

# Sunday, November 10, ACMP Presents

Listening Club: Brahms Piano Quintet op.34

An arrangement of an arrangement with Peter Fender

Introduction: Often called 'crown of his chamber music' – a fair claim?

Origin: String quintet to piano sonata to piano quintet (strings to pianos to a mix)

Arranging: Brahms an adept arranger. Comparing the piano sonata and piano quintet if fruitful

History: 1862, after heightened interest in Schubert (cf. Schubert string quintet) Brahms wrote his quintet. Changed to two piano sonata in 1864 after feedback from Joachim and Clara Schumann, then again to piano quintet in 1865 after feedback from Schumann and Carlo Levi.

## Piano quintet in detail:

I: Allegro non troppo (F min)

- a) Opening is a pre-echo / rubato or not (yes, some!)
- b) Dots not light, off the string type / repeat if not too tired!
- c) Not really a loud movement

II: Andante, un poco adagio (Ab)

- a) Charming
- b) Mix of simple & compound
- c) Proto-Mahler moments

III: Scherzo: Allegro (C min / C maj in trio)

- a) Serious again
- b) Compare the piano sonata, where some sections are 'better'
- c) Trio – sounds great in Holloway's orchestral version

IV: Finale: Poco sostenuto – Allegro non troppo – Presto, non troppo (F min)

- a) Opening (cf. Schubert Octet) is a curtain raiser / getting the speed relationships right
- b) False ending at 394
- c) Presto coda



## Conclusion

Which version works best? I reckon, overall, the piano quintet!  
'Crown' of chamber music?

## Resources:

Brahms: Sonata for two pianos Op 34b / Warner Classics (Martha Argerich / Alexandre Rabinovitch)

Orchestrated by Robin Holloway / Toccata Classics

Brahms: String quintet (reconstructed by Anssi Karttunen) / Toccata Classics

Brahms: Piano quintet Kodaly Quartet & Jeno Jando / Naxos

Brahms: Piano quintet Ironwood (period instruments) / ABC Classics

Article about Brahms' lost works:

[http://www.mediafire.com/file/1o3wkuxmm6gzcch/The\\_Lost\\_Works\\_of\\_Johannes\\_Brahms.pdf/file](http://www.mediafire.com/file/1o3wkuxmm6gzcch/The_Lost_Works_of_Johannes_Brahms.pdf/file)

Book on performance practice:

Clive Brown: Classical & Romantic Performing Practice, Oxford, 1999

