ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: The Significance and Context of Brahms’ Op. 1 as a Romantic-era Sonata

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This study examines the unique qualities of Brahms’ Sonata op. 1 and places it in a historical and stylistic context. The sonata is an early work in Brahms’ output, and features elements that Brahms uses throughout his life: developing variation, orchestral texture, abundance of thirds and sixths in the figuration, and contrapuntal writing. The sonata is compared to other piano sonatas such as Beethoven’s Waldstein and Hammerklavier sonatas, and Liszt’s B-minor sonata (written in the same year as Brahms’ op. 1). Musical examples illustrate specific aspects of the sonata’s pianistic style as well as compositional techniques (links between movements, text in the second movement, and developing variation).