



University Music Class Room,  
EDINBURGH.

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FOUR HISTORICAL CONCERTS.

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**CONCERT IV.**

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 1901.

**A Recital of Pianoforte Works by  
Johannes Brahms.**

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*Performer*—MISS FANNY DAVIES.

## PREFACE TO THE PROGRAMME.

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BRAHMS, being a pianist, naturally began by composing for his instrument; but he did not continue to do so for long, and, indeed, afterwards wrote comparatively little for the pianoforte alone. With the exception of a Trio for piano, violin, and violoncello, Op. 8, and some songs, Op. 3, 6, and 7, the Op. 1-10 are for the pianoforte alone, and comprise, which is notable, three grand solo Sonatas, the only ones he published. Op. 9 and 10 are Variations, so are also Op. 21, 24, 25, and the four-hand Op. 23. Between Op. 35 and 116, Brahms wrote for the pianoforte alone only the two-hand Capricci and Intermezzi, Op. 76, the Rhapsodien, Op. 79, and the four-hand Waltzes, Op. 39, Op. 52-a (Liebeslieder), and Op. 65 (Neue Liebeslieder). Having late in life turned again to his first love, the pianoforte, he seems to have been fascinated by her charms; for the Fantasien, Op. 116, were followed by the Intermezzi, Ballade, Romanze, and Rhapsodien, Op. 117, 118, and 119. To these works with *opus* numbers have, however, to be added some without *opus* numbers—two books of Hungarian Dances and fifty-one Exercises, and several transcriptions of compositions by other composers.

Without in the least undervaluing the imposing Sonatas and Scherzo, and the magnificent Variations, of the first period, the delightful waltzes and other pieces of the second, and the attractive tone-poems of the third, one cannot but come to the conclusion that Brahms's compositions for the pianoforte alone do not form the most important class of his works. In following the course of the master's artistic career, we are struck first of all by the large number and the excellent quality of his concerted chamber music. From Op. 18 to Op. 51 there are to be found no fewer than nine works of this kind—two sextets, one quintet, four quartets, one trio, and one sonata (piano and violoncello); and these were followed as time went on by ten more.

With Op. 45, *A German Requiem*, Brahms secured for himself an unassailable position as a composer of choral-orchestral music, and strengthened this position by Op. 54, the *Song of Destiny*, Op. 55, the *Song of Victory*, and other works. After precluding with two Serenades, Op. 11 and 16, and the Variations on a theme of Haydn, Op. 56-a, Brahms claimed with Op. 68, his first Symphony, a place

among the symphonic composers. After this came from his pen three more Symphonies, Op. 73, 90, and 98, and two Overtures, the Academic and the Tragic, Op. 80 and 81. To this class of composition we may also group the Concertos—two for pianoforte, Op. 15 and 67; one for violin, Op. 77; and one for violin and violoncello, Op. 102.

Whilst, with regard to the above-mentioned classes of composition, Brahms showed at different periods of his life a predilection for one—now for pianoforte, now for concerted chamber, now for choral-orchestral, now for the purely orchestral compositions—his devotion to song was continuous, extending from Op. 3 to Op. 121.

Now, in which of these classes of composition was Brahms pre-eminently great? Some say in concerted chamber music, others in choral-orchestral music, others still in song, and yet others, but, I think, fewer, in purely orchestral music. This, however, is one of the questions about which it is idle to dispute. Let us rather try to enjoy the good things which the master created in every one of the classes.

Opinions differ more about Brahms than about any other great composer of the 19th century. Even Wagner, once the subject of the most violent contention, may—if we ignore a few blind worshippers and equally blind disparagers—be regarded as in the main unanimously judged and appreciated. Of a unanimous judgment and appreciation of Brahms, on the other hand, there is as yet perceivable neither the slightest trace nor the faintest prospect. The extent of the diversity of opinion is even more extraordinary than the manifoldness. It ranges from the opinion that Brahms was a genius of the calibre of Bach and Beethoven to the opinion that he was an impotent and wholly uninspired combiner of notes. An excellent and by no means narrow-minded musician endeavoured in the writer's presence, by arguments enforced by numerous quotations from the master's works, to show that Brahms's compositions are toilsome elaborations of trite or purloined material. The proposition is absurd. But have those who, like Hans von Bülow, pronounce the names of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms in one breath hit the bull's eye of the truth? Is there not a difference between the later and the two earlier masters? Whatever may be denied, it must be admitted that Brahms was a master craftsman, a profound thinker, and a noble striver. To be a composer of the calibre of Beethoven includes all this, but includes more. It includes also some things which it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to describe. Let us call them a strikingly original personality which finds its natural expression in music, and a vigorous spontaneous creative power. These we find in Beethoven. Do we find them *in the same degree* in Brahms? That is the crucial point. On the degree of the original musical personality and the strong spontaneous creativeness depends the degree of a composer's genius, and the degree of the impression he will make on the general public. Classes of the public and individuals can be interested and satisfied by other qualities, not the general public. It is not the object of the present writer to pronounce

a judgment, to weigh and appraise the master's qualities, but simply to suggest an explanation of the Brahms problem. The question to be considered, then, may be formulated thus: Is Brahms, in the two respects mentioned, as liberally endowed as Bach and Beethoven, as Haydn and Mozart, or even as some others of the great, but less great composers? Or is he less liberally endowed in these respects? No doubt very different answers will be forthcoming. But even those whose estimate is lowest will have to concede that Brahms was a great artist who gave to the world many works deserving unqualified admiration, and will not be able to say in fairness anything worse than that his reflectiveness often unduly outbalanced his spontaneity.



# Programme

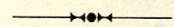
OF

PIANOFORTE COMPOSITIONS

BY

JOHANNES BRAHMS.

(Born at Hamburg in 1833; died at Vienna in 1897.)



## 1. SONATA in F minor, Op. 5.

(a) Allegro maestoso, 3/4.

(b) Andante espressivo, 2/4; Poco più lento, 4/16, 3/8, 4/16, and 3/8;  
Tempo primo, 2/4; Andante molto, 3/4; and Adagio,  $\frac{6}{8}$ .

“Der Abend dämmert, das Mondlicht scheint,  
Da sind zwei Herzen in Liebe vereint  
Und halten sich selig umfassen.”—*Sternau*.

(c) Scherzo. Allegro energico, 3/4.

(d) Intermezzo (*Rückblick*). Andante molto, 2/4.

(e) Allegro moderato ma rubato, 6/8.

**Interval.**

## 2. BALLADE in D major, Op. 10, No. 2.

## 3. CAPRICCIO in B minor, Op. 76, No. 2.

4. VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL THEME, in D major,  
Op. 21, No. 1.

## 5. RHAPSODIE in G minor, Op. 79, No. 2.

**Interval.**

6. CAPRICCIO in G minor, Op. 116, No. 3.
7. INTERMEZZO (Cradle Song) in E flat major, Op. 117,  
No. 1.
8. INTERMEZZO in B flat minor, Op. 117, No. 2.
9. INTERMEZZO in A major, Op. 118, No. 2.
10. BALLADE in G minor, Op. 118, No. 3.
11. INTERMEZZO in E minor, Op. 119, No. 2.
12. CAPRICCIO in C major, Op. 119, No. 3.
13. RHAPSODIE in E flat major, Op. 119, No. 4.



#### DATES AND PROGRAMMES OF THE FOUR HISTORICAL CONCERTS.

*November 14 (Wednesday).*—Early Symphonies by Haydn, and Predecessors and Contemporaries of Haydn: Sammartini, Stamitz, Van Maldere, Gossec, and Haydn. Songs sung by Madame WAHLER, accompanied by Mr A. SCOTT JUPP.

*December 19 (Wednesday).*—A Recital of Melodramatic Music (interspersed with some violoncello music).—Performers: Mrs TOBIAS MATTHAY [Jessie Kennedy] (reciter); Mr CUTHBERT WHITEMORE (pianist, accompanist of the recitations); Mr DAVID MILLAR CRAIG (violoncellist); and Mr A. SCOTT JUPP (pianist, accompanist of the violoncello music).

*February 14, 1901 (Thursday).*—Early Symphonies by Predecessors and Contemporaries of Haydn: Johann Carl Stamitz, Anton Filtz, Frederic Schwindl, Johann Christian Bach, Charles Frederic Abel, and François Joseph Gossec.

*March 13 (Wednesday).*—A Recital of Pianoforte Compositions by Brahms.—Miss FANNY DAVIES (pianist).

FREDERICK NIECKS,

*Reid Professor of Music.*