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Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms, by John Daverio. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. xii, 310 pp.

In the course of barely fifteen years John Daverio left a significant body of scholarship, much of which is devoted to the music of Robert Schumann and his circle. From his Einstein-award-winning article, "Schumann's *Im Legendenton* and Friedrich Schlegel's *Arabesque*," to his comprehensive life-and-works biography of Schumann, to this his third and last book, Daverio has written much that will shape the way Schumann and other nineteenth-century composers will be understood for years to come.¹ If this is a legacy to which scholars who have enjoyed full scholarly lives would aspire, it is one more indicator of how much we have lost with the premature death of this insightful, self-effacing, and musical teacher. In the belief that he would want it no other way, I will register praise and disagreement as I would have had I undertaken this review a year earlier.

Daverio's title allows him multiple layers of meaning. At the outset of his introduction, "At the Intersection of Old and New Paths," Daverio explains that he will focus on Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms, "a trio of paths that converged often enough so that in retrospect we may recognize them as cutting a central artery in the musical landscape" (pp. 3–4). But because Clara Schumann also plays a significant role, or more to the point, a multifaceted role of composer, wife, and lifelong friend, the trio is virtually a quartet. Near the end of his introductory remarks, after considering three different models of intertextual criticism (those of Harold Bloom and T. S. Eliot, as well as one focusing on allusions), Daverio settles on Walter Benjamin and credits him with shaping more complex senses of crossing paths. From Benjamin's 1936 essay "The Storyteller," Daverio derives the notion of describing Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms as subtle musical storytellers who interweave "memory, tradition, and experience"; while from the essay "Literary History and the Study of Literature," he builds on Benjamin's description of the literary artwork as a "microcosm" or "microeon," which

contains within itself traces of both its prehistory (the processes that brought it into being) and its afterlife (the factors that sustain its impact on future creators). . . . Hence the metaphor of "crossing paths," as employed here, is intended not to suggest the accidental convergence of disparate lines but the charged intersection of pre- and posthistory.² (p. 9)

1. John Daverio, "Schumann's *Im Legendenton* and Friedrich Schlegel's *Arabesque*," *19th-Century Music* 11 (1987): 150–63. His two earlier books were *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Macmillan, 1993) and *Robert Schumann: Herald of a "New Poetic Age"* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

2. Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov" (1936), in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969), 83–109; and idem, "Literary History and the Study of Literature" (1931), in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 2, 1927–1934, trans. R. Livingstone et al., ed. M. W. Jennings et al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1996), 464.

This is an image that Daverio returns to throughout the book. He describes Schumann's Piano Quintet in E♭ as "situated at a crossroads" between a past represented by Schubert and a future represented by Brahms (p. 46), and he invokes the metaphor repeatedly in discussions of Brahms, who had an "absolute distaste for the introduction of a thought that was without future consequences or that could not be traced back in some way to a thought that preceded it" (p. 162). Regarding Brahms, he later observes that "the essence of the Requiem idea lay not in maudlin lamentation but in the situation of death in a cycle of dissolution and renewal" (p. 190), and that the "Double" Concerto "spelled both reconciliation and renewal" (p. 239).

Brahms, for one, might have objected to Daverio's title. In the last year of his life he told Richard Specht, "I must go my way alone and in peace and have never crossed paths with another" ("Ich muß meinen Weg allein und in Frieden gehen und hab' ihn auch nie mit einem anderen gekreuzt").³ Although Daverio did not discuss this quotation, it is clear that he employs the metaphor of crossing paths for different purposes than Brahms, who, looking back over his career, used it to express his utter disinterest in leading any musical faction. However substantial his debts to Beethoven, Schumann, or even Wagner, he had always tried to achieve a style that was independent of all of them.

The book has three parts—"Schumann's One and Only Schubert," "Uttering 'Clara' in Tones," and "A Noble Model"—organized loosely around the intersections of at least two of the three composers. Daverio's avowedly eclectic route takes us on a winding journey that is at times fascinating for its erudite side trips into the history of cryptography, Biedermeier parlor games and children's books, the early years of photography, and the music of the Romany people (although these forays spur him to metaphorical descriptions of his composers that begin to compete with each other: on page 100 Schumann is a pictographer, on page 121 Brahms is a chemist, and by page 129 Schumann and Brahms are musical alchemists). For intellectual support in his ruminations about links between his three composers, he turns in one direction to philosopher-critics such as Benjamin Adorno and Theodor Adorno, and in another for different reasons to music theorists, citing, among others, Richard Cohn regarding the importance of voice leading for Schubert's de-centered tonal world, Harald Krebs for his thoughts on metrical ambiguity, Joel Lester on recapitulatory functions, and most extensively Peter Smith for his work on obscuring the boundaries of development and recapitulation sections.

Daverio's first two chapters take up Schumann's musical debts to Schubert, especially to Schubert's Piano Trio in E♭ and the Impromptus D. 935. Daverio vividly captures the intensity of the young Schumann's first encounter with the trio, citing contemporary reviews and Schumann's diaries to

3. Quoted in Max Kalbeck, *Johannes Brahms* (Berlin: Deutsche Brahms Gesellschaft, 1904–14), 3:409.

demonstrate the immediate effect the piece had on his social/musical life and on a piano quartet in C minor he drafted in the winter of 1828–29. Although Daverio identifies the harmonic and rhythmic influence of late Schubert on early Schumann, he is more interested in formal similarities, and in what he terms “complementary modes of temporal unfolding” in late Schubert: “heavenly length” and “musing on the past” (pp. 9–10).⁴ Schubert’s loquacity allowed him ample room to indulge in the “transformed recall” of musical material between movements, a feature Daverio also observes in Schumann (e.g., pp. 27–31). But Daverio takes the link a step further, suggesting that Schumann the critic “was equally sensitive to the temporality of pastness in Schubert’s instrumental music and to its bearing on the emotional character of large-scale musical designs” (p. 48). The ensuing discussion of Schubert’s Impromptus contains some of Daverio’s most insightful writing as he makes his strongest case for Schubert’s impact on Schumann. His conclusion that “for Schumann, the contrast between temporal modes becomes just as effective a means of shaping a musical argument as the more traditional contrasts between keys or themes” (p. 59) has the potential to alter the way one hears these two composers.

In contrast, the center of Daverio’s book, “Uttering Clara in Tones” (part 2), is vexingly uneven. Chapters 3 and 4 attack the possibility proposed by Eric Sams that both Robert Schumann and Brahms used a musical cipher to represent Clara with the notes C–B(b)–A–G#–A (or a transposition). According to Sams, after devising this musical code name as a cipher from a cryptic musical alphabet, Robert and later Brahms used it in numerous compositions. Daverio is eager to disprove Sams’s theory, since many studies in the past twenty years or so have accepted the existence of this Clara motive in works of both composers (though not necessarily because of Sams’s cryptographic theory).⁵ In the course of two chapters that explore cryptography in the nineteenth century and include an excellent account of children’s literature, Daverio demolishes Sams’s argument. But Daverio wrongly believes that because he has proven the motive could not have been generated cryptographically, he has therefore also proven that it did not have symbolic signifi-

4. Beethoven’s influence in thematic recall between movements deserves stronger acknowledgment. Schumann was not the only one who was well aware of Beethovenian precedent; it was also decisive for Schubert as he wrote the trio in the year after Beethoven’s death. It is perhaps telling that Schumann clearly took pains to finish his quartet in time for a performance on 28 March 1829, that is, a belated second anniversary of Beethoven’s death (26 March 1827).

5. Among many studies by Sams are “Did Schumann Use Ciphers?” *Musical Times* 106 (1965): 584–91; “The Schumann Ciphers,” *Musical Times* 107 (1966): 392–400; “The Tonal Analogue in Schumann’s Music,” *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 96 (1969–70): 103–17; and “Brahms and His Clara Themes,” *Musical Times* 112 (1971): 432–34. Daverio’s list of twelve books and articles that accept the existence of a Clara motive is not exhaustive. In addition to my own work, the scholars Daverio cites include David Brodbeck, Elaine Sisman, A. Peter Brown, Raymond Knapp, Michael Musgrave, Malcolm MacDonald, and Kenneth Hull (p. 264 n. 4).

cance. That the putative Clara motive has been popular in recent scholarship should be attributed to its musical prominence and to oft-quoted remarks by Robert and Brahms rather than to Sams's cryptographic derivation, which many of the scholars invoking the motive have simply ignored.

In rejecting the presence of this Clara motive in works of Schumann and Brahms, Daverio applies the following method: he gathers the few works that the composers indisputably composed on musical ciphers and from them formulates a series of eight rules (pp. 77–78, 108–9).⁶ For Schumann he lists nine works, fully half of them fragments or miniatures (such as the eight-measure “Rebus” Schumann discarded from the *Album für die Jugend*), the other half works such as the “Abegg Variations,” Op. 1, or the fugues on BACH, Op. 60. Among the rules Daverio derives from these works are: “Every letter . . . must have a precise musical equivalent” (no. 2) and “Generally the basic form should appear first in the melody . . .” (no. 5). For Brahms the rules are simply inadequate, in part because Daverio applies them to only three published works and three unpublished, in part because two of the works—the “F.A.E.” Sonata, WoO2, and the Fugue in A \flat Minor for Organ, WoO8—do not obey them. But the biggest chink in Daverio's proof is that he overlooks two fundamental “rules”: (1) all of his rules pertain to motives used in works in which the title (or a notation in the score) publicly divulges the presence of a musical name, if not the name itself (*Thème sur le nom Abegg*, Op. 1; *Carnaval, Scènes mignonnes . . . sur quatre notes*, Op. 9; and so on); and (2) all of his rules apply to motives that are used in only one or two works. It is problematic, at the very least, to abstract compositional rules from a few (mostly) minor works that satisfy these criteria and to expect that they would serve Robert and Brahms to represent Clara in major works composed over their entire careers. The strict application of Daverio's rules would result in works that would each begin with a motive consisting of the three untransposed musical letters of Clara's name (C–A–A), an aesthetic impossibility for a private symbol designed for sustained use in symphonies, concertos, and quartets. According to widely discussed Romantic distinctions between symbol and allegory, it is simply wrong to expect that private symbols and public signs should obey the same strictures.⁷ Ultimately for Schumann's

6. The seeds of this method are to be found in Daverio's biography of Schumann, in which he proposed that Schumann actually published nine sets of songs that qualify as song cycles. Daverio there derived three principles of unification from a review Schumann had written of Carl Loewe's *Liederkreis, Esther*—“narrative consistency, large-scale tonal logic, and motivic recall”—and then applied them to Schumann's own *Lieder* publications; see his *Robert Schumann*, 213.

7. From his first writings on Schumann, Daverio preferred allegory to symbol as a construct for interpreting Schumann's allusions, which led him to rely on Friedrich Schlegel, one of the few writers of the time to persist in favoring allegory; see Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 98–126. On the distinction between symbol and allegory, see my *Motives for Allusion: Context and Content in Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 7–10, 177–81.

larger works, theories of symbolization are vastly more important for his referential practices than are Biedermeier parlor games, which have little to do with his D-Minor Symphony or Brahms's Piano Quartet in C Minor.

But Schumann, as Daverio maintained in earlier writings, often employed allusions: "Few nineteenth-century composers explored the possibilities of the allusive reference as thoroughly as [Schumann]." ⁸ If the motive that has attracted so much attention is not a cipher, the possibility that it might be an allusion should be acknowledged. Excepting only compositions on BACH, the great majority of "naming" compositions in the nineteenth century, including several by Schumann, evidently relied on allusion and quotation. ⁹ In *Crossing Paths* Daverio reveals a conflicted attitude toward allusions, on the one hand readily and at times brilliantly interpreting some, while on the other distancing himself from an "overly zealous pursuit of allusive references" because first "it tends to produce an atomistic view of the musical text; and second it too often confuses allusion with a more generalized stylistic resonance" (p. 8). For Daverio the problem seems to lie more with an excessive zeal in the hunt than with allusions per se (he returns on page 161 to criticize the "overly zealous allusion hunter"), but his ambivalence is also evident in the index entry on allusion, which steers readers only to a few mentions of allusion, generally those that are critical of this analytical approach. Thus the index does not include his example of Robert's allusion in the F#-Minor Sonata, Op. 11, to "the drummed motive [that] was almost surely derived from the opening bars of Clara's 'Scène fantastique,' " Op. 5 (pp. 130–31); nor does it refer the reader to the suggestive connection he makes between their marriage and their compositional habits: "whereas before their marriage it was generally Schumann who alluded to Clara's music, Clara made increasing reference to the works of her husband in the period after their wedding" (p. 139). ¹⁰

With regard to the potentially atomistic effect of allusion hunting on the hearing of a musical work, it is relevant that this was, already in Schumann's lifetime, a criticism actually leveled against "reminiscences" (as they were called). In an 1855 article entitled "On Plagiarism," the Viennese critic and theory teacher L. A. Zellner chastised the many listeners who focused on reminiscences or who tried to identify the source of ideas that were "borrowed" or "stolen." ¹¹ His complaint was precisely that this practice encouraged people to hear works "only as a mass of details" and not as integrated wholes. Whatever the merits of this view in the mid-nineteenth century, today it seems anachronistic given the amount of analytical attention now routinely paid to

8. Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 59.

9. In *Motives for Allusion* I devote chapter 7 to musical "naming."

10. I would add at least the following discussions of allusion to his index entry: 59, 130–31, 134–37, 139–42, 161, 188, 195, 231, 280 n. 59, 280 n. 60, 278 n. 47, and 278–79 n. 51.

11. L. A. Zellner, "Ueber Plagiate," *Blätter für Musik, Theater und Kunst* 1, no. 86 (27 November 1855). This review was brought to my attention by Anthony Newcomb; see my *Motives for Allusion*, 3.

details of a work, not only by those who study phrasing, motivic relationships, or topics, but also by Daverio in his exhaustive account of *style hongrois* elements in Brahms's "Double" Concerto (pp. 216–26). Most forms of musical analysis practiced in the past century are susceptible to this charge.

Daverio is on more secure footing in chapter 5, which resumes essentially where chapter 2 had left off. He momentarily replaces the metaphor of crossing paths with that of the "folded fan," a working image (and title) that he takes from Walter Benjamin. But Daverio turns as well to Roland Barthes for his thesis that the music of Schumann "abounds in discontinuous effects," and that it is "in the interstices between what would normally be successive moments in the steady flow of time, that Schumann is most apt to situate the interpolations that imbue his music with the texture of an unfolding fan" (p. 130).¹² Daverio defines two "principal types of interpolation—the episodic, or temporarily disruptive, and the layered," by which he means a discrete line in a multilayered texture (p. 133); and he is particularly interested in showing how Schumann used "this Schubert-inspired technique" as "the embodiment of erotic yearning" (p. 133). With the exception of the Op. 80 trio, Daverio mostly considers Schumann's early piano works that have long been recognized to be inspired by Clara and, in a few cases, to contain quotations of Clara's works. In so doing he constructs an argument meant to counter the claims that Schumann represented Clara by ciphers: rather, "the imagistic [and therefore interpolative] quality of Schumann's music goes hand in hand with its implication in an exchange of creative ideas with Clara" (p. 139). Daverio concludes by showing how Brahms followed in this imagistic vein, reinterpreting what is perhaps Brahms's most oft cited "Clara" music, the Op. 9 Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann, and the portrait he claimed to have composed of her in the Adagio of his First Piano Concerto.

There is much in "Transcendental Chess Games" (chapter 6) to stimulate our views of what Brahms learned about formal strategies from Schumann, including a sensitive review of Schumann's five Requiem compositions and their impact on Brahms. But by part 3, which this chapter begins, I find the absence of one composer from the discussion too noticeable to ignore. Criticizing a book for questions unasked takes no particular imagination; indeed, a successful book inevitably begets other books that pursue roads previously considered tangential. Moreover, in limiting his book to an investigation of the musical paths that connect Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms, Daverio has many distinguished precedents. Articles such as Edward Cone's "Schubert's Beethoven," David Brodbeck's "Brahms's Mendelssohn," and Michael Musgrave's "Schoenberg's Brahms" make valuable contributions by relating the music of

12. Daverio quotes from Walter Benjamin, *Einbahnstraße*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 4-i, ed. Tilman Rexroth (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972), 117; and from Roland Barthes, "Rasch," in *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art, and Representation*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985), 300, 301–2.

one composer to another.¹³ Then why should it rankle that Daverio does not add Felix Mendelssohn to his trio of composers? The conspicuous dearth of Mendelssohn's music in this book leaps out from the lists of works cited in the index. Robert Schumann is by far the best represented with eighty-two compositions (a total all the more remarkable for the number of these works that Daverio treats substantively); then comes Brahms with fifty-six, Schubert with thirteen, and Clara with twelve. Beethoven and Mozart each have eight, Joseph Joachim five (some treated at length), and Mendelssohn but four, of which only the Violin Concerto receives even a couple of perfunctory lines.

It vexes because it misrepresents. As an example from chapter 6 will show, the absence of Mendelssohn overemphasizes Schumann's contribution to the evolution of the formal processes that so engage Daverio. His aim is to show that "Brahms inherited the obsessive streak in his desire to join ideas with ideas primarily from Schumann" (p. 162). In highlighting the tendency of Brahms "to blur the line between development and recapitulation, thereby subverting what in the Classical incarnation of the form had generally been a moment of high drama" (p. 162), Daverio draws heavily on Peter Smith's analyses of the first movements of Brahms's String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 51, no. 1, and the Cello Sonata in F, Op. 99.¹⁴ Partly by prolonging the harmonic instability of the development past the beginning of the recapitulation, and partly by resorting to various forms of motivic fragmentation (or "liquidation") such as rhythmic augmentation, Brahms effectively obscures the moment of return and thereby transforms "a sectional design into one nearly uninterrupted discourse" (p. 164). Daverio then considers Schumann's works to show that there were precedents available to Brahms in the Violin Sonatas in A minor and D minor, Opp. 105 and 121, in the Piano Trio in F, Op. 80, and in other, mostly later, works: "In at least a half-dozen cases, Schumann undercuts the articulative force of the thematic return at the moment of reprise by coupling it with dominant or tonic-six-four harmony" (p. 164) and also by motivic fragmentation, including rhythmic augmentation.¹⁵

13. Edward Cone, "Schubert's Beethoven," *The Musical Quarterly* 56 (1970): 779–93; David Brodbeck, "Brahms's Mendelssohn," *Brahms Studies*, ed. David Brodbeck, vol. 2 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 209–31; and Michael Musgrave, "Schoenberg's Brahms," in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives. Papers Delivered at the International Brahms Conference, Washington, D.C., 5–8 May 1983*, ed. George Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 123–37. See also Christian Thorau, "Richard Wagners Bach," in *Bach und die Nachwelt, Band 2: 1850–1900*, ed. M. Heinemann and Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1999), 163–99; and Klaus Kropfinger, *Wagner and Beethoven: Richard Wagner's Reception of Beethoven*, trans. Peter Palmer (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

14. Peter Smith, "Liquidation, Augmentation, and Brahms's Recapitulatory Overlaps," *19th-Century Music* 17 (1994): 237–61; and idem, "Brahms and Schenker: A Mutual Response to Sonata Form," *Music Theory Spectrum* 16 (1994): 77–103.

15. Regarding Schumann's blurring of retractions and recapitulations, Daverio cites Joel Lester, "Robert Schumann and Sonata Forms," *19th-Century Music* 18 (1995): 205.

To get from Brahms to Schumann, Daverio invokes Smith: “While there is some precedent for this strategy in Beethoven’s sonata forms—Smith cites the first movement of the Piano Sonata in E minor (Op. 90)—Brahms would have found a wealth of models in the works of Schumann” (p. 164). There is no question that Schumann took pains over this formal juncture; indeed, as Daverio subsequently remarks, Schumann called this moment “the touchstone of a composer’s consummate mastery of form” (p. 178). But the implication in Daverio’s reference to Beethoven before passing on to Schumann is that Schumann had paved Brahms’s path. Surely it is relevant that in almost all of Mendelssohn’s string quartets, the same means for obscuring formal boundaries appear.¹⁶ In the first movement of his Op. 13 String Quartet in A Major, Mendelssohn truncated the beginning of the exposition (from five measures to three) and presented the first theme over a tonic six-four harmony, as he also did in Op. 44, no. 2. In his late String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80, the tonal instability at the beginning of the recapitulation is prolonged until the appearance of the theme that had been introduced in measure 22 of the exposition. Whether Mendelssohn was more important for Schumann and Brahms than was Schubert (or Beethoven) is not at issue. Fitting Mendelssohn into this picture enhances our understanding of Schumann and helps us to evaluate what he passed on to Brahms. Mendelssohn need not have been cast in a marquee role for the significance of his path crossing to be acknowledged.¹⁷

Daverio tackles several issues in his final chapter, “Brahms, the Schumann Circle, and the Style Hongrois: Contexts for the ‘Double’ Concerto, op. 102.” He attempts (1) “to sketch a musical family tree” of the work (p. 192), considering the later works for solo instruments and orchestra by Schumann and especially Joseph Joachim’s “Hungarian” Violin Concerto; (2) to explain why this work was poorly received by many of Brahms’s most ardent supporters; and (3) impinging on both, to analyze the concerto’s gypsy content. Daverio is at his best in this, the most substantial, and perhaps also the most personal, chapter of the book. Several times one detects Daverio the violinist lurking in the background, as when he observes that a passage in the “Double” Concerto resembles one that Joachim wrote for the cadenza of Brahms’s Violin Concerto. At the end of a technical explanation of why this is

16. Daverio calls these “effacement techniques,” a term he introduces in the discussion of Brahms’s use of ciphers, arguing that Brahms engaged in “a process of effacement” to obscure and alter motives derived from names (pp. 121–22). For Schumann he prefers Schoenberg’s term “liquidation” for the fragmentation of motives (pp. 162 and 165).

17. Even the decision to exclude Mendelssohn from the discussion of Schumann’s appreciation of “pastness” is problematic. Schumann also praised Mendelssohn’s Overture to the fairy tale *Die schöne Melusine*, Op. 32, for beginning with “a tone out of the distant past.” This is quoted in R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 289; and in Leon Plantinga, “Schumann’s Critical Reaction to Mendelssohn,” in *Mendelssohn and Schumann: Essays on Their Music and Its Context*, ed. Jon W. Finson and R. Larry Todd (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1984), 14.

so, he adds simply, “moreover, each passage fits into the player’s hand in much the same way” (p. 231). This is part of a local explanation of how Brahms sought to engage his old friend Joachim “as both performer and composer”; but more generally, it fits into Daverio’s thesis that the overt physicality of this concerto was not in conflict with Brahms’s intellectual strengths.

Daverio argues persuasively that the poor reception of the work was directly related to its gypsy elements. While these were deemed acceptable “in the charming but ‘lower’ art of *Hausmusik*,” as for example in Brahms’s *Zigeunerlieder*, they became unsuitable and threatening in the “rarefied atmosphere of a ‘high’ artform such as the classical concerto” (p. 241). Musically exotic gestures such as the augmented second may have appealed to Brahms because they allowed him to compose a reconciliatory answer to Joachim’s “Hungarian” Concerto; but, more significantly, Brahms embraced the broader cultural import of gypsy music, which Daverio depicts as an “emblem of exclusion” (p. 239). Brahms’s assumption of a culturally marginalized voice confronted Viennese audiences and his German supporters with their preference for an altogether different sort of “doubleness”: “with the ‘Double’ Concerto . . . Brahms must have hit a raw nerve. His offense lay not so much in the calling of forbidden passions to the surface and not only in an overzealous display of intellect but rather, I think, in demonstrating that passion could be treated as a worthy object of the intellect” (p. 241).

Daverio’s book represents what it depicts, for more than in his previous books he indulges himself, and us, in digressions and intersections across great stretches of his narrative. Valuable insights are folded—fanlike—into arguments that resume at the end of engrossing side trips. Digressions and reminiscences, as Daverio observes in his epilogue, are standard techniques of storytelling, techniques employed in numerous ways by Daverio’s three musical storytellers, Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms. In formulating his final word, Daverio returns to Walter Benjamin’s lament over the demise of storytelling, a development he ascribes to the inability of people (he was writing in 1936) “to exchange experiences” (p. 244).¹⁸ Daverio seizes on a distinction between two different kinds of “experience” that in German is acknowledged by two different words, namely, *Erlebnis* (an isolated occurrence) and *Erfahrung* (a long-term engagement with an activity). Benjamin, who made much of both, prompts Daverio to revisit some of his key points in order to show how experience of both kinds affects storytelling.¹⁹ Thus his earlier description of Schubert’s and Schumann’s penchants for digressing and for musing on the past is now cast as a storyteller’s gambit, one that lends “the

18. Benjamin, “The Storyteller,” 83–84.

19. Daverio first explored Benjamin’s distinction between *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis* in a paper on Wagner’s *Götterdämmerung* that he read at a conference in Freiburg in 1993; see his “Music Drama as Modernist Text: *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis* in Wagner’s Ring Cycle,” in *Musik als Text*, ed. Hermann Danuser and Tobias Plebuch (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1998), 2:359–61.

substance of *Erfahrung* to the ephemeral *Erlebnis*” as single (musical) events are reinterpreted and contextualized, “revealing the continuity between present and past” (pp. 244–45).

This distinction leads Daverio to a concluding interpretation of Brahms’s esteem for “dauerhafte Musik” (enduring music) as “‘music rooted in the deep interior of the musical spirit, in contrast to music that clings unsteadily to superficial and subordinate elements’ ” (p. 248).²⁰ In reading this and a related text of Schumann’s as an endorsement of *Erfahrung* over *Erlebnis*, Daverio concludes his own narrative by praising his band of composers as storytellers who could “transform the momentary into the visionary, the ephemeral into the enduring” (p. 249). Passion and intellect both have a say in these last pages. John Daverio has left much in this ambitious book that will endure, either because it is read, accepted, and recounted, or because in sparking disagreement, he stimulates us to progress along new paths of our own.

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Manuel de Falla and Modernism in Spain, 1898–1936, by Carol A. Hess. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2001. xiii, 347 pp.

What do we want from Manuel de Falla these days? Do we still grant him an honorable if small niche in the international pantheon of musical modernism, as William Austin did in 1966, lauding works like *El retablo de Maese Pedro* and the Harpsichord Concerto that were far from his most popular with the public, yet dismissing as “wishful thinking” any suggestion that Falla was among the giants of his age?¹ Or do we prefer to consider him in the longer but narrower history of Spanish music? In 1941, when Falla was still alive, he was the only musician to whom Gilbert Chase devoted a whole chapter in his *Music of Spain*. Chase too gave his highest praise to the late works that he considered Falla’s most “modernist,” but he fit Falla’s modernism into a frame of Spanish nationalism: the Harpsichord Concerto represented for him the “profoundest and most intense phase” of Falla’s “endeavor to express the spiritual essence of Spain.”² Several decades later, the marketing of Falla as a modernist seems to have failed. While certain works valued for their touristic or folkloristic color—the *Noches*, the *Siete canciones* (where would senior voice recitals in

20. This is recounted by Brahms’s student Gustav Jenner, in his *Johannes Brahms als Mensch, Lehrer und Künstler* (Marburg: Elwert, 1930), 75.

1. William W. Austin, *Music in the Twentieth Century: From Debussy Through Stravinsky* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966), 120.

2. Gilbert Chase, *The Music of Spain* (1941; 2d rev. ed., New York: Dover, 1959), 194.