

BRAHMS

THREE INTERMEZZI OPUS 117 FOR THE PIANO

Practical Performing Edition
Edited from the original sources by
Willard A. Palmer

Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg on May 7, 1833. He died in Vienna on April 3, 1897. The title "intermezzo" was used for 13 of his piano solos, and all of them were written during his mature years. None of these are more gracious and more appealing than the three intermezzi of Opus 117, composed in 1892.

Intermezzo No. 1 in E \flat major is yet another of Brahms lullabies. Based on an old Scottish folk song, and superbly elegant in its serenity and simplicity, it is bathed in the mellow glow of the master composer's dignity and maturity.

No. 2 in B \flat minor is characteristic of the composer, whose ingenious compositional techniques are revealed in its unusual thematic transformations and superbly sensitive use of tonal coloring.

The third intermezzo, in C \sharp minor, is the most unusual of the three, with a haunting quality that is enhanced through the use of five-bar phrases.

This edition is made from all of the important original sources, including the composer's Autograph Copy and the earliest printed editions. Because Brahms was unusually meticulous in his markings for phrasing, dynamics, tempo changes and the like, it was not necessary to add editorial suggestions in light gray print, as is the custom for the present editor to do. It is sufficient to use parentheses for the very few added editorial markings, and to mention that all of the fingering is editorial.

Willard A. Palmer



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Based on a Scottish folk song. The German words, known to Brahms, are from Herder's *Volksliedern*:

*Schlaf sanft, mein Kind, schlaf sanft und schon!
Mich dauert's sehr, dich weinen sehn.*

Sleep softly, my child, oh gently sleep!
It grieves me so to see thee weep.

INTERMEZZO IN E \flat MAJOR, Opus 117, No. 1

Andante moderato

Johannes Brahms

p dolce

(col Ped. ad lib.)

5

9

13

poco a poco rit.

dim.

p

17

rit. molto

The musical score is written for piano in E-flat major and 6/8 time. It consists of 17 measures. The piece begins with a piano (*p*) and dolce dynamic. The tempo is marked 'Andante moderato'. The score includes various ornaments such as triplets, slurs, and fingerings. Dynamics change throughout, including *dim.* (diminuendo) and *p* (piano). The tempo slows down towards the end with markings for *poco a poco rit.* and *rit. molto*. The piece concludes with a final cadence.