

A Survey of Rarely Performed Piano Transcriptions from the 19th and 20th Centuries

by

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ABSTRACT

This research document focuses on rarely performed piano transcriptions. A total of 28 works are discussed. These works have high artistic value and should not be forgotten by pianists. Most of the transcribers are renowned pianists, such as Harold Bauer and Alfred Cortot, or composers themselves. Unfortunately, these works are seldom played in today's public concerts, or on online resources such as YouTube, Vimeo, or iTunes. Some people may think these works are neglected because the scores are hard to find, but they can be easily obtained online. Pianists around the world can access these scores in just a few minutes via the Internet.

In this research document, I discuss the transcriptions one by one. First, I introduce the background of the pieces, the composers, and the transcribers. Then, through comparison of the original pieces with the transcribed ones, I discuss the approaches of transcription and highlight the special features of each work. Finally, I recommend the concert occasions appropriate for the transcriptions based on their characteristics. I offer many musical examples from the works discussed. These excerpts should help the pianist to understand the style and technical difficulty, as well as to decide if the work meets their programming needs.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research document addresses the genre of piano transcriptions. In music, transcriptions are defined as works re-created from their original format. The re-creation is focused on the transformation of each work into an arrangement for a different instrumentation. After the rescoring, the original character of the works should still be recognized.

Transcription is said to be one of the earliest art forms. As a time-honoured art, transcriptions flourished under J. S. Bach (1685-1750), evolved with Franz Liszt (1811-1886), Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924), and Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), and even exist to this day.¹ Even though there were some transcriptions that were made for practical purposes, such as reduction of orchestral scores or re-assignment of instruments, many transcriptions were composed for artistic reasons. Egon Petri (1881-1962), one of the greatest performers of transcriptions, stated his view on them:

I think that all transcriptions should be considered as the transcriber's additions or interpretation, rather than the faithful reproduction of the original into another medium...It can all be reduced to the problem of whether the end justified the means, whether the

¹ Hinson, Maurice. *The Pianist's Guide to Transcriptions, Arrangements, and Paraphrases*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990, p. ix.

psychological disruption of an entity is counter-balanced with a new vital expression...²

The most famous study of piano transcriptions is Maurice Hinson's *The Pianist's Guide to Transcriptions, Arrangements, and Paraphrases*.³ Hinson introduces many transcriptions to musicians, but there are many other works he does not mention. Many of these missing works, with exquisite arrangements, are suitable to be performed even today.

The goal of the study at hand is to create a larger picture of piano transcription by examining unknown repertoire suitable for concert performances. The works have been chosen according to these features:

1. Suitability for performance: Transcriptions that were composed for concert performance and still are useful for that today.
2. Lyrical pieces: Although some works were not re-created for virtuosos, their artistry is still worth remembering.
3. Accessibility: The scores of the works selected for discussion can be obtained with ease online, primarily through the International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP).

² From MCA Westminster record jacket 1414. Egon Petri. *Egon Petri Plays Liszt (The Famous Piano Transcriptions)*. NY: MCA Westminster, 1956. CD.

³ Hinson, Maurice. *The Pianist's Guide to Transcriptions, Arrangements, and Paraphrases*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990, p. ix

4. Musical style: in the 19th century, a large number of musical works were transcribed liberally due to the needs of performers. In addition, the mechanism of the piano after the 19th century is closer to that of the modern piano. The technical improvements enabled more freedom to transcribe new works and to adapt them for modern concerts.

In the following chapter, I will describe each transcription's difficulty, its type of arrangement, and duration. According to those three attributes, pianists can easily choose any appropriate work. Musical examples from the transcriptions are included to convey style and tempo and thus the overall musical character.

It is hoped that this study will be useful not only for pianists, but also for musicians of other specialties, such as composers, arrangers, and musicologists. The works discussed here could also serve as the basis for a larger anthology of neglected piano transcriptions.

CHAPTER 2

Selected Works

In this chapter, I will discuss 28 wonderful transcriptions. First I will list the difficulty, type and duration of each piece. Medium difficulty is equivalent to the difficulty of the first movement of Mozart's piano sonata K. 283; Advanced is equivalent to the difficulty of many of Chopin's Etudes. As for types, Canadian researcher Glenn Colton's approach of classification is adopted. He indicates three terms in his thesis "The Art of Piano Transcription as Critical Commentary."⁴ If the notes of the original are transferred to the piano texture exactly and completely, without any changes or additions, the result is called a **transposition**, which means "literal transcription."⁵ If the author of the adaptation makes significant changes in texture, rhythm, melody or harmony, but at the same time preserves the general outline of the original piece, the result is called a **transcription**. If the transcriber just uses the original theme as the material for free recomposing (that is, the work is like a fantasy based on the established theme) the result is called a **paraphrase**. So, the performers can choose appropriate types of transcription based on the style of concerts. For example, transposition is the most conservative, and is usually suitable for concerts about particular composers. The performance is not intended to show the ideas or skills of a composer through the transcribed pieces, but to display the pieces of the composer in other types of music and form contrast with other pieces. If a performer hopes to arrange a fancy and showy piece at the end of a concert, a

⁴ G. D. Colton. *The Art of Piano Transcription as Critical Commentary*. Ontario: McMaster University, 1992, p. 63.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

paraphrased piece will be more suitable, because paraphrased works are based on those familiar to listeners and will leave a deep impression among listeners through free transcription. Finally, duration represents the time. I will provide many examples for each piece, through which readers can learn about the texture and tempo of the works. Based on this information, a performer can quickly judge whether it is acceptable to include the transcribed piece into his concert. That is the main purpose of the document.

J. S. Bach-Bauer: Aria No. 7, “Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen,” from the Cantata *Schwingt freudig euch empor*, BWV 36

Difficulty: medium

Type: transcription

Duration: 3 min

The cantata *Schwingt freudig euch empor* (Soar Joyfully Upwards) was written by J. S. Bach in 1731 in Leipzig. According to the Gospel, its performance illustrates the entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem, and thus the general mood of the piece is festive according to the jubilation of the people who welcomed the Savior. The aria “Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen” (also with muted, weak voices) is performed by a soprano accompanied by a violin and basso continuo. This cantata features both a lively melody and sincere and introverted religious affection.

While keeping the original style to the greatest extent, the transcription by Harold Bauer (1873-1951) gives full play to the properties of the piano and enriches the harmonic texture of the work. First, Bauer transcribed the music from A major into F major with a version suitable for piano performance in the principle of basso continuo.

The left-hand continuo is similar to the continuo part of the music, but occasionally and slightly revised without altering the harmony. For example, the last three notes in the first measure of the original music were G#-E-D, and later became Bb-C-Bb in the transcribed piano piece. By contrast, Bauer adopted Bb-C-Bb in his version without altering harmonic structure. If other voices of the music remain unchanged and the lowest pitch is E, this harmony cannot be performed by piano.

Besides some changed notes, Bauer also added chords in downbeats of the continuo part, highlighting the beats. Generally, pedals are required in piano performance to achieve such an effect, therefore, they often appear in the music score. The combination of pedals and left-hand chords presents a romantic style. As a result, the transcription of this work combines the Baroque with the Romantic styles, keeping its original style and exerting advantages of piano. It indeed challenges the performer in deep understanding of Baroque style and Romantic style.

4. Aria

Example 1: J. S. Bach: Aria No. 7, “Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen,” from the Cantata *Schwingt freudig euch empor*, BWV 36, mm. 1-6

Sempre semplice e legato ♩ = 120

p
con Ped.

5 4 1
5 5

ped. *ped.* *ped.*

Example 2: J. S. Bach: Aria No. 7, “Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen,” from the Cantata *Schwingt freudig euch empor*, BWV 36, mm. 1-7, transcribed by Bauer

From measure 17, Bauer lifts the theme by an octave to highlight the melody in piano performance and widen the range of the continuo part. The performance of the medium and higher register with *una corda* contributes to a transparent sound and better dynamics and density of harmony from measure 28. This demonstrates again that Bauer presents the work in a way more suitable for piano performance with original style.

13

auch mit ge-dämpften, schwachen Stimmen wird Gottes Ma - je - stät ver-ehrt, mit ge-dämpf-ten, schwa-chen Stim-men

16

mit ge-dämpf-ten, schwachen Stimmen wird Gottes Ma - je - stät ver-ehrt _____, auch mit ge-

Example 3: J. S. Bach: Aria No. 7, “Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen,” from the Cantata *Schwingt freudig euch empor*, BWV 36, mm. 13-18

The image displays a musical score for J.S. Bach's Aria No. 7, BWV 36, mm. 18-31, transcribed by Bauer. The score is presented in five systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is G minor (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ornaments (marked 'Orn.'), and dynamic markings like *pp*, *sempre pp*, and *poco cresc.*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. The transcription includes specific performance instructions like *una corda* and *tre corde*. The score is highly detailed, showing intricate patterns in both hands, including triplets and sixteenth-note passages.

Example 4: J. S. Bach: Aria No. 7, “Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen,” from the Cantata *Schwingt freudig euch empor*, BWV 36, mm. 18-31, transcribed by Bauer

So Bauer excels at the transcription that integrates the original music style with some new elements. Due to its Baroque and romantic style and high reputation, this work

can attract a listener's attention, and should be arranged before romantic grand music works in a concert or for encore. It surely can gain a sound performance effect.

J. S. Bach-Bauer: "Komm, süßer Tod," BWV 478, from *69 Sacred Songs and Arias*

Difficulty: medium

Type: transcription

Duration: 5 min

The song for voice and bass continuo "Komm, süßer Tod" (Come, Desired Death) is among the *69 Sacred Songs and Arias* that Bach included in the collection *Musikalisches Gesangbuch* published by Georg Christian Schemelli (ca. 1676-1762) in 1736. The work, which expresses the expectation of death and efforts toward heaven, is written based on the text of an unknown author. Admiring the beauty of Bach's spiritual songs, the composer's biographer, Albert Schweitzer, wrote: "Whoever was thrilled at the sounds of "Komm, süßer Tod or Liebster Herr Jesu" knows how infinitely beautiful these melodies are."⁶

This song is one of the most popular works of J. S. Bach and has repeatedly attracted the attention of transcribers throughout the past two hundred years. It was arranged for various instruments by composers such as Bauer, Max Reger (1873-1916), Leopold Stokowski (1882-1977), Knut Nystedt (1915-2014), and Virgil Fox (b. 1980).

Originally written for voice and basso continuo, this work was transcribed by Bauer based on the texture of chorale and is also a type of transcription just like most of his

⁶ A. Schweizer. *Johann Sebastian Bach*. Trans. from German. Y. Druskin. M.: Music, 1965, p. 19.

works, which features the original style and new elements. The transcribed version tends to be in a style of organ rather than vocal music. Played by piano, its grand harmony sounds more solemn and sacred. Bauer sets the original melody three times, each time with a different texture. This allows him to expand the short song into a five-minute long piece of music. In the first section, seen below, the style most closely resembles the chorale.

Johann Sebastian BACH
(1685-1750)

Voix
Komm, süßer Tod, komm sel'ge Ruh!

B. C.
6 5 8 7 6 5

5
Komm führe mich in Friede, weil ich der

6 6 6 5 5 4+ 6

Example 5: J. S. Bach: “Komm, süßer Tod,” BWV 478, from *69 Sacred Songs and Arias*,
mm. 1-8

Adagio ♩ = 50

p legato

con pedale

Example 6: J. S. Bach: “Komm, süßer Tod,” BWV 478, from *69 Sacred Songs and Arias*,
mm. 1-7, transcribed by Bauer

In the next iteration of Bach's song, Bauer uses thicker chords and a contrapuntal texture to create variety within the repetitive form.



Example 7: J. S. Bach: "Komm, süßer Tod," BWV 478, from *69 Sacred Songs and Arias*, mm. 24-27, transcribed by Bauer

In the final section of the transcription, Bauer no longer employs counterpoint but instead returns to the chorale-style texture, using thicker chords and greater dynamics to create a climax to the work.



Example 8: J. S. Bach: "Komm, süßer Tod," BWV 478, from *69 Sacred Songs and Arias*, mm. 39-50, transcribed by Bauer

In this case, Bauer repeated the work three times in three different effects through the design of counterpoints and increased texture. That keeps the work consistent in style

yet varied to some extent. The dark color is slightly brightened only at the end. Generally, the interpretation of the Bach song by Bauer is sustained in the aesthetics of Romanticism: death, as something material and even living, is invisibly present next to a person. The work is also quite romantic: the large-scale chords of the middle register, with organ color and power, remind one of the best pages of Liszt's late piano works. The prominent Soviet pianist and pedagogue Grigory Kogan (1901-1979) made the following observation based on the example of transcriptions of Bach's D-minor toccata: “neither loyalty to the letter of the original, nor disregard for its style can give an artistically full result. Such a result is obtained only with the creative re-creation of the ‘letters’ of the transcribed work on the basis of deep penetration into the spirit of “re-written” music.” It is also true in relation to this treatment by Bauer, who rewrote Bach's work.

As the work sounds more like organ performance, it can be performed together with a transcribed organ work in a recital, such as Liszt’s transcriptions of prelude and fugue composed by J. S. Bach. This would create an amazing performance.

J. S. Bach-Blech: Largo from the Sonata for Violin and Cembalo in C Minor, BWV 1017

Difficulty: medium-advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 4.5 min

The Sonata for Violin and Cembalo, BWV 1017, was written by J. S. Bach in the period 1717-23. Its first movement, Largo, is a Siciliana, an ancient form of Dance music that originated from Sicily, Italy in the 17th and 18th centuries. The 6/8 meter is a

consistent trait of the siciliana, along with a relaxing melody. Dominated by dotted rhythm, the accompaniment consists mostly of broken chords. The typical Siciliana dance music style is apparent throughout the work.

The transcription is composed by German composer Leo Blech (1871-1958). Blech mainly changed the arrangements of the two instruments and did not add excessive new elements. In the original music, the cembalo part has three main materials, including 1) left-hand notes in downbeats, which make up the progressive descending sound type or establish the progression of harmony; 2) right-hand continuous sixteenth notes, and 3) left-hand broken chords. In Blech's transcription, the arrangements of the three parts were slightly changed, making the music more suitable for piano performance. For example, the continuous sixteenth notes were moved to the continuo part and thus farther from the register of the main melody, better separating the main melody from the accompaniment. The notes in left-hand downbeats, such as the progressive descending notes established at the start, were placed at the beginning of the sixteenth notes, which highlights these notes effectively. Finally, the harmony made up of broken chords was moved into the alto part. Through the rearrangements of different voices, the work is more suitable for piano performance while maintaining the original style of the music. Moreover, the transcription challenges a pianist to control the different tone color of alto and treble voices to make the notes present different timber, while the left hand controls two vocal voices, including the progression of melody (the harmony consisting of the sixteenth notes) and the progression of harmony (the first sixteenth notes in downbeats can be viewed as the progression of another vocal part). The elements make the use of pedals important in performance and require stress and extension of the first sixteenth notes in

each beat. Moreover, as the range of left-hand part is close to that of right-hand part, pedals cannot be used excessively as huge sounds will blur the main melody.

The image shows the first system of a musical score for Example 9. It consists of two staves: Violino (Violin) and Cembalo (Cembalo). The Violino part is in the upper staff, marked 'Largo', and features a melodic line with trills (tr) and slurs. The Cembalo part is in the lower staff, featuring a complex rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth notes and slurs. The key signature is C minor (three flats) and the time signature is 8/8.

Example 9: J. S. Bach, Largo from the Sonata for Violin and Cembalo in C Minor, BWV 1017, mm. 1-8

The image shows the second system of a musical score for Example 10. It consists of two staves: Violino (Violin) and Cembalo (Cembalo). The Violino part is in the upper staff, marked 'Largo', and features a melodic line with trills (tr) and slurs. The Cembalo part is in the lower staff, featuring a complex rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth notes and slurs. The key signature is C minor (three flats) and the time signature is 8/8. There are dynamic markings 'p' and 'mf' in the Violino part, and asterisks (*) in the Cembalo part.

Example 10: J. S. Bach, Largo from the Sonata for Violin and Cembalo in C Minor, BWV 1017, mm. 1-7, transcribed by Blech

Sometime, Blech just changed the arrangements of voices in the original music, and performed the violin part in octaves to created a *crescendo*, such as measure 22. However, no excessive materials were added. While keeping the original style of the music to the largest extent, the change proves effective in performance. Meanwhile, the transcribed music is also a big challenge to performers, as two of the three voices are close to each other, and that requires good control to play different colors in different voices.



Example 11: J. S. Bach, Largo from the Sonata for Violin and Cembalo in C Minor, BWV 1017, mm. 17-24



Example 12: J. S. Bach, Largo from the Sonata for Violin and Cembalo in C Minor, BWV 1017, mm. 20-25, transcribed by Blech

Despite slight changes of materials, through the rearrangement of voices and use of pedals, the work has a strong romantic style besides the obviously identified Baroque style. It can be said to be a piece of Baroque work recreated with romantic methods, and is a form of transcription. In a recital, it will produce good results if arranged before Baroque or romantic musical works. Of course, if a concert is dominated by Baroque works, it is proper to arrange the transcription as an encore.

J. S. Bach-Stradal: Second Movement of Organ Sonata No. 4, BWV 528

Difficulty: medium-advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 5.5 min

The Organ Sonata No. 4 in E minor, BWV 528 is part of a cycle of six sonatas written in the second half of the 1720's, possibly as pedagogical pieces for Wilhelm

Friedemann Bach (1710-1784). These sonatas are typical for the style of the early Leipzig period of Bach, beautiful in thematic invention and composition.

In the original organ version, the work was not complex in texture. An excellent pianist can perform with the organ score without conflicts among voices.

43

Andante.

Example 1: J. S. Bach, Second Movement of Organ Sonata No. 4, BWV 528, mm. 1-9

However, a transcription that just changes organ music into piano music will not give full play to the ability of piano. How to keep the original style of the music and make it more suitable for piano performance is a big challenge for the transcription of such works.

Each composer has a different way to settle this issue. The author of this transcription is Czech pianist and teacher Antonio Stradal (1860-1930), a friend and student of Liszt. He is known for a significant number of piano transcriptions of symphonic and organ music — Bruckner's five symphonies, all of Liszt's symphonic poems, and selected works by J. S. Bach, Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707), W. A. Mozart (1756-1791), and Beethoven (1770-1827). Stradal's transcriptions tend to maintain the original music structure as much as possible and introduces octave when necessary. This makes it easier for listeners to identify the original work and for pianists to present the work more clearly through the use of pedals. The approach is similar to that adopted by Bauer and is also a form of transcription.

How to play in a romantic style while keeping the original Baroque style is a big challenge for performers. Take the beginning of the music for instance: obviously Stradal just changed the original type organ music into piano solo. The texture poses a challenge to a pianist's ability to control voices. As the soprano voices are very close to the alto voices, only good control can differentiate the two voices clearly.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano accompaniment. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first system is marked "Adagio." and "p molto cantabile". It features a melodic line in the treble clef with fingerings (5, 4, 5, 4, 2, 5, 4, 3, 4, 3) and a bass line with ornaments. The second system is marked "sempre p e cantabile" and includes complex fingering patterns such as (3 4 5 3), (2 1 4 1), (3 4 5 3), (2 1 4 1), and (3 4 5 3). The third system continues the piece with similar fingering and ornamentation. The notation includes slurs, ties, and various rhythmic values.

Example 13: J. S. Bach, Second Movement of Organ Sonata No. 4, BWV 528, mm. 1-6, transcribed by Stradal

As the music develops, a thicker texture is needed. For example, at the beginning of measure 11, through the change of some notes into octaves and the use of pedals, the texture is enriched, giving the work greater sound effects. Properly controlled pedals will make the work sound like an authentic and romantic organ piece without losing the original Baroque style.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano transcription of J.S. Bach's Organ Sonata No. 4, BWV 528, measures 11-13. The first system shows a treble and bass clef with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a *cresc.* marking. Fingerings are indicated above the notes: 7, 3, 4, 5, 3, 2, 2. The second system shows a treble and bass clef with a dynamic marking of *f*. Fingerings are indicated above the notes: 3, 2, 2, 3, 4, 5, 3, 2, 3. Both systems feature asterisks and 'rdo.' markings below the bass line.

Example 14: J. S. Bach, Second Movement of Organ Sonata No. 4, BWV 528, mm. 11-13, transcribed by Stradal

A long texture-dynamic swell allows the transcriber to make a spectacular dynamic decline in the final measures, thus returning to the original image.

Example 15: J. S. Bach, Second Movement of Organ Sonata No. 4, BWV 528, mm. 22-27, transcribed by Stradal

This way of transcription is frequently used by composers when rewriting organ works, in which the sequence of voices is changed when necessary, and octaves are used to create huge sound effects. Performance with the use of pedals better highlights the properties of a piano. Such a way is popular in the works of J. S. Bach transcribed by Bauer or Liszt. After transcription, the music has a strong organ color but a generally calm style. So, I suggest it can be arranged before a grand organ transcription in a recital, such as Liszt's transcribed version of Prelude and Fugue by J. S. Bach, or a large piece of

work with complex voices, such as Variations on a theme of Corelli by Rachmaninoff. That will avoid the sudden change of music styles and form contrasts between works.

Beethoven-Liszt: Vocal Cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98

Difficulty: medium

Type: transposition-transcription

Duration: 14 min

Beethoven's song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* (To the Distant Beloved), a musical setting of the words of physician and amateur poet Alois Jeitteles (1794-1858), was completed in April 1816. With this cycle, Beethoven essentially created a new genre: a through-composed song cycle interconnected by poetic and musical content, which proved to be very popular and influential during the Romantic Era. As Robert Cummings points out, "It was the first major effort written in a through-composed style, eventually exerting a great influence on the lieder of Schumann and many later composers."⁷ Unlike the numerous cycles of the romantics, Beethoven's six songs pass from one song to another without interruption, culminating in a repetition of the initial song. Thus, the subtitle *Liederkreis* (Song Cycle) in this case acquires a literal meaning.⁸

The content of the poems - love lyrics associated with poetic images of nature - is reflected by Beethoven with amazing inspiration and perfection. The music of the cycle, filled with bright sincerity and chaste purity, charms with beautiful melodies, and the

⁷ R. Cummings. Ludwig van Beethoven. *An die ferne Geliebte*, Song Cycle for Voice and Piano, Op. 98 [Electronic resource]. Access mode: <https://www.allmusic.com/composition/an-die-ferne-geliebte-song-cycle-for-voice-piano-op-98-mc0002369069> Access date: 01/17/2019.

⁸ *Ibid.*

colorful sound of the accompaniment, with beauty and penetration, immeasurably rises above the sentimental text of Jeitteles.⁹

A piano transcription of the Beethoven cycle was done by Liszt - an unsurpassed master of transcriptions and paraphrases. Liszt transcribed many pieces, including 50 works of Schubert, 19 of Beethoven, 15 of Schumann, 12 of Weber and Rossini, 9 of Mendelssohn, 6 of Chopin, and songs and romances of Russian composers. In most transcriptions, he maintained the original style of music while introducing many new elements, making the works sound like recreations based on certain themes. Although the changes belong to transcriptions, Liszt did that more obviously than Bauer during his transcriptions of J. S. Bach's works. That is, Liszt altered the music to a larger degree. Moreover, he made more complex changes that belong to paraphrase. That indicates Liszt is not a conservative composer as far as transcription is concerned.

But in this work, Liszt was relatively conservative in transcription. Many of the six compositions can be said to be transpositions. That is, they involve few changes when compared with the original music, and can be just viewed as being performed on another instrument. Such a conservative approach is rare in Liszt's transcriptions. For example, the second song is almost the same as the original one and is a form of transposition.

⁹ Ibid.

Nº 2.

Poco allegretto.

Vers les flots de ver-meil D'où le
Wo die Ber-ge so blau aus dem

pp
Ped. *

char du so-leil, Sort en vainqueur, Vers les ci-mes d'a-zur. Où le
ne-bli-gen Grau schau-en her-ein, wo die Son-ne ver- glüht, wo die

pp

Example 16: Beethoven, No. 2 of Vocal Cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, mm. 1-12

II

Poco Allegretto

Wo die Ber-ge so blau aus dem
8^{va} ad lib.

pp *una corda* *8^{va} ad lib.*

ne-bli-gen Grau schau-en her-ein, wo die Son-ne ver-
8^{va} ad lib.

pp *8^{va} ad lib.*

Example 17: Beethoven, No. 2 of Vocal Cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, mm. 1-11,

transcribed by Liszt

The 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th songs involve the fewest changes based on the original style, and are the piano versions of the original music. They raise the vocal line by an octave higher or lower at most for performance needs. The original music by Beethoven is easily matched with the transcribed version of Liszt. So, the transcriptions can be viewed as transpositions.

Chantre ai - lé de
 Wird sie an den

la ra - mé - e, Qui bien - tôt vas fuir nos bois, Por - te vers ma
 Bü - schen ste - hen, die nun herbstlich färb und kahl, klagt ihr, wie mir

pp

cresc.

Example 18: Beethoven, No. 2 of Vocal Cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, mm. 23-29

Was sie an den Bü-schen ste-hen,

die nun herb-st-lich falb und kahl, klagt ihr, wie mir ist ge-sche-hen, klagt ihr, Vög-lein, ritard.

Example 19: Beethoven, No. 2 of Vocal Cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, mm. 23-31, transcribed by Liszt

As far as approaches of transcription are concerned, the 1st and the 6th compositions involve slightly bigger changes and can be viewed as transcriptions. Compared with the other four compositions, they give better play to the properties of a piano. For example, the first composition is not changed much at the beginning.

No 1.

Assez lent et expressif.

CHANT.

PIANO.

Du ver - sant de la col - li - ne, Dans cet ho - ri - zon loin -
Auf dem Hü - gel sitz'ich spä - hend in das blau - e Ne - bel -
tain, Où mon â - me te de - vi - ne, Mon re - gard te cherche en vain!
land, nach den fer - nen Triften se - hend, wo ich dich, Ge - lieb - te, fand.

p *espressivo* = *dim.*

Example 20: Beethoven, No. 2 of Vocal Cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, mm. 1-10

I

Andante espressivo

Auf dem Hü - gelsitzich spä - hend in das blau - e Ne - bel - land, nach den fer - nen Trif - ten

se - hend, wo ich dich, Ge - lieb - te, fand. Weit, bin ich von dir ge -
cantando

p *espressivo* *dim.* *p*

Example 21: Beethoven, No. 2 of Vocal Cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, mm. 1-11,
transcribed by Liszt

As the piece progresses, Beethoven uses smaller subdivisions and stringendo to create rhythmic excitement; Liszt's transcription adds to this pianistic elements to bring it alive as a solo piece. For example, from measure 41, the music becomes more exciting, because octaves are used to create greater sound effects in the transcribed piano version, and the right-hand chords in the original version are played by both hands. From measure 48, the left-hand changes a lot, with the original octaves enriched. The approach of transcription also poses a challenge to performance. However, the music is more suitable for piano solo while highlighting right-hand melodic lines and left-hand low pitches. The larger distance between the ranges makes the layers of sounds easier to identify.

Car la stro - phe har - mo - ni - eu - se, Comme l'ai - gle, prend l'es - -
 Denn vor Lie - - des klang ent - wei - chet je - der Raum und je - de
 sor, Et s'en - vo le, ra - di - eu - se, Sur ses lar - ges ai - les
 Zeit, und ein lie - - bend Herz er - rei - chet, was ein lie - bend Herz ge -

stringendo

cresc.

Example 22: Beethoven, No. 2 of Vocal Cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, mm. 41-48

Denn vor Lie - - des-klang ent-wei - chet je - der Raum und je - de

Zeit, und ein lie - - bend Herz er - rei - chet, was ein lie - bend Herz ge -

l'accompagnamento leggero

cresc.

stringendo

rinforzando

Example 23: Beethoven, No. 2 of Vocal Cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, Op. 98, mm. 41-48, transcribed by Liszt

Similar to the 1st composition, the 6th composition also introduces big changes to make the music more splendid. Apparently, this is a planned design: the first and last compositions involve fancier means of presentation, while the middle compositions keep the original intimate style as much as possible. As the transcription is conservative as a whole, I suggest matching it with other grand piano solo works of Beethoven to produce good results in style contrast.

Borodin-Feinberg: “Nocturne” from String Quartet No. 2

Difficulty: advanced

Type: transcription-paraphrase

Duration: 8.5 min

Alexander Borodin (1833-1887) composed his String Quartet No. 2 in 1881 as a wedding anniversary gift for his wife. The 3rd movement is particularly famous, and is

one of the most performed works of Borodin. The work was transcribed by the famous pianist and composer Samuel Feinberg (1890-1962). As a world-class pianist, Feinberg was quite familiar with the properties of the piano, and many of his transcriptions produce good results in performance. While both the work itself and the transcriber are renowned, it is a pity that the transcription has not been as popular as expected.

Many of Feinberg's transcriptions are paraphrases. They can almost be viewed as brand-new creations inspired by established works or melodies. So, by nature, they are closer to piano solos rather than transcriptions. But this particular work is not totally a paraphrase. Part of it is a transcription. For example, at the beginning, Feinberg keeps the original style and materials of the music, making the work present in a way more suitable for piano solo. But the transcription is more like a paraphrase later. The complex counterpoint and techniques require a pianist to be highly skilled. Complex counterpoints, use of pedals and layered control of tones can be seen in many of Feinberg's transcriptions, and are present in this piece of music.

At the beginning of the work, instead of adding extraneous elements, Feinberg just arranges the original music to make it suitable for piano performance.

Andante

Violin I

Violin II *p*

Viola *p*

Violoncello *Solo.* *cantabile ed espressivo*

segue

Example 24: Borodin, “Nocturne” from String Quartet No. 2, mm. 1-5

The musical score for Example 24 is presented in two systems. The first system shows measures 1 through 4. The tempo is marked 'Andante cantabile ed espressivo' and the dynamic is 'p'. The piece is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (D major). The notation includes a treble clef with a key signature change to two sharps and a bass clef. The bass line features a steady accompaniment of chords and moving lines, with a 'con Ped.' marking. The second system shows measures 5 through 8, continuing the melodic and harmonic development.

Example 25: Borodin, “Nocturne” from String Quartet No. 2, mm. 1-8, transcribed by
Feinberg

But when the theme is repeated by the cello, Feinberg raised the theme an octave higher, and increased the texture of the work by making it played by both hands. That makes the work present layers of changes based on a similar level of dynamics.

6

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vc.

Detailed description: This system shows measures 6 through 10. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). Vln I is mostly silent. Vln II plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Vla plays a similar eighth-note pattern. Vc. has a more complex line with triplets and slurs.

11

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vc.

Detailed description: This system shows measures 11 through 15. Vln I remains silent. Vln II continues with eighth-note patterns. Vla plays chords and eighth notes. Vc. features a triplet in measure 14 and other rhythmic figures.

Example 26: Borodin, "Nocturne" from String Quartet No. 2, mm. 6-15

p

cresc.

a

Detailed description: This system shows the piano accompaniment for measures 6-15. It features a complex texture with many chords and moving lines in both hands. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and crescendo (*cresc.*). An accent (*a*) is marked in the first measure.

Example 27: Borodin, “Nocturne” from String Quartet No. 2, mm. 9-16, transcribed by
Feinberg

From measure 54, the transcription becomes increasingly complex and requires the pianist to be highly skilled in using pedals. During the process in which the string quartet is transcribed into a piano solo, if the cello part involves prolonged sound, pedals are often used to produce the effect. That is, after the left hand finishes the cello notes, it will continue with the viola and violin parts, matched with the cello notes prolonged by the use of pedals. However, if there is too much external sound in harmony and it is impossible to use a single pedal in the whole measure, the original cello pitches are often added in the left-hand performance of the transcribed part. That way, the sound supporting the harmony will not be interrupted even in the case of a pedal change. Take the piano solo for example, a comparison between measures 52-53 shows pedal skills are used to prolong the left-hand low pitch F by three beats in measure 52, and measure 53 introduces many notes in C to prolong the sound effects.

47 **a tempo** **più mosso**
appass. e risoluto

This musical score covers measures 47 to 50. It features four staves: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vc.). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#).
 - **Measure 47:** Vln I has a half note G4 with a *cresc.* marking. Vln II has a half note G4. Vla has a half note G3. Vc. has a half note G2.
 - **Measure 48:** Vln I has a half note G4 with a *mf* marking. Vln II has a half note G4. Vla has a half note G3. Vc. has a half note G2.
 - **Measure 49:** Vln I has a sixteenth-note figure starting on G4. Vln II has a sixteenth-note figure starting on G4. Vla has a half note G3. Vc. has a half note G2.
 - **Measure 50:** Vln I has a half note G4 with a *tr* marking. Vln II has a half note G4. Vla has a half note G3. Vc. has a half note G2.

51

This musical score covers measures 51 to 54. It features four staves: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vc.). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#).
 - **Measure 51:** Vln I has a half note G4 with a *tr* marking. Vln II has a half note G4. Vla has a half note G3. Vc. has a half note G2.
 - **Measure 52:** Vln I has a half note G4 with a *tr* marking. Vln II has a half note G4. Vla has a half note G3. Vc. has a half note G2.
 - **Measure 53:** Vln I has a half note G4 with a *tr* marking. Vln II has a half note G4. Vla has a half note G3. Vc. has a half note G2.
 - **Measure 54:** Vln I has a half note G4 with a *tr* marking. Vln II has a half note G4. Vla has a half note G3. Vc. has a half note G2.

Example 28: Borodin, “Nocturne” from String Quartet No. 2, mm. 47-54

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano transcription. The first system shows a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. It includes dynamics markings *mp* and *mf*, and tempo markings *rall.*, *a tempo*, and *Più mosso appassionato e risoluto*. The second system continues the transcription with trills (*tr*) and slurs. The third system includes fingering numbers *53 5* and *1 2*, along with more trills and slurs.

Example 29: Borodin, “Nocturne” from String Quartet No. 2, mm. 45-54, transcribed by
Feinberg

From measure 133, Feinberg fully demonstrated his superb transcription skills. While keeping the first and second violin melodies, he revised the viola and cello parts to make them grammatically more suitable for piano performance. So, the work is more like a piano piece instead of a transcription. That is, the change is closer to paraphrase rather than transcription. So, a highly experienced performer is needed to interpret the work. In a recital, it will also produce wonderful effects.

131 *risoluto*

Vln I *mf*

Vln II *mf*

Vla *mf leggiero*
pizz.

Vc. *mf*

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 131 to 134. It features four staves: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vc.). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 131 is marked *risoluto*. Vln I plays a melodic line with a triplet in measure 134. Vln II plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Vla plays a pattern of eighth-note chords, with a *pizz.* (pizzicato) instruction in measure 133. Vc. plays a simple eighth-note bass line. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) for Vln I, Vln II, and Vc., and *mf leggiero* for Vla.

135

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vc.

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 135 to 138. It features the same four staves as the previous system. Vln I has a melodic line with a triplet in measure 138. Vln II continues with eighth-note accompaniment. Vla continues with eighth-note chords. Vc. continues with eighth-note accompaniment. The key signature and time signature remain the same.

Example 30: Borodin, “Nocturne” from String Quartet No. 2, mm. 109-114,
transcribed by Feinberg

The image shows a musical score for a piano transcription of a string quartet movement. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems of music. The first system has three measures, and the second system has three measures. The key signature is two sharps (D major), and the time signature is 3/8. The tempo is marked 'meno mosso' and 'Tempo I'. The dynamics are marked 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingering numbers (1-5) for the fingers. The piano part is transcribed to be played on a piano, with the right hand playing the melody and the left hand playing a supporting bass line.

Example 31: Borodin, “Nocturne” from String Quartet No. 2, mm. 133-138, transcribed by Feinberg

Feinberg described transcription as follows:

The task of transcription is, while maintaining the style of the work whenever possible, to convey the nature of the sound of the original by other means. This cannot be done mechanically. To do this, you need to know the means of your instrument well and creatively find adequate forms of rendition and new means of expression.¹⁰

¹⁰ S. Feinberg S. *Pianism as Art*. Moscow: Muzyka, 1969, p. 41.

Borodin's Nocturne, which he transcribed fully, proves that. He keeps the spirit of the original music to the largest extent. Meanwhile, the work breaks the stereotype of transcription, making the transcription more like a piano solo. This is the complex way of transcription, and requires listeners to concentrate. So, I suggest performing it before works that require fast tempo and high skills but have shorter length or less complex voices to contrast it with the next works in both tempo and style or performing it as an independent encore. This piece of music shows the most wonderful transcription skills of Feinberg, but is rarely performed now. It is a pity that it is even less performed among transcriptions. I hope the work will become popular in the future.

Brahms-Jadassohn: "Treue Liebe" and "Parole" from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs*

Gesänge, Op. 7

Difficulty: medium

Type: transposition

Duration: 5 min

The vocal cycle *Sechs Gesänge* (Six Songs) written by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) in 1851-53 is from the early period of his work. Compared with transcriptions of works by Bach or Schubert, composers tend to treat Brahms with great care and avoid changing the contents of his music as much as possible. Therefore, most of his transcriptions belong to transposition. On such a basis, the properties of a piece of work will first determine whether it is suitable for concert performance. Take the six songs in the work for example. Only the first and second ones are suitable for concert performance, and the rest are not good for a concert and will not be discussed here.

These two songs have a lot in common: their plots tell about separation and true love, both miniatures are performed on behalf of girls. The musical embodiment is similar: 6/8 in time signature, lyrical melody, along with the broken chords consisting of sixteenth notes. Both transcriptions were written by Salomon Jadassohn (1831-1902), a prominent German composer and pianist of the second half of the 19th century.

In the first composition, the transcriber proves to be a bold experimenter as he made the biggest change within the scope of transposition. First, octave is introduced in the melody, while some melodic rhythms are simplified to make the music better for piano performance.

Andante con espressione

Singstimme *p*

Ein Mäd - lein saß am Mee - resstrand und
Der A. - bend nah - te, die Son - ne sank am

Pianoforte *pp*

col Pedale

rit. *pp* **a tempo**

blick - te voll Sehnsucht ins Wei - - - te: „Wo bleibst du, mein Liebster, wo
Saum des Him - mels dar - nie - - - der. „So trägt dich die Wel - le mir

rit. *pp*

rit. *

Example 32: Brahms, “Treue Liebe” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Gesänge*, Op. 7, mm. 1-

Andante con espressione. Ein Mägd - lein sass am Mee - res - strand und

col Pedale

blickte voll Seh - sucht ins Wei - - - te: „Wo bleibst du, mein Liebster, wo

rit. *pp*

a tempo

Example 33: Brahms, “Treue Liebe” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Gesänge*, Op. 7, mm. 1-6, transcribed by Jadassohn

As the original music has a flowing rhythm, and the music type is suitable for being directly mixed with the vocal part performed on a piano, the work belongs to transposition and is good for public performance. That's also true with the second composition. However, because of the style of transcription, some parts of the transcribed work are challenging to pianists. For example, in the last beat of measure 7 (Example 35), the rhythm lies in the right-hand G note. But the B in the upper three intervals makes it difficult to highlight the G note. Transposition is conservative in style and is limited in the fluctuations of dynamics. So, I suggest performing the two works right before or after other piano solo works. On one hand, this gives listeners a fresh feeling as piano is used to introduce his compositions; on the other hand, solo works show the properties of a piano better. That is why the contrasts between transcriptions and solo works will enrich the contents of a concert.

Andante con moto

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p

Sie

a tempo

stand wohl am Fen - ster - bo - - gen und flocht sich trau - rig das Haar, der
als der Frühling ge - kom - men, die Welt war von Blü - ten ver - schneit, da

p

col Pedale

Example 34: Brahms, “Parole” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Gesänge*, Op. 7, mm. 1-9

Andante con moto.

f

col Pedale

rit.

p

a tempo

Sie stand wohl am Fen - ster - bo - - gen und flocht sich trau - rig das

p

Example 35: Brahms, “Parole” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Gesänge*, Op. 7, mm. 1-8,
transcribed by Jadassohn

Brahms-Reger/Cortot/Keller: Selected Songs from *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49

Difficulty: medium / medium-advanced / medium-advanced

Type: transposition / paraphrase / paraphrase

Duration: 3 min

This collection of five songs was written to verses of German poets by Johannes Brahms in 1867-68. The second song “An ein Veilchen” (To a Violet) of the group is written to text of 18th century poet Ludwig Höltz (1748-1776). The poem is dedicated to the forest flower symbolizing love: it is difficult to find, but if you manage to find it, the beauty of the flower will heal you from melancholy and give you a tender feeling.

In the vocal miniature of Brahms, the romantic image is embodied in an elegant melody similar in style to folk songs, which is accompanied by fluid piano accompaniment. German composer Max Reger (1873-1916) was heavily influenced by Brahms in music creation. He preferred a style that is loyal to the original music and less extravagant; therefore, his transcribed works mostly belong to transposition and show a mixed style of transcription. Generally speaking, there are fewer works rewritten with the transposition approach that are suitable for public performance. So, only the second and fourth songs compositions are best for performance. The fourth, which is a famous cradle song, has some versions better for performance. These versions are briefly discussed below. For Reger’s transcribed version, only the second song will be discussed here.

On the whole, Reger adopted an approach similar to that used by Jadassohn when transcribing the composition Op.7, in which the vocal part is directly combined with the piano part into a piano solo version.

Singstimme

Andante

Birg, o

Pianoforte

Sehr zart

p

Veil - chen, in dei - nem blau - en Kel - che,

Example 36: Brahms No. 2 from *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49, mm. 1-6

Pianoforte.

Andante.

Sehr zart. (delicatamente)

p

Birg Hide, o sweet

Veil - - chen, in dei - - nem blau - - en Kel - - che, blos - - som, with - in thy pur - - ple cha - - lice,

Example 37: Brahms, No. 2 from *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49, mm. 1-6, transcribed by Reger

The only change made by Reger is to replace the top notes in the accompaniment with notes from the vocal line when the two conflict. That can be seen in measure 4 of the excerpt above, for example. Reger made almost no other changes except that.

The extremely careful attitude of the transcriber toward the musical text of the original is probably explained by the great respect that Reger felt for Brahms as a spiritual mentor.

The fourth song, “Wiegenlied” (Lullaby), is the most famous in the work. A freer approach is found in two treatments of the fourth song of the cycle, done by Alfred Cortot (1877-1962) and Robert Keller (1828-1891). Although the two transcriptions are paraphrases, they have slightly different directions. While Keller’s version was developed with more inspiration from the materials and texture of the original music, Cortot’s version was developed with more inspiration from the melody of the original music. First, let’s compare the beginning of the two works.

Zart bewegt.
 Singstimme. *Teneramente con moto.*
 Pianoforte. *p*

Gu-ten A - bend gut' Nacht, mit
Slumber soft - ly, dear love, 'Neath the
 An-ge ro - sea l'œil bleu, sur les

Ro - sen be - dacht. mit Näg'lein be - steckt schlupf' un - ter die
ro - ses a - bove; Car - na - tions shall keep Sweet watch o'er thy
 bras de ta me - re. Sous la gar - de de Dieu Ferme en paix ta pau -

Example 38: Brahms, No. 4 from *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49, mm. 1-9

Zart bewegt.

Piano.

p *dim.* *ppp* *p*

Red. * *Red.*

dim. *ppp* *p* *ppp*

* *Red.* * *Red.*

im Tempo
ausdrucksvoll

sehr zart

pp

Red. * *Red.* *

Example 39: Brahms, No. 4 from *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49, mm. 1-24, transcribed by Keller

Moderato

p *mp* *pp*

cantando

Example 40: Brahms, No. 4 of *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49, mm. 1-10, transcribed by Cortot

At the beginning, Keller's version makes double notes in the main texture; as the music progresses, there is no notable contrast in either texture or style except in a few parts. This makes the work sound more consistent. However, Keller expands the original piece. The following example shows that two downbeats of the original were expanded to 14 measures. Keller adds new interludes between phrases of the song. The interlude explores the bVI key of C-flat Major, which is foreshadowed by the C-flats in the extended introduction in measures 5 to 8. Meanwhile, the left hand begins to use the triplet with broken chords never seen before; dynamics begins to accumulate in measure 74, gradually pushing the music to a height in measure 81. That is, Keller kept consistent materials as much as possible, but introduced new accompaniment materials and expanded original from measure 70 forward as the climax of the whole music. Therefore, Keller's version is a paraphrase.

Example 41: Brahms, No. 4 from *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49, mm. 66-83, transcribed by Keller

By contrast, Cortot's version moved the melody an octave lower at the beginning, which forms a sharp contrast among the high, middle and lower register. But on the whole, the creation is based on the materials of the original music. Quickly, Cortot developed the music, introducing materials never used in the original music. From measure 19 forward, the flowing sixteenth notes constitutes the main rhythm of the left

hand and expands the accompaniment around the basic melody.

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of two systems of music. The first system shows the right hand with a melody and the left hand with a bass line. The second system continues the piece with dynamic markings 'm.d.', 'm.g. dolce espressivo', and 'p leggero'. The score is in two systems, with the first system showing the right hand and the second system showing the left hand. The music is in a minor key and features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes. The score is transcribed by Cortot.

Example 42: Brahms, No. 4 from *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49, mm. 16-22, transcribed by Cortot

Brahms-Reger: “Alte Liebe” from the Vocal Cycle *Fünf Gesänge*, Op. 72

Difficulty: medium

Type: transposition

Duration: 3 min

The vocal collection *Fünf Gesänge* (Five Songs) was created by Brahms in 1876-77. It is one of the composer’s mature works. The song “Alte Liebe” (Old Love) has notable melodic lines. Brahms arranges the melody and piano accompaniment relative to each other so well that the transcriber need only to insert the melody of the vocal part into the piano part. It is also noteworthy that the original rhythm and texture of the piano accompaniment are maintained throughout the entire song. Such a way of transcription is most preferred by Reger. Because of his extreme respect for Brahms, he tried not to

change the contents as much as possible when transcribing the works of Brahms. All his treatment is an example for following Brahms's ideas exactly in every detail.

Bewegt, doch nicht zu sehr

Singstimme

Es kehrt die dunk - le Schwal - be aus

Pianoforte

p

fer - nem Land zu - rück, die from - men Stör - che

simile legato

Example 43: Brahms, “Alte Liebe” from the Vocal Cycle *Fünf Gesänge*, Op. 72, mm. 1-6

Es kehrt die dunk - - le Schwal - be aus
The dus - - ky swal - - low fly - - eth to -

Pianoforte.

p

fer - - nem Land zu - rück, die from - men Stör - che
wards her nor - - thern home, the song - sters build and

Example 44: Brahms, “Alte Liebe” from the Vocal Cycle *Fünf Gesänge*, Op. 72, mm. 1-6, transcribed by Reger

This approach of transcription combines piano music and vocal music without changing the original work as much as possible, but inevitably involves conflicts between the voice and the piano. So, a choice must be made. Only at the conflicting points will Reger adjust some notes in transcription. For example, on beat 6 of measure 13, shown in Example 44, the right hand plays G-F in the original music. But the notes are slightly different in Reger’s transcribed version. Apparently Reger wished to keep the voice melody intact in the treble line of the piano. So, it is a transposition, in which Reger did not attempt to add in personal ideas, but worked to reproduce the original work as much as possible. The work features notable melodic lines, a strong flow of accompaniment type and expressive contrasts; it is suitable for performance and can be viewed as an independent piece. In a recital, I suggest performing it together with several songs or transcriptions, or before some grand works with sharp contrasts.

die - sem Früh - lings - mor - gen, so trüb ver - hängt und

Example 45: Brahms, “Alte Liebe” from the Vocal Cycle *Fünf Gesänge*, Op. 72, mm. 13-

die - sem Früh - lings - mor - - gen, so trüb' ver - hängt und
 morn is warm and clou - - dy, the sky be - dimm'd with

Example 46: Brahms, “Alte Liebe” from the Vocal Cycle *Fünf Gesänge*, Op. 72, mm. 13-15, transcribed by Reger

Carbajo: “Lirios de Nieve” for Flute and Piano

Difficulty: advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 4.5 min

“Lirios de Nieve” (Snow Lilies) was written by contemporary Spanish composer Victor Carbajo (b. 1970). His works are often performed in some European countries, North and South American countries and Australia.

“Snow Lilies” is for flute and piano. The melody in the flute part is beautiful, accompanied with romantic harmony and modulations, filling the work with a strong post-romantic style. It is impractical to fully and loyally transcribe all the contents of the original music into a piano solo. Take the beginning, for example: the flute’s melody covers a wide range while the piano part is filled with big right-hand chords and a left hand that jumps in octaves. We can imagine that there must be a selection of contents during the transcription of a piece of work into a piano solo.

Example 47: Carbajo, “Lirios de Nieve” for Flute and Piano, mm. 1-6

Example 48: Carbajo, “Lirios de Nieve” for Flute and Piano, mm. 1-6, transcribed by Carbajo

The music was transcribed by the composer himself. The transcribed version shows the intricate ideas of the composer. While removing many left-hand notes, the re-written work makes the accompaniment less thick, which better highlights the melody. A similar way of transcription was used in most parts of the work. That is, it is a piano version that faithfully inherits the spirit of the original music without changing any materials. The following musical example is complex and requires big changes, but both the style and the materials used in the work come from the original music. So, the work is a transcription that reduces the original music to make it playable on piano alone. Despite the big changes in some parts, the nature is kept.

25 *a tempo*
rit. *p*
a tempo
rit. *p*

30 *cresc. poco a poco*
cresc. poco a poco

Example 49: Carbajo, “Lirios de Nieve” for Flute and Piano, mm. 25-34

25 *a tempo*
rit. *p*
a tempo
rit. *p*
cresc. poco a poco

30 *cresc. poco a poco*

Example 50: Carbajo, “Lirios de Nieve” for Flute and Piano, mm. 25-33, transcribed by Carbajo

The work includes polyphonic passages. For example, from measure 116 forward, the original melody is presented in a three-voice canon, which poses a challenge to the performers, who need to convey the complex counterpoint clearly.

Musical score for Example 51, measures 115-120. The score is written for Flute and Piano. It consists of two systems of staves. The top system has a single staff for the Flute, and the bottom system has two staves for the Piano (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score begins at measure 115. The Flute part starts with a melodic line marked *p* (piano) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The Piano part features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, also marked *p* and *mp*. The music is polyphonic, with the original melody presented in a three-voice canon.

Example 51: Carbajo, “Lirios de Nieve” for Flute and Piano, mm. 115-120

Musical score for Example 52, measures 115-120. This is a transcription of the original score. It follows the same layout as Example 51, with a Flute staff and two Piano staves. The notation is simplified, focusing on the essential melodic and harmonic lines. The key signature and time signature are the same as in Example 51. The score begins at measure 115. The Flute part is marked *p* and *mp*. The Piano part is also marked *p* and *mp*. The transcription captures the complex counterpoint of the original score in a more accessible format.

Example 52: Carbajo, “Lirios de Nieve” for Flute and Piano, mm. 115-120, transcribed by Carbajo

Therefore, the transcription is necessarily reductive, but the original is so complex that the transcription is still technically difficult. A pianist can demonstrate his or her virtuoso skills through it. We can say that the transcription is filled with the most intricate ideas and is ideal for concert performance.

Carbajo: “Pensive Quixote” for Violin and Piano

Difficulty: advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 10 min

The piece “Pensive Quixote” was written by Carbajo in 2011. The post-romantic melody sounds sad yet pleasant, matched with the use of many dissonant intervals and sounds, the unsteady tonality fills the work with strong conflicts and reflects the contemplation, struggle, dreams, and disillusion inside Don Quixote.

The image shows the first eight measures of the piece "Pensive Quixote" for Violin and Piano. The score is in 4/4 time and marked "Moderato pensieroso" with a tempo of 80-90. The composer's name, VÍCTOR CARBAJO, is written in the upper right. The Violin part begins with a melodic line in measure 1, marked *mp*. The Piano part features a complex accompaniment with arpeggiated chords and moving lines in both hands, marked *p*. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1-3. The key signature changes from one flat to one sharp between measures 5 and 6.

Example 53: Carbajo, “Pensive Quixote” for Violin and Piano, mm. 1-8

Moderato pensieroso ♩ = 80 – 90 VÍCTOR CARBAJO

Piano *mp*

Example 54: Carbajo, “Pensive Quixote” for Violin and Piano, mm. 1-8, transcribed by
Carbajo

The work was originally written for violin and piano and was transcribed by the composer himself into a piano solo. Like “Lirios de Nieve,” the work follows the style and melody of the original music as much as possible during the transcription and is presented faithfully through piano. Despite the changes of many notes, the purpose is to make the work better for piano performance rather than to introduce new music ideas or materials. For example, it is impracticable to perform all the violin and piano parts in the beginning with just a piano. As in mm. 1-8, Carbajo removes the arpeggios from the right hand and replaces them with the violin’s melody. In the climax, such as measure 151, it is impossible to perform all the piano and violin parts at the same time. So, Carbajo chose to remove many right-hand repeated chords, place the violin melody in octaves into the right hand, and add major chords on some beats. The changes are better for piano solo in both sound and technical feasibility.

Example 55: Carbajo, “Pensive Quixote” for Violin and Piano, mm. 151-153

Example 56: Carbajo, “Pensive Quixote” for Violin and Piano, mm. 151-152, transcribed by Carbajo

The work is a transcription, but both performers and listeners will think it is a solo written for piano performance. With a beautiful style filled with conflicting feelings, the transcription is perfect as a major piece of work performed in a concert.

Chopin-Cortot: Third Movement of the Cello Sonata in G Minor, Op. 65

Difficulty: medium

Type: transcription

Duration: 3.5 min

The cello sonata was written by Chopin in 1846. This is one of only nine works by the composer not for solo piano. The Cello Sonata was the last work published by Chopin

during his lifetime. American pianist Charles Rosen regards the Sonata in G Minor as an “undervalued masterpiece.”¹¹

The third movement of the Cello Sonata (Largo) is an instrumental romance. The work was transcribed by Cortot. His process of reduction is similar to Carbaio’s “Lirios de Nieve” for flute and piano, which moves accompanimental arpeggios into the left hand and places the cello melody into the right hand. Because the cello and piano parts have few conflicting notes, combining both parts and slightly adjusting the melody in the piano as warranted will make the work playable by piano alone. Therefore, the work is a transcription with minimal changes. As the work has no complex counterpoint after transcribed, it can be put before a virtuoso vocal transcription or in the encore during concert performance.

¹¹ Charles Rosen. “The First Movement of Chopin’s Sonata in B \flat Minor, Op. 35.” *19th-Century Music*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1990, p. 60.

LARGO.
cantabile.
dolce

p dolce
legato

legato
p dolce

Example 57: Chopin: Third Movement of the Cello Sonata in G Minor, Op. 65, mm. 1-6

Largo - dolce e cantabile

Adaptation pianistique
d' ALFRED CORTOT

mp

p
mp

Example 58: Chopin: Third Movement of the Cello Sonata in G Minor, Op. 65, mm. 1-5,
transcribed by Cortot

Chopin-Sgambati: “Piosnka Litewska” from the Vocal Cycle *Polish Songs*, Op. 74

Difficulty: advanced

Type: paraphrase

Duration: 3 min

The “Piosnka Litewska” (Lithuanian Song) written by Chopin in 1831 is a charming lyrical sketch that is neatly drafted and witty. A mother suspects that her daughter, dressed up in a beautiful dress and a wreath, has spent time with her lover. The resourceful daughter easily dispels all her suspicions. Such a dialogue between a mother and daughter, who dresses suspiciously elegantly, can be found in the folklore of many nations. Chopin used an authentic melody and Lithuanian text in Polish translation. The suggestion of Lydian mode characteristic of the folk music is evident in the introduction.

When seeing the original music, it is hard to imagine how to transcribe it, as the vocal part has many traces of the *recitativo* style. The result will certainly be unsatisfactory if the transcriber just mixes the vocal parts with the piano part.

Allegro moderato. M. M. ♩ = 88.

The image shows a musical score for Chopin's "Piosnka Litewska". The top system is the piano accompaniment, starting with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The tempo is marked "Allegro moderato" with a metronome marking of quarter note = 88. The bottom system is the vocal line, starting with a piano (pp) dynamic. The tempo for the vocal line is marked "M. M. ♩ = 72". The lyrics are "Früh, da im O - sten der" and "Sweet was the morn - ing, and". The piano accompaniment for the vocal line includes a *pp* dynamic and a *p legatiss.* marking.

Example 59: Chopin, “Piosnka Litewska” from the Vocal Cycle Polish songs, Op. 74,
mm. 1-7

Italian pianist and composer Giovanni Sgambati (1841-1914) wrote many wonderful transcriptions, including the famous “Dance of the Blessed Spirits” from *Orpheus and Eurydice* by Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787). As a favourite pupil of Liszt, Sgambati boasted excellent performing skills. So, his transcriptions could maximize the capabilities of the piano. Take the beginning, for example. In measure 7, Sgambati slightly simplified the rhythm of the melody. He expands the broken chords of the original piano accompaniment so that they are now shared by both hands, and the right hand must play accompaniment and melody simultaneously. The resulting voicing is much bigger, changing the simplicity of Chopin’s original song.

Trascrizione di G. Sgambati.

Moderato. (♩=84.)

*riten.
senza arpegg. Jaki Bryles*

PIANO.

mf *P* *leg. col Ped.*

Ped. ⊕ Ped. ⊕

Un poco più moderato (♩=72.)
cantabile ma dolcissimo

pp *riten.* *legato*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

a *a* *mf* *pp*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. ⊕ Ped. ⊕ Ped. Ped.

Example 60: Chopin, “Piosnka Litewska” from the Vocal Cycle *Polish songs*, Op. 74, mm. 1-11, transcribed by Sgambati

From measure 15, the way of transcription begins to change greatly. In the original music, repeated chords are woven with the recitativo style. But after it is transcribed into a piano solo, the repeated chords are thinner, but with constant sixteenth-note arpeggios added. With more broken chords in the right hand, the work becomes more flowing, and sounds more like a piano solo than a transcription. Due to the notably different style, the work is a paraphrase. But compared with other paraphrased works, the work was written based on the original melody and materials and can be said to be a conservative paraphrase.

poco più animato

„Wo kommst du her, feucht sind Haar dir und Wan - gen?“ „Schöpfte Was - ser an der
Gdzieś twój wia - ne, czek na glo - wie zma - cza - la?“ „Kto tak raniuch - no ra -

Quel - - le. Was - ser an der Quel - le Ran - de, da - von sind feucht mir
niuch - - no mu - si mu - si wo - de no - sić Nie dziw że mo - że

pp poco più animato

Example 61: Chopin, “Piosnka Litewska” from the Vocal Cycle *Polish songs*, Op. 74,
 mm. 13-19

Un poco più animato. (♩ = 120.)

legg.

legato

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

cresc.

ri - te - nu - to -

Example 62: Chopin, “Piosnka Litewska” from the Vocal Cycle *Polish songs*, Op. 74,
 mm. 15-20, transcribed by Sgambati

In this transcription, Chopin's song undoubtedly gained a concert scale, and as a virtuoso piece it can easily be performed for an encore. Meanwhile, the work also

requires a performer to have good fingers to control different voices as well as good pedalling skills. Sgambati took a song that looks difficult to transcribe and turned it into a work suitable for a virtuoso to perform, demonstrating his creativity in transforming the original.

Drdla: “Souvenir” for Violin and Piano

Difficulty: medium

Type: transcription

Duration: 3 min

This composition was written by Czech violinist and composer František Drdla (1868-1944) in 1904 and immediately gained great popularity. Kept in the style of salon music of the late Romantic period, “Souvenir” (Memory) is a graceful violin miniature full of elegance and thus justifies its name.

The work is a piano solo transcribed by the composer himself. Generally speaking, a piano solo rewritten by the composer himself is a transcription, not a transposition. The composer, who understands best the idea of the work, summarizes it by reducing the instrumentation to a piano solo. So, most of such works are transcriptions rather than paraphrases. But this transcription involves bigger changes, as the composer did not transcribe his work just to reproduce it in another genre.

However, since the composer chose to rewrite one of his works into a piano solo, he certainly considered that the work is suitable for rewriting. As shown in Examples 64 and 65, Drdla divides the piano accompaniment between the hands so that the right hand can

take over the violin melody. Meanwhile, in the passages with loud sounds, such as measure 9, big chords can be used to exaggerate the change of dynamics.

Franz Drdla.

Violin. *Quietly, not too quick.*
Sordino

PIANO. *Quietly, not too quick.*

The score for Example 63 shows the violin and piano parts for the first ten measures of 'Suvenir'. The violin part begins with a Sordino and a dynamic of *p*. The piano part features a steady accompaniment with dynamics ranging from *p* to *f*. Both parts include tempo markings for *ritard.* and *a tempo*.

Example 63: Drdla, “Suvenir” for violin and piano, mm. 1-10

Piano *Calmato, non troppo allegro*

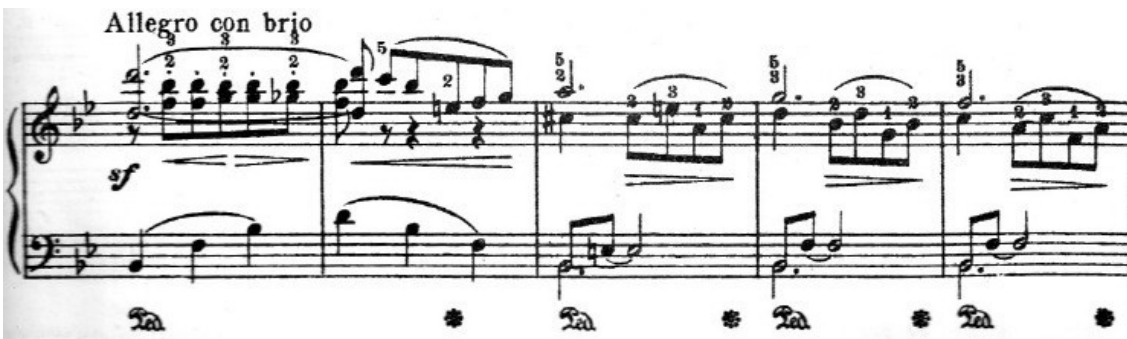
The piano transcription for Example 64 maintains the tempo of 'Calmato, non troppo allegro'. It features a dynamic of *p* and includes a *ritard.* section. The score is marked with *pp* and includes various fingering and articulation markings.

Example 64: Drdla, “Suvenir” for violin and piano, mm. 1-10, transcribed by Drdla

However, a transcribed solo is not necessarily highlighted with more notes, as a reverse operation sometimes happens. Take the beginning of measure 37 for example. The violin passage is very exciting, and the piano part has thicker texture. But if the violin part and the piano part based on both hands are both put in the transcribed piano solo, the sound will be mixed and too large for salon music. Under the circumstances, the composer raised the right-hand notes by an octave and reduced the chords and violin double stops, making measures 37 and 38 less dense. The dynamic mark in the transcribed version is changed from *mf* to *sf*. But the change better reflects the spirit of the original music. As said above, when a composer rewrites his own work, he often prefers to change it into an independent piece of music with the original harmony, melody, and materials, but written idiomatically for piano solo.



Example 65: Drdla, “Souvenir” for violin and piano, mm. 37-41



Example 66: Drdla, “Souvenir” for violin and piano, transcribed by Drdla

This type of salon music can be put before any masterpieces or at the beginning of a recital and will surely be loved by listeners.

Fauré: “Sicilienne” for Cello and Piano, Op. 78

Difficulty: medium-advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 3.5 min

The piece was written by Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) in 1893. It was originally created as an orchestral piece, and the version for cello and piano emerged in 1898. The Sicilienne is among the most popular works of Fauré and therefore often becomes the object of transcription.

The work was transcribed by the composer himself. Fauré was a pianist and wrote many piano solo works. So, if he rewrote a piece into a piano solo, the work must have many properties suitable for rewriting, such as beautiful and notable melodic lines and a piano part that can be reduced to preserve both the solo line and the accompaniment. As said above, most works rewritten by composers themselves are transcriptions. The transcribed version will modify the original while keeping the same melody, harmony and materials. For example, the melody at the beginning is an octave higher than in the cello version, which avoids the conflict between the left-hand accompaniment and the melody; some notes are replaced, such as those in measures 4 and 5. This re-voicing makes the work sound like a mature piano solo rather than a transcription

Andantino $\text{♩} = 50$

VIOLONCELLE *p dolce.*

PIANO *p sempre.*

Example 67: Fauré, “Sicilienne” for Cello and Piano, Op. 78, mm. 1-7

Andantino quasi allegretto. $\text{♩} = 50$

Cantabile.

PIANO. *p sempre.*

Flûte

Harpe

Con Ped.

Cordes

Ped. *

Example 68: Fauré, “Sicilienne” for Cello and Piano, Op. 78, mm. 1-6, transcribed by Fauré

Some passages of the music are dialogues between the cello and the piano. Here the left-hand accompaniment is simplified so that it can take over the cello line in the middle register.

44

mp

49

p

p

Example 69: Fauré, “Sicilienne” for Cello and Piano, Op. 78, mm. 44-52

Example 70: Fauré, “Sicilienne” for Cello and Piano, Op. 78, mm. 44-51, transcribed by Fauré

The famous French philosopher and musicologist Vladimir Yankelevich noted that “If all music is nostalgic in a certain manner, the Sicilienne is nostalgic music par excellence.”¹² The musician based his judgment on the fact that this work embodies a truly existential striving for a certain imaginary place, which is the island of Sicily in the colorful world of the human dream. The nostalgic aspect, which is extremely important in the character of this piece by Fauré, is emphasized in the transcription strictly via use of the piano. The heavy, arpeggiated figurations accompanying the melody from the first measure to the last give the “Sicilienne” the character of woeful thinking and, possibly, reminiscence. Thus, the composer and transcriber in working on the “Sicilienne” follows the principle of “photographic accuracy” in conveying the original duet material, avoiding any additions and changes. Both the composer and the original work are quite

¹² A. Corleonis. “Gabriel Fauré: Sicilienne, for cello & piano, Op. 78.” Allmusic.com. Accessed January 17, 2019. <https://www.allmusic.com/composition/sicilienne-for-cello-piano-op-78-mc0002658457>.

famous. Easily loved by listeners, the work is an excellent piece for recital. It can be played with any other piece of solo work by Fauré or before any romantic master pieces.

Franz-Bendel: “Widmung” for Voice and Piano, Op. 14 No. 1

Difficulty: advanced

Type: paraphrase

Duration: 6.5 min

This song opens the vocal cycle of German composer Robert Franz (1815-1892) “Six Songs” written in 1851. The text of *Widmung* (Dedication) is by the Romantic poet Wolfgang Müller von Königswinter (1816-1873). This song brings peace and tranquillity. From a musical point of view, the miniature is a combination of an expressive but calm vocal melody and a chorale-like piano accompaniment.

Andante espressivo

Oh, thank me not for songs I sing thee! From thee they
O dan - ke nicht für die - se Lie - der, mir ziemt es

came, from thee to me; Thy gift they were, - I on - ly
dank - bar Dir zu sein; Du gabst sie nur, - ich ge - be

Example 71: Franz, “Widmung” for Voice and Piano, Op. 14 No. 1, mm. 1-9

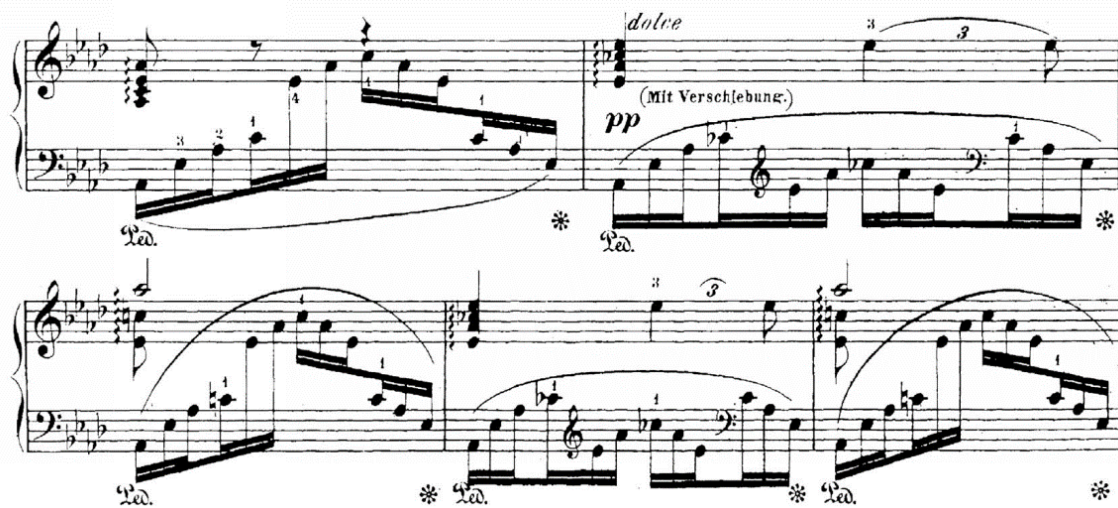
Small in scale, the song covers two stanzas of the text and does not bear any significant contrasts, preserving the emotional structure of grateful tranquillity until the last measures.

The composer Franz Bendel in the latter half of the nineteenth century rewrote the piece into a piano solo that is filled with sincere emotion but is highly embellished and virtuosic. The result is a form of paraphrase and involves big changes. At the beginning of the work, Bendel maintains the chorale style.



Example 72: Franz, “Widmung” for Voice and Piano, Op. 14 No. 1, mm. 1-7, transcribed by Bendel

But quickly, Bendel adds a new melody and a new style of accompaniment, making the work sound like a fantasy based on Franz’s *Widmung*. A dramatic change is seen from measure 15. From the perspective of either the melody or accompaniment, the work is an independent piano solo. In other words, the work is not intended to be a transcription, but a piece created with fresh inspiration.



Example 73: Franz, “Widmung” for Voice and Piano, Op. 14 No. 1, mm. 15-19, transcribed by Bendel

Even when the opening melody returns in 62, the original style is not followed. Sixteenth-note triplets carry over from the first part in a new variation of the theme.

Example 74: Franz, “Widmung” for Voice and Piano, Op. 14 No. 1, mm. 62-67,
transcribed by Bendel

From this part, the work is more like an opera transcription popular in the early 19th century, which involves variation based on the original melody and demonstrates virtuosity through the variation. For instance, the beginning of measure 77 introduces a new variation with a new, active figuration.

Example 75: Franz, “Widmung” for Voice and Piano, Op. 14 No. 1, mm. 77-86,
transcribed by Bendel

The work requires excellent virtuoso skills and dynamics. It lasts for more than six minutes. The relatively slow chorale style in the first 14 measures is followed by continuous sixteenth notes and sixteenth note triplets. We can say that the work includes all the popular dazzling skills associated with variations in the romantic period and is an outstanding concert or competition piece. As a piece of work that has a decorative style but is very strange to listeners, it is ideal as the last piece in the second half of a concert, as it will impress listeners deeply at the end of the concert.

Glazunov: “Petit Adagio” from the Ballet *The Seasons*, Op. 67

Difficulty: advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 3 min

The ballet *The Seasons* by Alexander Glazunov (1865-1936) was created and premiered in 1900. It embodies one of the favorite myths of mankind by means of dance and music - the myth of an eternal resurrection of nature from winter sleep. Ballet music is often performed in symphony concerts. The “Petit Adagio” (Small Adagio) is in the final fourth scene of the ballet (Autumn) and represents a lyrical digression before the onset of a large-scale, life-affirming finale.

Glazunov was an outstanding symphonist of his time, perfectly fluent in the colorful and expressive means of the orchestra. The brightness, expressiveness, and naturalness of the orchestral sound are evident in many of his scores, including the “Petit Adagio.” The piano transcription done by the composer fully reflects these features of his musical talent. The main theme is played by violas and English horn, then violin, with

arpeggiated passages played by harp, a pedal point played by double basses, and chords played by cellos and woodwinds. All these elements are clearly and fully presented in the transcription:

95 Andante mosso. ♩ = 63.

1 Flauto piccolo.

2 Flauti grandi. *p*

Oboe I.

Corno inglese. (poi Oboe II.) *dolce cant.*

2 Clarinetti in A. *p*

2 Fagotti. *p*

I. II.

4 Corni in F. III. IV.

Timpani.

Arpa. *p*

Violini I.

Violini II.

Viole. *dolce cant.*

Violoncelli. *3 soli* *p*

Altri Celli. *p*

Contrabassi. *div. arco* *pizz.*

95 Andante mosso.

Example 76: Glazunov, “Petit Adagio” from the Ballet *The Seasons*, Op. 67, mm. 1-3



Example 77: Glazunov, “Petit Adagio” from the Ballet *The Seasons*, Op. 67, mm. 1-4,
transcribed by Glazunov

It is almost impossible to rewrite a symphony into a piano solo. In the 19th century, many symphonies were transcribed into piano solos. However, that was probably not for public performance, but to make symphonies more accessible to people through the transcriptions.

Transcriptions created by composers themselves were more intended for performance. So, although a composer included as many elements as possible into a transcribed piano solo, the result sounds more like a work created for piano solo rather than a transcription.

In addition to idiomatic symphonic writing, Glazunov was also good at counterpoint and creating an endless melody that flows through the music. Although the polyphony and the orchestral colors create complex voicing, Glazunov reflects all the elements of the music in the transcribed piano piece, which demonstrates his creative ability.

The image displays a complex musical score for a piano piece, consisting of two systems of staves. The first system includes a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and five individual staves. The second system includes a grand staff and five individual staves. The score is written in a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. Dynamic markings are prominent throughout, including *f* (forte), *p* (piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), and *p espress. cresc.* (piano, expressive, crescendo). The notation features various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests. The overall structure suggests a multi-instrument ensemble or a highly detailed piano arrangement.

Example 78: Glazunov, “Petit Adagio” from the Ballet *The Seasons*, Op. 67, mm. 12-14



Example 79: Glazunov, “Petit Adagio” from the Ballet *The Seasons*, Op. 67, mm. 11-14,
transcribed by Glazunov

In summary, Glazunov transcribed a complex symphonic work by keeping the style and main elements of the original music. The transcribed work sounds like a piece written for piano solo rather than a transcription. These features make the work one of the most wonderful transcriptions as well as a piece that cannot be missed in a concert. The piece is not long, so a piece that sharply contrasts it and shows virtuosic skills could follow it in a performance. The sharp contrast will surely leave deep impression on the audience.

Gounod-Bériot/Liszt: “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra

Difficulty: medium-advanced / advanced

Type: transcription / paraphrase

Duration: 4 min / 12 min

This work was created by Charles Gounod (1818-1893) in 1865. It celebrates the memory of the virgin martyr of the 3rd century, Cecilia the Roman. Since the 16th century,

Cecilia has been the patroness of church music, and she is usually portrayed with a small organ in her hands.

Without a complex texture, the original work is mainly for harp and violin, which is occasionally accompanied by other musical instruments. There are two transcribed versions which are discussed here.

The first one is transcribed by Charles-Wilfrid de Bériot (1833-1914), who essentially consolidates the orchestra and the violin part into the piano solo. At the beginning, for example, de Bériot combines the harp arpeggios with the violin melody.

Andante sostenuto assai

The score is for the first five measures of the piece. The tempo is marked 'Andante sostenuto assai'. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The time signature is common time (C). The instruments and their parts are:

- Flûte 1:** Starts with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a whole note B4. Dynamics: *f*, *dim.*, *p*.
- Flûte 2:** Same as Flute 1.
- Hautbois:** Starts with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a whole note B4. Dynamics: *f*, *dim.*, *p*.
- Clarinette en La 1:** Starts with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a whole note B4. Dynamics: *f*, *dim.*, *p*.
- Clarinette en La 2:** Same as Clarinet 1.
- Basson 1:** Starts with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a whole note B4. Dynamics: *f*, *dim.*, *p*.
- Basson 2:** Same as Bassoon 1.
- Cor en Mi 1:** Starts with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a whole note B4. Dynamics: *f*, *dim.*, *p*.
- Cor en Mi 2:** Starts with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a whole note B4. Dynamics: *f*, *dim.*, *p*.
- Cor en Ré 1:** Rest.
- Cor en Ré 2:** Rest.
- Trompette en Ré 1:** Rest.
- Trompette en Ré 2:** Rest.
- Timbales:** Rest.
- Violon Solo:** Rest.
- Harpes:** Starts with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a whole note B4. Dynamics: *f*, *dim.*, *p*.
- Contrebasses:** Starts with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and a whole note B4. Dynamics: *f*, *dim.*, *p*.

Example 80: Gounod, “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra, mm. 1-5

6
Fl. 1

6
Fl. 2

Hb.

6
Cl. (la) 1

6
Cl. (la) 2

6
Bn. 1

6
Bn. 2

6
Co. (Mi) 1

6
Co. (Mi) 2

6
Co. (Ré) 1
p

6
Co. (Ré) 2
p

6
Trp. (Ré) 1
p

6
Trp. (Ré) 2
p

6
Timb.
p

6
Vln. Solo
p cantabile

6
Hpc
p

6
Cb.
p

Example 81: Gounod, “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra, mm. 6-8

The image shows a piano transcription of Gounod's "Hymn to Saint Cecilia" for the first ten measures. The score is written for piano and is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (D major). The tempo is marked "Andante." and the dynamics are "f". The score consists of four systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system includes a "PIANO." instruction. The second system has a measure number "51" above the first measure. The third system is marked "ben sostenuto il canto." and features a melodic line in the right hand with triplets. The fourth system continues the melodic and harmonic development.

Example 82: Gounod, “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra, mm. 1-10,
transcribed by Bériot

However, as the melody sometimes conflicts with the accompaniment, pure duplication cannot produce good results and will go against piano grammar. So, in the right-hand of the accompaniment, de Bériot changed some notes while keeping the original harmony to make it better for piano performance.

In some passages, big adjustments have been made. In measure 57, for example, to meet the needs of right-hand performance, the original ascending and descending arpeggios have become descending only, and the left-hand is reinforced with octaves.

55

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Hb.

Cl. (la) 1

Cl. (la) 2

Bn. 1

Bn. 2

Co. (Mi) 1

Co. (Mi) 2

Co. (Ré) 1

Co. (Ré) 2

Trp. (Ré) 1

Trp. (Ré) 2

55

Timb.

Vln. Solo

Hpe

55

Cb.

p *cresc. molto* *f*

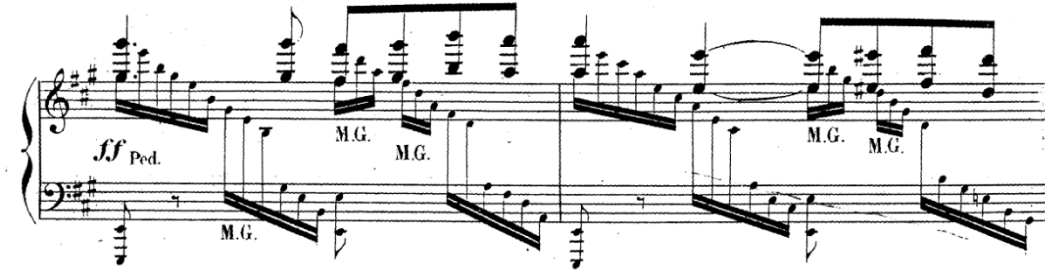
cresc. molto *f*

cresc. molto *ff* *tutta forza*

cresc. molto *ff*

cresc. molto *ff*

Example 83: Gounod, “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra, mm. 55-57



Example 84: Gounod, “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra, mm. 57-58,
transcribed by Bériot

Compared with Bériot’s transcription, Franz Liszt’s transcription can be viewed as effectively a new work, it is so paraphrased. For example, Liszt adds a “Prelude” of 21 measures to the beginning, shown in part in Example 86.

Prélude
Andante (quasi lento)

C p
una corda
p sempre
4 p sempre p un poco espressivo
7 ten. ten.
10 più espr. dim. - - - perdendo

Example 85: Gounod, “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra, mm. 1-12,
transcribed by Liszt

As in de Bériot’s transcription, Liszt combines the harp arpeggios with the violin melody, as shown in Example 87.

22

sempre legato

24

25

Example 86: Gounod, “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra, mm. 22-25,
transcribed by Liszt

The body of Liszt’s transcription consists of a series of variations based on the theme. For example, in measures 38-41, the violin melody is presented in accented octaves against elaborate arpeggios in the right hand and an accompaniment of rolled chords in the left hand.

Example 87: Gounod, “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra, mm. 38-41,
transcribed by Liszt

In addition, complex polyphony is introduced in some variations. For example, from measure 107, an approach similar to *stretto* creates imitation of the melody between the left and right hands.

Example 88: Gounod, “Hymn to Saint Cecilia” for Violin and Orchestra, mm. 107-110, transcribed by Liszt

This transcription is in the form of paraphrase. A chain of variations shows the pianist’s skills and the composer’s infinite ideas, making the work sound very like Schumann’s “Widmung” as transcribed by Liszt. However, the work has a huge scale and the performance lasts about 12 minutes. The special style of music, the virtuoso features and the long performance time make it difficult to program this work in a concert. It is not good enough to be a masterpiece to end a concert, but it is too flashy to be put before some masterpieces. So, I suggest placing the Liszt transcription as an encore. In contrast, Bériot’s transcribed version is quite different. The performance lasts only three minutes, and the texture is not thick. It can be performed at the beginning of a concert or between two masterpieces. Because the two versions are quite different but both excellent works for concert performance, the pianist should select on based on specific needs.

Jensen-Reger: “Murmelndes Lüftchen” from the Vocal Cycle *7 Gesänge aus dem spanischen Liederbuche*, Op. 21

Difficulty: medium

Type: transposition

Duration: 2 min

The song “Murmelndes Lüftchen” (Evening Wind) is the fourth of *7 Gesänge aus dem spanischen Liederbuche* (Seven Songs from the Spanish Collection) and was created by German composer Adolf Jensen (1837-1879) in 1864. This vocal miniature is a lullaby that a mother sings to the accompaniment of the wind: breezes sway the leaves of trees, giving rise to a lulling rustle, and help the mother soothe the child.

The work was transcribed by Max Reger (1873-1916). Like most of his transcriptions, this piece is a transposition. Moreover, due to the way in which the work was written, almost no changes are needed to turn the original vocal and piano music into a piano solo. For example, at the beginning of the song, the voice line is doubled in the left hand of the piano. In other words, in the original music, the piano the piano part is already close to being complete and independent.

Adolf Jensen, Op. 21. Nr. 4.

GESANG.
VOICE.

Con moto, dolce e con tutta tenerezza. *p*

Mur - - -
Mur - - -

PIANO.

pp una corda sin' al fine.

And.

- meln-des Lüft - chen, Blü - ten - wind, der die
- mur - ing breezes, soft - ly sweep o'er the

And. *And.*

Example 89: Jensen, “Murmeldes Lüftchen” from the Vocal Cycle 7 *Gesänge aus dem sanischen Liederbuchelie*, Op. 21, mm. 1-6

18.

Leise bewegt, so zart als möglich.

Mur -

pp Verschiebung bis zum Schluß

And. *espress. e ben marcato*

- melndes Lüft - chen, Blü - ten - wind, der die schö - ne Welt

il canto *And.* *And.* *And.* *And.*

Example 90: Jensen, “Murmeldes Lüftchen” from the Vocal Cycle 7 *Gesänge aus dem sanischen Liederbuchelie*, Op. 21, mm. 1-7, transcribed by Reger

From measure 29 in the original music, the piano part no longer involves a melody. However, due to the texture of writing, it is not difficult to combine the piano and vocal to develop a piano solo. We can say that the work is born to be transcribed into a piano solo.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a vocal and piano piece. The first system shows the vocal line in a treble clef and the piano accompaniment in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has four flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat, D-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line begins with a *p* dynamic marking. The lyrics are: "Heu - - te sollst du, sanf - - ter / Wand'r - - ing ze - phyr's, hear my". The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line with notes marked "Re." and asterisks. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics: "West, Schlum - mer ü - - ber / quest: bring my love sweet". The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns and notes marked "Re." and asterisks. The *p* dynamic marking is also present in the second system.

Example 91: Jensen, “Murmeldes Lüftchen” from the Vocal Cycle 7 *Gesänge aus dem sanischen Liederbuchelie*, Op. 21, mm. 28-34

Example 92: Jensen, “Murmeldes Lüftchen” from the Vocal Cycle *7 Gesänge aus dem sanischen Liederbuchelie*, Op. 21, mm. 29-36, transcribed by Reger

So, the way of writing is a very conservative form of transcription. I suggest performing the work together with other rewritten pieces. Performing works of the same style but rewritten in different ways can make listeners compare the ways of transcription and recognize the changing complexity and contrasts of the music.

Norman: “Cavatina” from the Cycle *10 Karakterstycken* for Violin and Piano, Op. 27

Difficulty: medium

Type: transcription

Duration: 5 min

The cycle *10 Karakterstycken* (10 Character Pieces) for violin and piano was written in 1883 by Swedish composer Ludwig Norman (1831-1885). Little known outside of his native country, this musician was wholly related in the romantic current.

The work was transcribed into a piano solo by the composer himself. Of the ten pieces in Op. 27, he chose only this one for transcription. Careful observation shows the music has notable melodic lines and flowing sixteenth notes. Such works are easier to transcribe and will have good performing effects. Many of the works introduced thus far share the same features. Like many works transcribed by composers themselves, the result is similar to the original, but a closer look will reveal a few revisions. At the beginning of the transcribed version, the original violin part is combined with the piano part. Some notes have been removed from the accompaniment, which does not make it sound thin but rather makes it more easily playable. The transcription has a prominent main melody with harmonic support in the left hand plus flowing sixteenth notes in the middle register. All of these elements make the transcription sound as layered as the original.

Allegretto moderato. Ludvig Norman, Op. 27. H. 2.

Violino. *p con molto espressione*

Pianoforte. *p*
legato

un poco ritard.

un poco ritard.

Example 93: Norman, “Cavatina” from the Cycle *10 Karakterstycken* for Violin and Piano, Op. 27, mm. 1-8

Allegro moderato.

PIANO.

Example 94: Norman, “Cavatina” from the Cycle *10 Karakterstycken* for Violin and Piano, Op. 27, mm. 1-8, transcribed by Norman

Except for the removal of some notes and the re-arrangement of sixteenth notes in the higher register, the transcription involves few changes. The relatively conservative style yields a peaceful work for solo piano. So, the work can be programmed at the beginning of the second half of a concert. On one hand, the pianist can set the mood with a work that requires less difficult skills. On the other hand, listeners will be easily attracted by this unknown but beautiful piece.

Saint-Saëns: “Elegy” for Violin and Piano, Op. 160

Difficulty: advanced

Type: paraphrase

Duration: 5.5 min

In 1920, one year before his death, Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) wrote the violin solo “Elegy.” This was not the first time that Saint-Saëns composed a work with this title, as five years earlier he had composed the Elegy Op. 143. However, neither work

sounds like an elegy. Both in major keys, they did not create a mournful atmosphere and were more like romantic pieces written for the violin. Saint-Saens's transcription involves big changes, which is rare among transcriptions by composers themselves. This work is a paraphrase. That is, the composer conveys the character of the work with the established melody, which he freely accompanies. Saint-Saëns was an excellent pianist. So, the rewritten work gives full play to the properties of the piano and requires virtuoso skills.

The beginning of the piece is similar to the original, without added materials.

The image displays the first nine measures of the score for Saint-Saëns' "Elegy" for Violin and Piano, Op. 160. The score is written in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo and mood are indicated as "Moderato - espressivo". The Violin part (top staff) begins with a *p* dynamic and a melodic line. The Piano part (bottom staves) starts with a *ppp* dynamic, featuring a complex accompaniment of chords and arpeggiated figures in both hands.

Example 95: Saint-Saëns, "Elegy" for Violin and Piano, Op. 160, mm. 1-9

Molto moderato ed espressivo
Cantabile

PIANO
p

l'accompagnement pp

pp
simili

Example 96: Saint-Saëns, “Elegy” for Violin and Piano, Op. 160, mm. 1-7, transcribed by Saint-Saëns

From measure 13 on, the composer does not reproduce the original music and begins to introduce types of accompaniment that are more suitable for piano performance. In measure 13, for example, the original music is dominated by chords. In the piano transcription, the repeated chords are replaced by a new, eighth-note bass line that makes the music sound more flowing. Similarly, the chords in measure 23 are changed into triplets. Finally, the melody is consistently doubled at the octave so that it is clearly brought out.

Musical score for Saint-Saëns' "Elegy" for Violin and Piano, Op. 160, mm. 10-27. The score is in three systems. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a piano accompaniment of chords and a violin melody. The second system includes the instruction *poco a poco cresc.* and features a triplet in the piano part. The third system includes *più cresc.* and a section marked *Poco rit.* and *Poco più lento* with *dim.* and *pp* dynamics. The score concludes with a double bar line.

Example 97: Saint-Saëns, "Elegy" for Violin and Piano, Op. 160, mm. 10-27

Example 98: Saint-Saëns, “Elegy” for Violin and Piano, Op. 160, mm. 12-26, transcribed by Saint-Saëns

Afterwards, the changes become increasingly bigger. Many passages are removed and replaced by new materials. The piece is basically a new one that consists of variations on the original melody, therefore it is a paraphrase. In the following example, measure 44 in the original is the same as measure 43 in the transcription. But the two versions modulate to E major in different ways.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a violin and piano piece. Each system consists of three staves: a single staff for the violin and two staves for the piano accompaniment. The first system begins with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and includes dynamic markings 'dim.' and 'p'. The second system features a key signature change to three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and includes accents. The third system includes the marking 'cresc. e stringendo' and ends with a double bar line and a fermata.

Example 99: Saint-Saëns, “Elegy” for Violin and Piano, Op. 160, mm. 42-52

Example 100: Saint-Saëns, “Elegy” for Violin and Piano, Op. 160, mm. 43-49,
transcribed by Saint-Saëns

The same approach can also be seen in measure 56 in the original, which is equivalent to measure 52 in the transcription. Here, Saint-Saëns introduces new materials into the transcription. He replaces the big leaps in the original violin part with broken octaves, which can create amazingly magnificent effects in piano performance. Similarly, the rhythm is also changed in the violin melody in measure 60 to 61.

Allegro non troppo

marcato

Poco rit.

Poco rit.

Example 101: Saint-Saëns, “Elegy” for Violin and Piano, Op. 160, mm. 56-61

Animato

mf

f

Example 102: Saint-Saëns, “Elegy” for Violin and Piano, Op. 160, mm. 52-57,
transcribed by Saint-Saëns

Therefore, the transcription can be viewed as a solo work with inspiration from the original melody. Compared with paraphrased works, this transcription is relatively conservative. After all, most paraphrased works may retain only several measures of the theme and then begin new development without restrictions from the original. But in this piece, we can see the relations between the two. However, the work goes beyond transcription, as the materials in many passages are exclusive to the rewritten piece and are not seen in the original. The bold ways of rewriting give the work splendid and showy performing effects. As five minutes is not long and the end diminishes quietly, the work is not suitable to be the last piece of the concert. I suggest putting it in the first half or the beginning of the second half, or making it part of the encore. With contrasts among different materials, textures, and dynamics, I believe it will leave deep impression on the listeners.

Schumann-Kirchner: “In der Fremde” from the Vocal Cycle *Liederkreis*, Op. 39

Difficulty: medium

Type: transcription

Duration: 2 min

The vocal cycle *Liederkreis*, which came from the composer’s “year of song,” was written by Robert Schumann (1810-1856) in 1840. Like other cycles of the “song year,” the *Liederkreis* was written under the anticipation of the long-awaited union of the composer with his beloved Clara Wieck Schumann (1819-1896). The cycle includes 12 songs to verses by Joseph Eichendorff (1788-1857). The *Liederkreis* opens with the miniature “In der Fremde” (In a Foreign Land) in which sad reflections of the hero,

deprived of his homeland and of people close to him, are heard. The mournful, narrow-range melody throughout the song is accompanied by simple guitar-type figurations.

The transcription of the song was made by Theodor Kirchner (1823-1903), a German composer of the romantic current, whose piano miniatures are close to Schumann's in style. The song is similar to many of the vocal works discussed above and, like them, it is easy to transcribe. The transcriber only needs to combine the flowing, sixteenth-note accompaniment with the melodic lines, occasionally moving the accompaniment by an octave to make it more playable. For example, the beginning of the transcription has few changes, but in the original version, sometimes there were conflicts between the piano and the voice in the higher register. For example, on the second beat of measure 2, A is sung in the voice right after the same A is played by the piano. If both A's are directly transcribed, the repetition will prevent the melody from standing out.. Kirchner chose to change notes based on the same harmony. That is, the original F#-A is replaced by C#-F#. Such changes do not alter the original style but make the transcription more suitable for piano performance.

Nicht schnell.

Aus der Hei - math hin - ter den Bli - tzen roth da
 kom - men die Wol - ken her. A - ber Va - ter und Mut - ter sind

Mit Pedal.

Example 103: Schumann, “In der Fremde” from the Vocal Cycle *Liederkreis*, Op. 39,
 mm. 1-6

Nicht schnell.

Mit Pedal.

pp

Example 104: Schumann, “In der Fremde” from the Vocal Cycle *Liederkreis*, Op. 39,
 mm. 1-5, transcribed by Kirchner

But in some passages, Kirchner chose to raise or lower the notes by an octave to produce better results from the piano performance. For instance, in measure 16 he raises the chord on beat two by an octave, which separates it from the range of the melody and therefore keeps the melody and accompaniment clearly delineated.



Example 105: Schumann, “In der Fremde” from the Vocal Cycle *Liederkreis*, Op. 39, mm. 16-18



Example 106: Schumann, “In der Fremde” from the Vocal Cycle *Liederkreis*, Op. 39, mm. 14-19, transcribed by Kirchner

On the whole, the changes in Kirchner’s transcribed version are not big. As a conservative form of transcription, the transcribed work is pianistic while conveying the style of the original work as much as possible. I suggest performing it together with some of Schumann’s pieces transcribed by Liszt. That will highlight the contrast among different types of transcription and make the selection of concert works more varied.

Schumann-Reinecke: “Der Nussbaum” from the Vocal Cycle *Myrthen*, Op. 25

Difficulty: medium

Type: transcription

Duration: 3 min

The song “Der Nussbaum” (The Nut Tree) to a poem by Julius Mosen is included in the vocal cycle *Myrthen* (Myrtles), written by Schumann in 1840. Its central image is that of a nut tree growing underneath a window. The nut tree is a source of life-giving coolness; in its thick branches beautiful flowers bloom and whisper to a dreaming maiden about love and the beloved. The poetic image is conveyed by the composer in the combination of a songlike, slightly swaying vocal melody and broad harp-like passages of piano accompaniment.

The work was transcribed by German composer and pianist Carl Reinecke (1824-1910). Like many transcribed vocal pieces, the work consists of the flowing sixteenth notes and the vocal melody. Many transcribed pieces in the same style have been introduced above. Generally, while maintaining the melodic lines and harmony, they combine the piano and the voice with minor changes in the accompaniment as needed.

Reinecke makes a major change in the transcription, however, by adding a 15-measure introduction that connects in measure 12 to a variation of Schumann’s 2-measure introduction. Because the original song is the third of a cycle of 25 songs, a long prelude is not necessary. However, when the song is transcribed into a piano solo, an extended prelude serves to prepare the mood before the vocal melody begins. The additional

prelude introduces new harmonies and obscures the tonality of G Major, which is not solidified until just before the vocal melody begins.

Nº 3.
Allegretto.

p Es grü - net ein Nuss - baum vor dem Haus,
p duf - tig, luf - tig brei - - tet er

Pedale

Example 107: Schumann, “Der Nussbaum” from the Vocal Cycle *Myrthen*, Op. 25, mm.

1-8

Allegretto.

The musical score consists of six systems of piano accompaniment and one system with vocal lyrics. The piano part is written in G major and 6/8 time. It features a variety of textures, including arpeggiated chords, flowing sixteenth-note passages, and sustained chords. Dynamics range from *pp* to *f*. Performance instructions include *cresc.*, *un poco*, *una corda*, and *Tutte le corde*. The lyrics are: "Es grü - net ein Nuss - baum vor dem Haus,". The score includes fingerings (e.g., 2, 3, 4, 5, 2, 3, 4, 2) and articulation marks like slurs and accents. The piano part is marked with *pp* at the beginning and *f* later on. The vocal line is marked with *una corda* and *Tutte le corde*. The tempo is *Allegretto*.

Example 108: Schumann, “Der Nussbaum” from the Vocal Cycle *Myrthen*, Op. 25, mm.
1-17, transcribed by Reinecke

Besides the bold approach adopted for the prelude, the work is on the whole transcribed in a relatively conservative way. Reinecke combines the voice and the piano with few changes and even simplifies the melody. In the examples shown above, measure 3 and measure 4 in the original version are the same as measure 16 and measure 17 in the transcribed version. Reinecke lowered the piano part by an octave in both measures to make room for the melody in the right hand and also to create a fuller sound.

If the pianist can overcome all of the technical difficulties, the beautiful melody will clearly stand out. I suggest putting this transcription at the beginning of a concert to get the attention of listeners and following it with a work in marked contrast to it.

Sibelius-Ekman: “Jägargossen” from the Vocal Cycle *Seven Songs for Voice and Piano*, Op. 13

Difficulty: medium-advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 4 min

The *Seven Songs for Voice and Piano* was composed by Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) in 1891-92, to poems by Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804-1877), the Romantic Finnish poet and author of the text of the national anthem of Finland. The final song of the cycle, “Jägargossen” (Little Hunter), tells about a boy-hunter who does not shoot because he deeply feels the nature around him.

The work has some characteristics suitable for transcription, such as the melodic lines and the flowing broken chords with sixteenth notes in the piano. It is not difficult to combine the vocal with the piano in such type of works, and that makes them easier to be transcribed. Although the work consists of seven songs, only this one was transcribed into a piano solo.

In “Jägargossen” the piano and the voice overlap notes right from the start. In measure 7, where the voice enters, the same G is duplicated in both parts. In the transcription, Ekman replaces the repeated Gs with Ds, freeing the right hand to play the melody while keeping the same figuration.

Jean Sibelius, Op. 13 N^o 7.

Allegro.

Im
Pä

Feld der Vo - gel hau - sen muß, im Wald wirts fin - ster
mar - ken vi - stas fo - getn blott, och löf - ven - skym - ma -

Example 109: Sibelius, “Jägargossen” from the Vocal Cycle *Seven Songs* for Voice and Piano, Op. 13, mm. 1-9

Allegro (ma non troppo). M.M. ♩ = 96.

På mar - - ken vi - - stas fo - - geln blott, och

Example 110: Sibelius, “Jägargossen” from the Vocal Cycle Seven Songs for Voice and Piano, Op. 13, mm. 1-8, transcribed by Ekman

In measures 18-22, Ekman cleverly notates to show where the melody should be played by the left hand. In this way both the voice melody and the piano’s bass melody can be performed together in one hand.

Win - ter nur mit sei - nem wei - ßen Flaum, wie
 hit en - gang med drif - vor i sill - fjät, jag

deut - lich wär' des Schnee.huhns Spur, der Birk - hahn hoch im -
 så - ge bätt - re ri - pans gang och or - ren - høl - le -

mp

Example 111: Sibelius, “Jägargossen” from the Vocal Cycle Seven Songs for Voice and Piano, Op. 13, mm. 16-21

fjät, jag

så - go bätt - re

ri - pans gång och or - ren høl - le trät.

Red. *

1 2 1 5 4

Example 112: “Jägargossen” from the Vocal Cycle Seven Songs for Voice and Piano, Op. 13, mm. 18-22, transcribed by Ekman

If direct combination is impossible, the melody or accompaniment can be raised or lowered by an octave. In the following example, measures 24-25, Ekman moves the voice melody down an octave and divides it between the two hands so that the right hand can preserve its big chords. The registers return to those of the original measures 26-27, and in measures 28-29 the voice melody is again an octave lower, which brings the piano's rising melody to the forefront.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the vocal cycle 'Seven Songs for Voice and Piano, Op. 13' by Jean Sibelius. The first system (measures 24-25) features a vocal line with lyrics in German and Swedish. The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand with large chords and a left hand with a rising melodic line. The second system (measures 26-27) continues the vocal and piano parts, with the piano's rising melody becoming more prominent.

System 1 (Measures 24-25):

Vocal line: Baum. trä't. O wä-ren schon die Bäume kahl, ge-lö-sen ful-la se'n jag säg kan-ske i-nä-sta dal en flock af jür-par re'n. Doch

Piano accompaniment: Right hand has large chords; left hand has a rising melody. Dynamics: *p* (piano).

System 2 (Measures 26-27):

Vocal line: lö-sen ful-la se'n jag säg kan-ske i-nä-sta dal en flock af jür-par re'n. Doch

Piano accompaniment: Right hand has large chords; left hand has a rising melody. Dynamics: *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Example 113: Sibelius, “Jägargossen” from the Vocal Cycle Seven Songs for Voice and Piano, Op. 13, mm. 22-31

The image shows a musical score for the song "Jägargossen" by Sibelius. It consists of two systems of music. The first system features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The tempo marking is *poco più tranquillo*. The lyrics for the first system are: "Om luf-ten vil - le blif - va' sval, och lög - ven fal - la". The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the second system are: "se'n, jag såg kan - ske i nä - sta dal en flock af jär - par re'n Dock". The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings such as *p* and *mf*, and a *con ped.* instruction.

Example 114: Sibelius, “Jägargossen” from the Vocal Cycle Seven Songs for Voice and Piano, Op. 13, mm. 23-31, transcribed by Ekman

The piano music of Sibelius is rarely performed, and so for innovative programming this transcription can be grouped with other solo piano works of Sibelius. For contrast with this transcription, at least one of the other works should be big and virtuosic.

Sibelius-Palmgren: “Svarta Rosor” from the Vocal Cycle Six Songs for Voice and Piano, Op. 36

Difficulty: medium-advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 1.5 min

The vocal miniature “Svarta Rosor” (Black Roses) was written by Sibelius in 1904 to verses by the Swedish poet Ernst Josephson (1851-1906). The poem is about black roses that symbolize sadness. The narrator realizes that black roses are growing in his

heart, he feels the thorn pricks and says that the grief they represent fills him with pain and bitterness.

The song was transcribed by the composer and pianist Selim Palmgren (1878-1951), who was born in Finland. The work has a style similar to other songs examined here, consisting of a vocal line accompanied by fast arpeggios. The arpeggios in this song create agitated movement, supporting the feelings expressed in the poem. In addition to adjusting the registers so that both melody and accompaniment can be played together, Palmgren from the start doubles the melody at the octave. This reinforcement of the melody allows it to stand out despite the big, sweeping arpeggios. In measure 5, Palmgren makes the arpeggio larger, matching the expanded transcription of the voice part. With such a bold approach at the beginning of the song, we can expect even bolder devices later.

Commodo.

Säg hvar - för är du sa
Sag, wa - rum bist du so

led - sen i dag, du, som all - tid är sa lu - stig och
trub - se - lig heut, bist doch all - zeit sonst so hei - ter und

glad? Och in - te är jag me -
froh? Und den - noch bin ich mehr nicht

mp
Con Pedale.

Example 115: Sibelius, "Svarta Rosor" from the Vocal Cycle *Six Songs* for Voice and Piano, Op. 36, mm. 1-6

The image shows a musical score for the vocal cycle "Svarta Rosor" by Sibelius. It consists of three systems of music. The first system is for the piano accompaniment, featuring a bass line with arpeggios and block chords, and a treble line with arpeggios. The tempo is marked "Commodo." and the dynamics "mp". The second system is for the vocal line, with lyrics in Swedish: "trüb - - se - lig heut, bist doch all - zeit sonst so het - - ter und led - - sen i dag, du som all - tid är så lu - - stig och". The tempo is marked "Cantabile." The third system is for the piano accompaniment, with lyrics in German: "froh? Und den - noch bin ich mehr nicht glad? Och in - te är jag me - ra". The tempo is marked "tranquilla".

Example 116: Sibelius, "Svarta Rosor" from the Vocal Cycle *Six Songs* for Voice and Piano, Op. 36, mm. 1-6, transcribed by Palmgren

Beginning in measure 12, Palmgren adds block chords in the bass to the arpeggios in the treble and the melody in the middle register, making the sound even bigger.

a tempo

ro - - - sor. I mitt
 Ro - - - sen. Hier im

a tempo

mp

Red.

hjer - - ta der vä - - xer ett ro - - sen - de - träd som aldrig
 Her - - zen da wu - - chert ein Ro - - sen - ge - rank, das raubt die

Example 117: Sibelius, “Svarta Rosor” from the Vocal Cycle *Six Songs* for Voice and Piano, Op. 36, mm. 11-14

Ro - - - sen. Hier im
 ro - - - sor. I mitt

a tempo

Her - - zen da wu - - chert ein Ro - - sen - ge - rank, das raubt die
 hjär - - ta där vä - - xer ett ro - - sen - de - träd som aldrig

legg.

pp dolce cantando

Example 118: Sibelius, “Svarta Rosor” from the Vocal Cycle *Six Songs* for Voice and Piano, Op. 36, mm. 11-14, transcribed by Palmgren

From measure 17, Palmgren continues to enlarge the sound. First, he expands the tremolo octaves in the right hand, applying the figuration to all of the notes so that the chords are repeated in the sixteenths. Then he adds a cadenza in measure 20, which greatly contrasts with the *recitativo* style of measure 21.

poco a poco string.

stjel - kar - ne sit - ter det tagg vid tagg, och det val - lar mig stän - digt
 Sten - geln da spreizen sich Dorn an Dorn, und die qui - len mich fort mit

p *cresc. molto*

Lento. *pp* **a tempo**

sve - da och agg; ty sor - gen har natt - svar - ta ro - - - -
 bren - nen dem Sporn, denn Trau - er trägt nacht - schwarze Ro - - - -

a tempo *mp*

sor. Men af
 sen. Doch an

Example 119: Sibelius, “Svarta Rosor” from the Vocal Cycle *Six Songs* for Voice and Piano, Op. 36, mm. 17-24

Sten - - geln da sprei - zen sich Dorn an Dorn, und dir
 stjel - - kar ne sit - ter det tagg an vid tagg, och det

poco a poco stringendo e molto cresc.

gållen mich fort mit bren nen dem Sporn,
 vållar mig stån - digt sve - na da och agg;

rinforz.

Lento.
 den Ty

molto *p* *simile* *pp*

Trau - er trügt nacht. schwar.ze Ro - sen.
 sor - gen har natt. svar. ta ro - sor.

Doch an Ro - sen birgt es ein
 Men af ro - sen blir det ein

pp misterioso ed un poco agitato

Example 120: Sibelius, “Svarta Rosor” from the Vocal Cycle *Six Songs* for Voice and Piano, Op. 36, mm. 17-25, transcribed by Palmgren

In the work, Palmgren showed how to rewrite the works with notable melodic lines besides traditional approaches. The bold approach suggests that this piece should be

performed together with contrasting works, especially ones with conservative ways of transcription, giving the audience a range of experiences.

Strauss-Godowsky: “Ständchen” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 17

Difficulty: advanced

Type: paraphrase

Duration: 7.5 min

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) wrote “Ständchen” (Serenade) in 1886, and a year later he included it in the vocal cycle *Sechs Lieder* (Six Songs). The song is written to verses by the German poet Adolf Schack (1815-1894). In a romantic vein, the poem conveys an image of a wonderful summer night through the murmur of a brook, the rustling of foliage, the song of a nightingale, and the shining moon. The piano supports this imagery with arpeggiated figurations that evoke the motions of the stream and the foliage.

The creator of the piano transcription is the American virtuoso pianist and composer Leopold Godowsky (1870-1938). His name became famous worldwide thanks to transcriptions. Godowsky himself recalled the success of his first solo concert in Europe, in 1900 in Berlin: “It is impossible to say how many times I have been called after the transcriptions. I could not count. Pianists such as Pachmann, Weiss, Hamburg, and Anton Förster and the entire audience went wild with them. They shouted like wild beasts, waved handkerchiefs, etc.”¹³ The work of Godowsky became the object of

¹³ Jeremy Nicholas. *Godowsky: The Pianist's Pianist*. London: Appian Publications & Recordings, 1989, p. 43.

academic research only half a century after his death, and in these studies it received the highest marks. Here is just one of them: “The great transcriber expounds, enlarges and amplifies matter and thought that it has been left to him to discover and reveal, and as in Godowsky’s case, makes the original a *point de départ* for a great new creation.”¹⁴

A master of transcription for the piano, Godowsky in the opening of “Ständchen” places the melody in the left hand, then transfers it to the right hand, moving any double notes.

The image shows a musical score for the song "Ständchen" by Johann Strauss. It consists of two systems of music. The first system is labeled "Gesang" (Vocal) and "Piano". The tempo is "Vivace e dolce". The vocal line starts with the lyrics "Mach' auf, — mach' auf, — doch". The piano accompaniment is marked "pp una corda" and "segue". The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "lei - - se mein Kind — um Keinen vom Schlum - - mer zu wecken." and the piano accompaniment. The score is in G major and 3/4 time.

Example 121: Strauss, “Ständchen” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 17, mm. 1-8

¹⁴ K. S. Sorabji. “Leopold Godowsky as Creative Transcriber” in *Mi Contra Fa: The Immoralisings of a Machiavellian Musician*, Reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1986. P. 62-63.

Vivace e dolce (♩ = 84-96)

Piano

pp e leggiero

ped. sempre una corda

p espr.

Example 122: Strauss, “Ständchen” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 17, mm. 1-5, transcribed by Godowsky

But being faithful to the original piece is not Godowsky’s style of transcription. He is particularly good at transcribing works in the paraphrase style. That is, the original work just gives him inspiration, based on which he develops the work into a wonderful piece. To illustrate, in measures 23 the voice melody and accompaniment from the beginning appear again, but Godowsky makes this music more complex. He adds harmony in the lower register and expands the range of the broken chords, making the overall effect broader this time.

nur lei-se die Hand auf die Klinke ge-legt.

Mit Trit-ten, wie Trit-te der El-fen so

pp

segue

Example 123: Strauss, “Ständchen” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 17, mm. 20-

26

pp

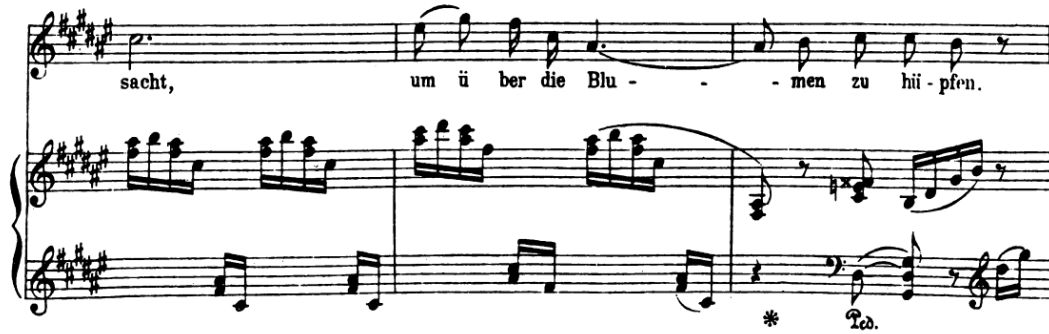
a tempo

rit.

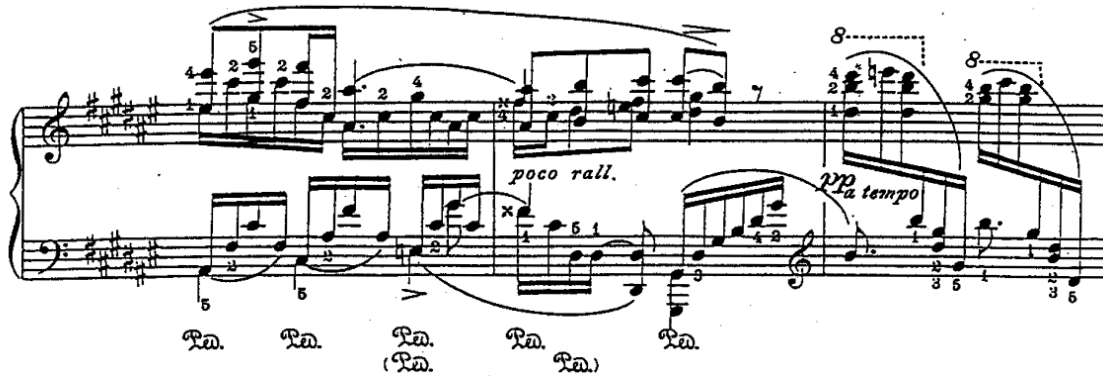
Example 124: Strauss, “Ständchen” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 17, mm. 23-

28, transcribed by Godowsky

Meanwhile, in his transcribed work, Godowsky generally introduces complex counterpoint, making each work sound as though it has acquired new voices. The combination of the romantic style and with polyphonic writing is evident in parts of “Ständchen.” For example, in measure 29 Godowsky adds a melody to the original to make this passage sound more layered.



Example 125: Strauss, “Ständchen” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Lieder*, p. 17, mm. 27-29



Example 126: Strauss, “Ständchen” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 17, mm. 29-31, transcribed by Godowsky

Godowsky continues to use new materials and approaches to make the work more complex. Starting in measure 48, for example, he adds two entirely new inside voices in eighth notes, creating a much fuller texture.

a tempo
pp
ppp *segue*
 Sitz'
 nie - der, hier, däm - merts ge -

Example 127: Strauss, “Ständchen” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 17, mm. 45-

52

espressivo
normorando
ppp a tempo

Example 128: Strauss, “Ständchen” from the Vocal Cycle *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 17, mm. 49-

52, transcribed by Godowsky

This piece is undoubtedly one of the most outstanding transcribed works and is suitable for performance in any concert.

Tchaikovsky-Kirchner: “Elegy” from the Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48

Difficulty: advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 8 min

The Serenade for String Orchestra was written by Tchaikovsky in 1880. The work consists of four movements that resemble those of a classical symphony. The “Elegy” is the third movement.

The piano transcription was done by German composer and organist Theodor Kirchner (1823-1903). It is not easy to transform a string orchestra work into a piano solo, and Kirchner tried to stay as close as possible to the original, without reducing too many elements. Additionally, although he kept the original style, the transcribed version sounds as though it had originally been written for piano solo, an affirmation of Kirchner’s ability as a transcriber.

At the beginning of the movement, Kirchner closely transcribes the original, with only slight changes. In measures 5-8 he doubles the bass line of the piano, which helps to balance the thick chords in the right hand.

Larghetto elegiaco. (♩ = 69.)

The score consists of five staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom three are in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is marked 'Larghetto elegiaco' with a quarter note equal to 69 beats per minute. Dynamic markings include *pp*, *mp*, and *mf* throughout the piece.

Example 129: Tchaikovsky, “Elegy” from the Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48, mm.

1-8

Larghetto elegiaco.

PIANO.

The score is for piano accompaniment, labeled 'PIANO.'. It consists of two systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The key signature has two sharps. The tempo is 'Larghetto elegiaco'. Dynamic markings include *pp* and *mp*.

Example 130: Tchaikovsky, “Elegy” from the Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48, mm.

1-9, transcribed by Kirchner

Beginning in measure 19, Kirchner clearly incorporated the triplets from the viola and cello into the left-hand accompaniment and put the melody on top in the right hand. This arrangement preserves the dialogue between the instruments of the original.

Poco più animato. *molto cantab.*

The musical score is divided into three systems, each containing five staves. The first system begins with a tempo marking of *Poco più animato.* and a dynamic of *mf*. It includes markings for *pizz.* and *sempre p ma sensibile*. The second system features a vocal line with the lyrics "cre do" and dynamics *più f* and *dim.*. The third system includes markings for *arco* and *cresc.*.

Example 131: Tchaikovsky, "Elegy" from the Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48, mm.

Poco più animato. *molto cantabile*

Example 132: Tchaikovsky, “Elegy” from the Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48, mm. 21-34, transcribed by Kirchner

A similar approach was used in most passages of the piece. However, the results will not be good if all of the original is simply transcribed for the piano. After all, string music and piano music are expressed in different ways. So, Kirchner introduced new elements for transcription and used the bold approach in some passages to produce better results. For example, beginning in measure 78, he converts the constant sixteenths in the violas into arpeggios, a much more pianistic effect.

Example 133: Tchaikovsky, “Elegy” from the Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48, mm.
76-80

Example 134: Tchaikovsky, “Elegy” from the Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48, mm.
76-80, transcribed by Kirchner

Any transcription of a work for string orchestra must be simplified, and Kirchner’s transcribed version of “Elegy” by Tchaikovsky is no exception. However, the value of the work will not be reduced because of the simplification as Kirchner accurately put all the elements of the original piece into the transcribed one and kept all the main materials. I

believe that the beautiful melody of the work will quickly attract the attention of listeners and win favor with them.

Widor-Laistner: Nocturne from the Instrumental Cycle 6 *Duos pour piano et harmonium*, Op. 6

Difficulty: medium-advanced

Type: transcription

Duration: 3 min

Much of the output of French composer Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937) consists of organ works. Among these are the *Six Duets for Harmonium and Piano*, composed in 1867. The harmonium is a portable reed organ, also called a *melodeon*, for which other composers as well as Widor wrote music. From the ensemble point of view, this work is an unusual combination of two keyboard instruments with matching ranges. The potential beauty of such an ensemble will come from the combination of the percussive sound of the piano with the sustained, reedy sound of the harmonium.

The Nocturne is the third duo in the collection. Its singing melody (harmonium) and guitar-like accompaniment (piano) lend the work its nocturne character, but with an unusual instrumentation.

The work was transcribed by German pianist Max Laistner (1853-1917). In the beginning, he reduces the piano accompaniment and incorporates the harmonium's melody with it. In measure 3, the left hand briefly crosses over the right to continue this melody. The result is a texture similar to three voices: melody, bass line, and middle-

register accompaniment. Through much of this duo, the harmonium has only the melody, and the pianist will need to preserve its *legato* quality.

The image displays a musical score for a duo. The top system is for the HARMONIUM, featuring a treble and bass staff with a melodic line. The tempo is marked 'Adagio.' and there is a circular 'rit. legato' marking. The bottom system is for the PIANO, also with treble and bass staves, providing a complex accompaniment. The piano part begins with a 'p' dynamic marking. The score is written in a key signature of two flats and a 3/8 time signature.

Example 135: Widor, Nocturne from the Instrumental Cycle *6 Duos pour piano et harmonium*, Op. 6, mm. 1-6

The image displays a musical score for a piano and harmonium duo. The tempo is marked 'Adagio' and the dynamics are 'PIANO.' and 'p'. The score is written in 12/8 time with a key signature of two flats. It consists of three systems of music. The first system shows the piano part with a melodic line in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The second system continues the piano part with more complex melodic and harmonic textures. The third system includes a 'cresc.' marking and shows the piano part with a more active melodic line. The harmonium part is indicated by a '20.' marking at the beginning of the first system, suggesting it is a transcription for a specific instrument.

Example 136: Widor, Nocturne from the Instrumental Cycle *6 Duos pour piano et harmonium*, Op. 6, mm. 1-6, transcribed by Laistner

In some portions of the duo, however, there are four voices when the harmonium is given two different melodies, and when the piano has its own melody, as in the example below beginning in measure 11. In this circumstance, Laistner reduces the middle-register accompaniment and divides the melodies between the hands to make them playable.

The image displays a musical score for a piano and harmonium duo. It consists of four systems of music, each with a piano part (left hand) and a harmonium part (right hand). The piano part is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs), and the harmonium part is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The score includes various dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, *f*, and *pppp*, as well as performance instructions like *dolce* and *ritard.*. The music features complex textures with overlapping lines and intricate rhythmic patterns.

Example 137: Widor, Nocturne from the Instrumental Cycle *6 Duos pour piano et harmonium*, Op. 6, mm. 10-18

The image displays four systems of musical notation for a piano and harmonium duo. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef for the piano and a bass clef for the harmonium. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The first system features a piano melody with a second ending bracket and a harmonium accompaniment with sixteenth-note patterns. The second system is marked *p* and *dolce*, with a piano melody of eighth notes and a harmonium accompaniment of eighth-note chords. The third system includes a *cresc.* marking and features a piano melody with a fermata and a harmonium accompaniment with sixteenth-note runs. The fourth system is marked *f* and *p*, showing a piano melody with a fermata and a harmonium accompaniment with sixteenth-note patterns.

Example 138: Widor, Nocturne from the Instrumental Cycle *6 Duos pour piano et harmonium*, Op. 6, mm. 9-16, transcribed by Laistner

Despite its very full texture, the work was naturally transcribed into a solo version. Many contents were simplified and revised to enable the pianist to perform the accompaniment and the multiple melodies. The result can be a beautiful piano piece so long as the pianist can keep the melodies and their dialogues at the forefront. The lyrical style of this duo makes it suitable for being performed together with grand pieces in the Romantic style or transcriptions with complex counterpoint, such as those by Godowsky. I believe listeners will be deeply impressed by this rarely-heard transcription.

CHAPTER 3

Conclusion

Transcriptions, which make works originally written for other instruments or voice playable on the piano, are a significant addition to the literature for the instrument. I have tried in this study to introduce some rare but wonderful works in this genre that are worthy of public performance, especially in concerts with a specific theme relating to either a certain style or a particular composer. Some transcriptions are not quite suitable for concerts, because they were created only for practical use, before recording technology was developed. According to Spencer Baker, “musical purists of the 20th century claim that with the advent of the era of sound recording, all music in its original form became available to the public and no longer requires transcription.”¹⁵ However, many transcriptions have musical value and offer the pianist more choices in programming. These works demonstrate the cleverness of both the composer and the transcriber, and they appeal to the audience in a way that ordinary solo works do not.

¹⁵ Baker, S. “Interpreting Schubert Lieder through Transcription: Four Composers’ Techniques in Solo Piano Transcriptions of Lieder from *Die Schöne Müllerin*.” D.M.A. Dissertation, University of Nevada, 2016, p. 10.

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