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Preface

Prior Clara Schumann, there was no clear distinction between the professions of pianist and composer. Professional pianists were expected to present their own compositions during concerts and recitals, and the public demanded something new every time. This was fine if the pianist also happened to be credible as a composer, like Weber or Chopin. But, more often, audiences were subjected to an endless parade of vapid virtuoso showpieces and sentimental salon works. Clara Schumann had begun her career this way: as a young virtuoso, she composed many salon-style pieces for her recital programs, but over time this left her increasingly dissatisfied. She was sufficiently self-aware to realize she was not a great composer and she found it increasingly difficult to continue to present what she considered to be substandard music to her knowledgeable audiences, especially when so much great music by truly great composers remained unheard.

After her husband's death, Clara Schumann reinvented her career. She gave up composing almost entirely and filled her programmes with music by the great masters of the past, like Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert. She supplemented this with newer works by important contemporary composers, like Mendelssohn, Chopin, Brahms and, of course, her husband Robert Schumann. While this sounds very much like the kind of programming we are accustomed to today, at the time it was completely new. She became the first exclusively interpretive pianist and her success opened new paths for future generations. Eventually her way would become the norm.

Although we know that Clara Schumann was famous for her interpretation at the piano, we have no way of knowing how they sounded. Her early original compositions may reflect something of her general playing style, but they don't reveal anything about her approach to the music of other composers. For this reason, her cadenzas are valuable documents for us today. While a cadenza cannot be considered an original composition, it does demonstrate the performer's re-interpretation of the musical material of the concerto and reveals their personal tastes and abilities. Consequently, Clara Schumann's cadenzas contain rare insights into her interpretive approach to some of the famous works of the Classical repertoire and provide us with more than a hint of how she may have performed these great works in public.

This volume brings together all of Clara Schumann's known cadenzas, including those for Beethoven's Third and Fourth Piano Concertos, Opp. 37 and 58, and Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor K 466. Also included is the first edition of the early version of her cadenzas for Mozart's D minor Concerto, composed in 1856, based on the autograph score in the archives of the Library of Congress in Washington DC.

Cadenzas to Beethoven's Piano Concertos

No. 3 in C minor Op. 37 and No. 4 in G major Op. 58

It is not known whether Clara Schumann knew of Beethoven's cadenzas for his Piano Concertos (they were first published in the 1860s by Breitkopf & Härtel), but even if she had, it would have been completely natural for her to compose her own cadenzas for her performances of these works.

Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, was for a long time his most popular. It is therefore somewhat surprising that this work did not enter Clara Schumann's repertoire until rather late in her career. In a diary entry from November 3, 1868, she writes:

'I played Beethoven's C minor Concerto [in Bremen] for the first time, almost unbelievable, with real delight. I composed a cadenza for it and I believe it is not bad.'¹

On the other hand, she performed Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto many times during her career, most notably in 1883 with the newly-formed Berlin Philharmonic under the direction of her close friend and frequent recital partner, violinist Joseph Joachim.² Her cadenzas for the first and third movements, written in 1846, are the earliest of her existing cadenzas. Beethoven specifically instructs that the cadenza for the *Rondo* should be kept short, but Clara Schumann's is a long and complex piece that includes quotations from the concerto's slow movement.

The original autographs of Clara Schumann's cadenzas for Beethoven's concertos have not survived. They were first published in a single volume at J. Rieter-Biedermann in 1870³ (probably under Clara Schumann's supervision) and re-issued by Edition Peters in 1917.

Cadenzas for Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor K 466⁴

Clara Schumann's cadenzas for Mozart's D Minor Piano Concerto have come down to us in two versions. The first is based on a previously unpublished manuscript, held today in the Library of Congress in Washington DC. The manuscript is unsigned and undated and contains cadenzas for the first and last movements of the concerto (illustrations 1–4).⁵ The Library of Congress sources date the autograph to c. 1855/56, however, it may have been created somewhat later, possibly for a performance of the concerto in 1878.

The second version comes from a set of cadenzas based on a working manuscript (rough copy), which Clara Schumann created specifically for publication in 1891, probably to commemorate the centenary of Mozart's death. It is also found today in The Library of Congress (illustrations 5–10).⁶ These cadenzas were first published, under Clara Schumann's supervision, by J. Rieter-Biedermann in 1891, and reissued by C. F. Peters in 1917. Clara Schumann would not have performed these cadenzas herself, as she had retired from the public stage in 1890.

The first movement cadenza of the 1891 version can be seen as a heavily revised version of that in the earlier manuscript, however, the cadenzas for the last movement are unrelated.

Comparison with Brahms' Cadenza

Brahms is known to have written cadenzas for Mozart's D Minor Piano Concerto for a performance in his home town of Hamburg on 27 January, 1856 – the centenary of Mozart's birth. Clara Schumann is thought to have used his cadenzas for some of her early performances of the concerto. These cadenzas by Brahms are now considered lost.

¹ Berthold Litzmann, *Clara Schumann. An Artist's Life, Based on Material Found in Diaries and Letters*, Vol. 3, (London, 1913), p. 225.

² Letter to Marie Schumann October 27, 1883, in: *Ibid.*, p. 445f.

³ *Johannes Brahms Cadenzas for Concertos by J. S. Bach and W. A. Mozart*, Washington DC, The Library of Congress LC ML30.8b.B7K45.

⁴ For this section see Ludwig Sémerjian, 'Clara Schumann. New Cadenzas for Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor. Romantic Visions of a Classical Masterpiece', in: *The Kapralova Society Journal* 17, Issue 2 (Autumn 2019), p. 1–9.

⁵ See pp. X–XIII, and also in *Johannes Brahms. Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, Vol. III/7, ed. Camilla Cai (Munich, 2007), pp. 164f.

⁶ See pp. XII–XVIII.

KADENZ

zu Mozarts Konzert in d-Moll KV 466, erster Satz (ursprüngliche Fassung), Erstdruck
to Mozart's Piano Concerto in D minor K466, first movement (initial version), first edition

Cadenz

f

4

7

9

12

dim.

rit. *a tempo*

p