

Franz Schubert
Martin Widmaier

Impromptu in G major
to 3 Impromptus D. 946

for piano

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Preliminary Note

On the one hand, I wished to add a conclusion to the presumably incomplete set of 3 ‘Impromptus’ (pieces prompted by various situations) or ‘Klavierstücke’ (piano pieces) from Franz Schubert’s artistic estate; on the other hand, to save the crossed-out second episode of its No. 1. But it took me twenty years to bring these matters together. On 24 April 2002, the critical mass was eventually reached, and this Impromptu saw the light of day: a low-key Andantino, based on a harmonic progression by Carl Czerny and a song line by Franz Schubert, in combination with the orphaned episode. In a piano recital in Herxheim on 3 May 2002, the Impromptus D. 946 still came in a set of 3; but on occasion of a fortepiano recital in Wuppertal on 21 July 2003, the programme already included an Impromptu No. 4 in G major.

According to Paul Badura-Skoda, Schubert ‘crossed out the episode vigorously because he did not regard it as being on the same level of inspiration as the rest of the piece’. For my part, I would agree that there are many issues in this cycle – but lack of inspiration is not among them. So, let me construct a different story: Nos. 1 and 2 with their pairs of episodes took 12 and 14 minutes, respectively; No. 3 with its single episode, 4 1/2 minutes. To no surprise, Schubert considered Nos. 1 and 2 combined as too long. As he wasn’t ready to sacrifice a single bar of No. 2, and as he regarded the coherence within No. 1 as comparatively weak, he crossed out its beautiful second episode – after a long struggle, hence the vigorous strokes ...

In order to make the score a convincing reading, I have also experimented with notation, both timewise and pitchwise. Originally, the episode was written in 2/4 metre, with quaver triplets and dotted quavers followed by semiquavers – I have chosen a 6/8 metre instead. Likewise, the key signature of the complete episode used to be A \flat major – for an eight-bar paragraph, I have switched from flats to sharps. Furthermore, a few chord voicings were changed on the basis of parallel passages, and some articulation signs and dynamic markings either added or omitted. I am confident that these alignments are not arbitrary but well-grounded in the new context. While the original context was a breathless hunt based on a march rhythm, the new one is lyrical. Thus, the pianist is now allowed – and impelled – to highlight the clear-cut and eloquent side of the episode.

Martin Widmaier

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Impromptu in G major

Addendum (No. 4) to 3 Impromptus D. 946 by Franz Schubert

Outer sections by Martin Widmaier, based on models by Carl Czerny and Franz Schubert

Middle section by Franz Schubert (deleted second episode from No. 1 in E♭ minor)

Andantino (♩ = 84)

Musical notation for measures 1-4. The piece is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The tempo is Andantino (♩ = 84). The first system shows the beginning of the piece. The right hand starts with a quarter rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2. A first ending bracket covers measures 3 and 4. Measure 3 contains a triplet of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4. Measure 4 contains a quarter note G4. The first ending ends with a repeat sign and a double bar line. The instruction "2da volta" is written above the second ending.

Musical notation for measures 5-8. The right hand plays a melodic line: quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2. A first ending bracket covers measures 7 and 8. Measure 7 contains a triplet of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4. Measure 8 contains a quarter note G4. The first ending ends with a repeat sign and a double bar line.

Musical notation for measures 9-13. The right hand plays a melodic line: quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2. A first ending bracket covers measures 12 and 13. Measure 12 contains a triplet of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4. Measure 13 contains a quarter note G4. The first ending ends with a repeat sign and a double bar line. The instruction "mp" is written above the first ending.

Musical notation for measures 14-18. The right hand plays a melodic line: quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2. A first ending bracket covers measures 17 and 18. Measure 17 contains a triplet of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4. Measure 18 contains a quarter note G4. The first ending ends with a repeat sign and a double bar line. The instruction "pp" is written above the first ending.

Musical notation for measures 19-24. The right hand plays a melodic line: quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2. A first ending bracket covers measures 23 and 24. Measure 23 contains a triplet of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4. Measure 24 contains a quarter note G4. The first ending ends with a repeat sign and a double bar line. The instruction "2da volta" is written above the second ending.

24

pp

2da volta

29

33

37

[energico]

41

pp

46

50

55

60

64

[energico]

67

72

77 $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

p

82

87

91

95

100

Offline Publications

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with piano arrangements by Burkhard Scheibe and Martin Widmaier, Peer, Hamburg 2001

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August Halm: *Klavierübung* 1918/1919, edited by Thomas Kabisch, Linde Großmann

and Martin Widmaier, Ortus, Beeskow 2019

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