

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Graduate Recital Works

By Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, Johannes Brahms,  
Camille Saint Saëns, and Dmitri Shostakovich

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
of Master of Music in Music, Performance

By

Kallen Meyer

May 2019

The graduate project of Kallen Meyer is approved:

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Date

California State University, Northridge

## Acknowledgments

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## Abstract

### GRADUATE RECITAL WORKS BY JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH, LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN, JOHANNES BRAHMS, CAMILLE SAINT SAËNS, AND DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

By

Kallen Meyer

Master of Music in Music, Performance

In this paper, I will introduce and discuss the piano works that I performed on my solo recital and concerto recital. The piano works consisted of pieces by Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, Johannes Brahms, Camille Saint-Saëns, and Dmitri Shostakovich. The purpose of this paper is to introduce the historical background, form, harmonies, technique and articulation, and other important aspects of these pieces

For my solo recital, I performed a variety of music representing each of the musical styles: Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Contemporary. In these piano works, the pianist will have to use different ways and techniques to interpret the differences between these styles. This

variety of styles allows the pianist/performer to deal with big challenges of performing these works; ranging from the difficulty of the technique, and articulation, to the musicality. Bach's music is categorized in the Baroque period, but his works and style have influenced other genres of music, such as jazz and 20<sup>th</sup> century composers like Shostakovich. Beethoven represented the Classical period, but he is also the bridge and connection to the Romantic period. Brahms was a virtuoso pianist that composed for not only piano, but also for orchestra, chamber, voice, and chorus. Brahms' music had strong foundations and roots of the Classical Period. Shostakovich represents the Contemporary Period with his use of unique tonality and contrasts. For my concerto recital, I performed Camille Saint-Saëns' *Piano Concerto No. 5 in F Major*.

**Section 1: Prelude and Fugue in F Minor, Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I, BWV 857 by  
Johann Sebastian Bach**

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was a Baroque composer born in Eisenach, Germany. J.S. Bach composed many works including keyboard music, organ music, choral music, orchestral music, and chamber music. Composer Dieterich Buxtehude influenced J.S. Bach so much that Bach would often visit him in the city of Lübeck.<sup>1</sup> The Baroque period is considered to have ended when Bach passed away in 1750.

Bach composed two books known as the *Well-Tempered Clavier*. They are a collection of prelude and fugues in all of the twenty-four major and minor keys. Both books start in the key of C major with the first piece, then move on to the parallel minor, C minor. The pieces then continue to move up by half step to C-sharp major and C-sharp minor, continuing in this pattern until the books reach the final keys of B major and B minor. These two books are very important repertoire for pianists to study.

I performed the “Prelude and Fugue in F Minor” from the *Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I*. The prelude is short 22 measures and has continuous 16<sup>th</sup> notes in either the right hand or left hand. The theme is introduced in the right hand in the first two measures and is then responded to in the left hand. Throughout the prelude, the melodic line is shared in both the right and left hands. The piece does not have its first cadence until measure 12, where it lands on C major, the dominant of F minor. This prelude then concludes like most of the minor key preludes with the Picardy third, ending in F Major instead of F Minor. The prelude does not have a complex polyphonic texture; however, the piece itself is still challenging with held notes and overlapping

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<sup>1</sup> Kerala J. Snyder, *Dieterich Buxtehude, organist in Lübeck* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2007), 104.

voices. The prelude also has a consistent four-part polyphonic texture. The fugue has four voices and is longer than the prelude with 58 measures. The subject of the fugue is three measures long with a lot of chromatic half steps in the tenor voice. In measure four, the right hand has the tonal answer in alto voice. Then the bass and soprano entrances follow. The fugue is usually played slowly perhaps at Andante. Throughout this fugue after the first subject entrance, there is always a running 16<sup>th</sup> note passage when the subject is presented or when there is an episode or transition. This fugue however does not present any strettos, inversions, augmentation, diminutions, or any variations of the subject. This fugue is very complex with the counterpoint and the chromatic half steps. Just like the end of the prelude, the fugue concludes with a Picardy third ending in F Major.

## Section 2: Piano Sonata in E Major, Op. 109 by Ludwig van Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was a Classical composer born in Bonn, Germany. Beethoven's compositional works are categorized into three periods: early, middle, and late. His early period ended in 1802, his middle period was from 1802-1812, and his later period was from 1812 until his death in 1827. In each period, Beethoven grew more and more detailed, particularly in his late period.

During his lifetime, Beethoven composed 32 piano sonatas. His *Sonata in E Major Op. 109 (No. 30)* is from his late period. This sonata was composed during the 1820s. There are three movements: *Vivace*, *Prestissimo*, and *Gesangvoll mit innigster Emphfindung (Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo)*. The sonata usually takes 20 minutes to perform with the last movement lasting more than half of the time.

The first movement is in E major and has a tempo marking of *Vivace*. This movement is in sonata allegro form; however, Beethoven compressed the typical two to three-page exposition to just one page. The first theme is just five measures long, and a modulation occurs in measure six. The second subject, in B major, the dominant of E major, is in measure nine with a total contrast of the first theme. Beethoven does not present the cadence in the dominant until measure 15. At the end of the first movement, there is an *attacca* implying the performer to immediately transition to the second movement without any rest.

The second movement, marked *Prestissimo*, is in the parallel minor of E minor. Unlike the first movement, the second movement has a striking contrast with the first movement. This movement is also in sonata allegro form but is much more explosive with a huge contrast to first movement. The first theme is in E minor, and the second theme is in B minor. There is a lot of

thematic material throughout this movement. This movement is fairly short but still very difficult to play *Prestissimo*, clean, and clear.

The third, and final, movement of this sonata returns to the key of E major and has the tempo marking of *Gesangvoll mit innigster Empfindung (Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo)*. This movement is theme and variations form containing a theme and six variations. When performing this movement, it is best to play with all the repeats. The main theme is the first 16 bars. The theme heavily emphasizes beat two and also emphasizes the tonic key. Variation I is *Molto espressivo* and has the same tempo as the theme. The melody is moved one octave higher, and this variation is much more expressive. Variation II is *Leggiermente*. This variation is still in the key of E major; however, it is broken up into three sections. The first section is like a response to the first movement. It is very difficult to perform, because it must be played lightly, and all notes need to be equal in sound. The second section is a two-voice canon in the right hand while the left hand has a chordal accompaniment. The third section puts the two sections together with alternating chords between the left and right hands like the first section. This is repeated again for the second half of the variation. Variation III is marked as *Allegro vivace*. This variation now changes time signatures from 3/4 to 2/4 time. It is virtuosic and also resembles a two-part invention with the subject alternating in the left to right hands. Variation IV is slightly slower than the original theme and is marked as *Etwas langsamer, als das Thema (Un poco meno cioè è un poco più adagio come il tema)*. The time signature changes to 9/8 and this is where Beethoven begins to implement the contrapuntal texture between four voices. The second part of Variation IV is less contrapuntal and more expressive with a larger texture. Variation V is *Allegro ma non troppo*, and the time signature changes to cut-time. This variation is a small chorale-like fugato. This is one of the harder variations due to the counterpoint and tempo. Variation VI returns to the original tempo, *Tempo primo del tema*, and

also returns to 3/4 time signature. This variation is a huge contrast from Variation V and begins with a four-bar *cantabile* passage. Slowly, the note durations decrease and get faster from eighth note to sixteenth note, to thirty second note, and then to trills. During Beethoven's late period, he experimented with very long trills lasting multiple measures. This trill lasts for 23 measures, alternating left and right hands and also together. Near the end of the variation, the trills and intensity slowly fade away with a diminuendo. The piece finally returns to the main theme and ends *piano*. This sonata is both musically and technically difficult. The first movement is musically challenging, the second movement is technically challenging, and the third movement is both musically and technically challenging. With studying late Beethoven sonatas, the pianist must have a mature sense of musicality. It is recommended learning earlier Beethoven sonatas before studying his later sonatas.

### Section 3: Ballades Op. 10 No. 1-4 by Johannes Brahms

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) was a composer and pianist during the Romantic Period. He was born in Hamburg, Germany, and he is considered both a traditionalist and an innovator. Brahms not only used structures and form from Classical composers such as Mozart and Beethoven, but he also became an inspiration for future of composers. Brahms was a perfectionist. He would destroy many of his works if they did not meet his standards and would sometimes leave other works unpublished. For example, he struggled to write his first symphony (*Symphony No.1 in C Minor*), which took almost fifteen years to complete. Brahms adored Beethoven so much that his first symphony used many themes from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

Brahms composed many works including symphonies, concertos, choral, chamber works, and piano works. One of his piano works is his set of *Ballades, Op. 10*. These were composed early in his life in 1854 and are dedicated to Julius Otto Grimm. These ballades are composed differently when compared to Chopin's ballades. Brahms decided to take more of the lyrical side and focus on the narrative poetry. Brahms's ballades are paired in twos, each pair written in parallel keys. The first ballade is in D minor, the second is in D major, the third is in B minor, and the fourth is in B major.

"Ballade No. 1", in D Minor, is marked *Andante*. The first ballade is a reference to the Scottish poem "Edward" from a collection titled *Stimmen der Völker in ihren Liedern* by Johann Gottfried Herder. This ballade is a good example of one of Brahms's compositional styles with octaves, open fifths and triadic harmonies. This is broken into three sections of ABA form. Both A sections are in D minor, and the B section is in D major with a contrasting tempo.

“Ballade No. 2” is in D major and marked *Andante*. The form of this ballade is in Bogen Form (ABCBA), which is an arch/pyramid form.<sup>2</sup> The first A section is in D major. The melody is presented in the right hand while the left hand plays with an ostinato bass accompaniment on the off beats. The first B section is in the relative minor key of B minor with the tempo marking of *Allegro non troppo*. The texture and tempo are a contrast to the A section with a very militaristic mood. The C section is in B major, the parallel major of the B section in *Molto staccato e leggiero*. This section seems very strange and out of place with the texture and the grace notes on all the notes in the right hand. The second B section returns to B minor with the militaristic mood and rhythm but transitions and modulates to a different key entering the second A section. The second A section returns to the original tempo of *Andante*; however, the key is B major instead D major. In measure 139, there is a small coda modulating and cadencing back to D major.

“Ballade No. 3” is in B minor with a title “Intermezzo” and is *Allegro*. This is the only ballade out of the four in Op. 10 that has a title. The form is in ABA, and it starts in B minor. The A section has a very fast pace and difficult octave passages in measures 7-8, 23-24, and 35-36, for example. The B section is in the parallel key of B major. Although the tempo is still *Allegro*, the rhythmic structure is slower. There are no fast passages like section A, but instead, there are chords in a homophonic texture. The last section returns to B minor and is very similar to the beginning except Brahms ends the ballade in B major, transitioning to Ballade No. 4.

“Ballade No. 4” is in B major with a tempo of *Andante con moto*. The ABACB form is very unusual. The first A section is in B major with the left-hand playing an eighth note rhythmic ostinato accompaniment. The melody stays in the right hand while the accompaniment

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<sup>2</sup> Mark Richman, *Quote* (Northridge, 2018).

blends together in both hands. The B section is still in B Major with a tempo marking of *Più lento* (*Col intimissimo sentiment, ma senza troppo marcare la melodia*). This section is slower than A with the constant two against three eighth-note rhythm. This section is very difficult in voice balancing, because the melody is in the middle voice with the right-hand performing triplets and left hand performing duplets. In measures 55-60, Brahms modulates and also includes more voices. The second A section returns with the first tempo and the same structure except the rhythmic ostinato has changed slightly. Section C has slowed the rhythmic pace even more with just quarter notes. This section is very chordal and also has a resemblance to the melody from section A. It then modulates to B minor in measure 115 with the melody from section A. The last B section is in G major with the three against two eighth-note rhythms. The piece ends in *Adagio* and in B major.

## Section 4: Dmitri Shostakovich

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) was a 20<sup>th</sup> Century composer period born in Saint Petersburg, Russia. He is considered one of the major twentieth-century composers and is known for his symphonies, string quartets, chamber works, and piano works. Shostakovich also composed operas, ballets, and song cycles. Some of his piano works include his two sonatas, preludes, and a set of 24 preludes and fugues. Shostakovich achieved his fame during the Soviet Union era but struggled with Joseph Stalin monitoring him and his music.

Shostakovich admired Johann Sebastian Bach and his two sets of prelude and fugues. These inspired him to compose his own set of 24 preludes and fugues, one of each in major and minor keys moving up a chromatic half step starting from C major till D minor. He composed this set around 1950, and it was premiered by Tatiana Nikolayeva in Leningrad in 1952.

### **Prelude and Fugue No. 15 in Db Major**

The prelude is an energetic waltz marked *Allegro*. The opening theme resembles the tune of “We Wish You a Merry Christmas.” This prelude and fugue was composed in December which could be the reason for the theme resemblance. It is technically difficult with fast passages and fast octave passages also both in the right hand and left hand. The prelude is broken into an ABA structure with the B section in a total different character and mood. The fugue is a four-voice fugue and perhaps one of Shostakovich’s hardest fugues, marked *Allegro molto*. The subject itself is chaotic, chromatic, and atonal presenting 11 out of the 12 pitches. The time signature constantly changes from 3/4, to 4/4, back to 3/4, and then 5/4. The fugue brings back the rhythmic theme from the prelude on measure 116. This piece is technically difficult and musically difficult to make the subject not sound robotic and machine-like.

## **Prelude and Fugue No. 24 in D Minor**

This is the last prelude and fugue in the set and can be considered a finale. The prelude is very chordal and filled with deep emotion. Written in an ABA form, the B section introduces a melody in measure 32 that is then used as one of the subjects in the fugue. The prelude ends with an *attacca* implying that the performer immediately moves from one part to the next without rest. The fugue is four voices marked *Moderato*. This fugue is a double fugue and very long with 296 measures. The first subject is five measures, and Shostakovich applies many counter subjects. The entire first part of the fugue stays in D minor with just a single accidental until measure 62. The second subject is then introduced in measure 111 with an *accel. poco a poco*. This second subject is much more active as the accelerando continues until measure 134, ending with *più mosso*. The counterpoint through this fugue is not as complex as other fugues composed by Shostakovich. The fugue later intensifies with octave subjects. The first subject is then brought back in measure 217 with the second subject still being presented. At measure 260, Shostakovich marks a *Maestoso* implying that the performer should slow down slightly. Shostakovich resolves the piece in D major in measure 282 but then continues and ends with a huge octave grand finale ending with octave Ds.

## Section 5: Piano Concerto No. 5 in F Major Op. 103 by Camille Saint-Saëns

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) was a French composer born in Paris, France during the Romantic Period. Saint-Saëns was a musical prodigy who had his concert debut at the age of 10.<sup>3</sup> He was known for his *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, *Piano Concerto No. 2 in G Minor* and other works. He also taught composers such as Gabriel Fauré and Maurice Ravel who would become famous later on.

Saint-Saëns's *Piano Concerto No. 5 in F Major* was his last piano concerto. He composed this in 1896, twenty years after his Piano Concerto No. 4. His fifth piano concerto is called "The Egyptian" Piano Concerto for several reasons. One of these was that Saint-Saëns had composed this during his visit to Luxor and to Egypt. Another reason is his use of the exotic middle-eastern music in the piece.<sup>4</sup> This concerto is in three movements: *Allegro animato*, *Andante*, *Molto allegro*. One of the many unique features of the piano concerto is that Saint-Saëns did not write a cadenza in any of the movements, which is unusual in Concertos.

The first movement of this concerto is in Sonata Allegro form and starts with a short introduction of the orchestra in F major. After the eight-measure introduction, the piano presents the first subject with variations in both the solo piano and orchestra. The piece slowly increases its energy with technical piano parts. It then dissolves and enters the second subject with a tempo change to *Un poco rubato*. This lyrical subject is very similar to one in his second piano concerto. The piece continues with its virtuoso and technically challenging piano passages. Finally, the first movement ends with a simple F Major chord marked *pianissimo*.

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<sup>3</sup> Harold C. Schonberg "It All Came Too Easily For Camille Saint-Saëns" (The New York Times, 1969), 17.

<sup>4</sup> Barbara Heninger, *Camille Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No. 5, "Egyptian" Program Notes* (2001).

The second movement is where this piano concerto got its designation as “The Egyptian” Concerto. It starts in the key of A major with the orchestra beginning with the timpani and a rhythmic ostinato in the string section. With this, the piano enters with an ascending and descending exotic Egyptian scale. Throughout the movement, Saint-Saëns develops the exotic Egyptian style of music through the melody in measures 18-33, and the harmony in measures 34-41. The middle section of the second movement takes a break from the exotic style of music and has a very lyrical melody for the piano in the key of G major. The piece returns to its Egyptian music and ends in D Minor.

The last movement is in a unique rondo form of A B A C A B C and is the most energetic and technically challenging movement of the three with a fast tempo of *Molto Allegro*. This movement starts with the piano lower bass rumbles with orchestra tremolos and increases in energy and dynamics. This movement has flashy piano sections with parallel chords, fast arpeggios, chromatic scales. This movement also has a very humorous second theme in the key of G major with a duet with the woodwinds. The piece ends with a grand finale of chromatic octaves alternating left hand and right hand and repeated F major chords.

**Appendix A: Program I (Concerto)**

California State University, Northridge  
Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication Department of Music  
Presents

**Kallen Meyer, Piano**

In his Master of Music Concerto Recital\*

A Student of Dr. Dmitry Rachmanov

With Yu Ting Peng, Piano

Sunday March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 4:30pm

Cypress Recital Hall

**PROGRAM**

Piano Concerto Op. 103, No. 5 in F Major

**Camille Saint-Saëns**

**(1835-1921)**

**I. Allegro Animato**

**II. Andante**

**III. Molto Allegro**

\*In partial fulfillment of the Master of Music degree in Piano Performance

## **Appendix B: Program II (Solo Recital)**

California State University, Northridge  
Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication Department of Music  
Presents

### **Kallen Meyer, Piano**

In his Master of Music Solo Recital\*

A Student of Professor Mark Richman and Dr. Dmitry Rachmanov

Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 7:30pm

Cypress Recital Hall

### **PROGRAM**

Prelude and Fugue No. 12 in F Minor,  
Well-Tempered Clavier Book 1, BWV 857

**Johann Sebastian Bach**  
(1685-1750)

Piano Sonata in E Major Op. 109

**Ludwig van Beethoven**  
(1770-1827)

- I. Vivace ma non troppo
- II. Prestissimo
- III. Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung  
(Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo)

### **Intermission**

Ballades, Op. 10

**Johannes Brahms**  
(1833-1897)

- I. D Minor, Andante
- II. D Major, Andante
- III. B Minor, Intermezzo, Allegro
- IV. B Major, Andante con moto

Preludes and Fugues Op. 87

**Dmitri Shostakovich**  
(1906-1975)

- No. 15 in Db Major  
No. 24 in D Minor

\*In partial fulfillment of the Master of Music degree in Piano Performance

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