made the greatest impression on English audiences with his artistry and taste, while reports from Paris were somewhat mixed.

The portrayal provided by his journal is one of a humble and serious musician who was well-versed in musical matters; his areas of expertise included the operatic repertoire as well as military and chamber music. Stage fright was a topic about which he openly wrote, and the reader can appreciate Preumayr's relief on the occasions where he expressed satisfaction about

⁹¹ Anonymous, 'Preumayr's Concert', *Morning Post* (London), July 20, 1830, issue 18597.

⁹² James Silk Buckingham, (ed.), 'Mr Preumayr's Concert', *Athenaeum* (London), July 24, 1830.

⁹³ *Twf*²p."3; ."the greatest bassoonist in Europe"

a successful performance. Particularly remembered in London reviews for his exquisite tone quality and extended range, he remained active as a player and conductor in Sweden until the end of his life in 1853. His travel journal deserves to be the subject of a more profound examination in its entirety, together with a complete transcription and translation.

We do not know what kind of instrument father Severin Preumayr used, and perhaps this is noted at some point in his son's journal, but Frans Preumayr defended his choice of the Grenser instrument (based mainly on its timbre) in diary passages written in Paris.⁹⁴ This preference may have been influenced by a strong tradition in Stockholm favoring the woodwind instrument builders from Dresden, if the relatively large number of Dresden instruments located there are any reliable indication.⁹⁵ The popularity of Grenser woodwind instruments in Sweden is the subject of the first part of chapter 3; the second part contains details of my Grenser & Wiesner bassoon, which was sent from Dresden to Stockholm in the early nineteenth century.

⁹⁴ Preumayr, 161–63. Here he describes his meeting with French players, comparing their tone quality in a comparison of their reeds and instruments with his. In pages 260–63, he publicly announces the name and place of his bassoon builder at a soireé. Further, on page 402, he vows in response to a concert review in Paris never to imitate the method of French bassoon playing.

⁹⁵ See chapter 3.

