

Teaching guide: Area of study 1 (the piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg)

This resource is a teaching guide for Area of Study 1 for our A-level Music specification (7272). All students will need to study:

- Strand A (Baroque solo concerto)
- Strand B (The operas of Mozart)
- Strand C (The piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg).

Appraising music - listening

In the listening part of the examination, students will be tested on their recognition of musical elements from excerpts of unfamiliar music from all three of these strands. Their learning and understanding of these musical elements can be developed from their study of the set works.

In the examination they will be required to apply their knowledge and skills to excerpts from other works within the genre. For two of these strands, students will also be required to use their recognition of these elements to place the music in context.

We recommend that teachers broaden their students' experience of these genres by regularly exposing them to works by other composers (in the case of Baroque solo concerto), other Mozart operas and other piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg. Students could listen to examples from the list below:

- Chopin: Nocturnes and Ballades; Waltzes, Mazurkas and Polonaises; Preludes, Etudes and Impromptus, Any of the other Lyric pieces, Album Leaves and Norwegian Dances.
- Brahms: Intermezzos and Ballades, Op.10. Ballades, Op.24 Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, Op.79 Two Rhapsodies, Op.117/118/119 any of the other Intermezzi, Rhapsodies and Romance
- Grieg: any of the other Lyric Pieces

In the analysis part of the examination, students will be required, with the help of a printed score, to answer specific questions on musical elements and contextual understanding from two of the three strands. They will need to use their knowledge and understanding of the set works in order to show:

- the effect of audience, time and place on how the set works were created, developed and performed
- how and why the music across the selected strand is different
- how the composer's purpose and intention for the set works is reflected in their use of musical elements
- relevant musical vocabulary and terminology for the set works
- the complex interdependencies between musical elements
- the sophisticated connections between music and its context.

The scores will be Sibelius files of an extract from each of the set works (one from each strand). No prior knowledge of a particular edition of the set works will be necessary for this, but you can find the files used in the exam on [e-AQA](#).

The piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg

In the early nineteenth century, new ideas in music and the arts heralded the birth of Romanticism. Emboldened by the revolutionary fervour in France, new thinking centred on the freedom of the individual as opposed to that of the accepted authorities, including political, religious and social orders. In music, following the inspiration of Beethoven, this manifest itself in works which concentrated more on personal expression rather than formal design, pieces which were unrestrained in imagination and emotive power, and music which was inspired by poetry, the force of nature and, indeed, the supernatural. If the music of the classical period can be considered the epitome of grace and elegance, order and proportion, and ever pleasing to the ear, then the music of the romantic period strives to embrace feelings and emotions, with the power to rouse hearts and souls, express (for example) themes of heroism or destruction, and touch the most private intimacies.

Recent developments in the construction of the piano made this the ideal instrument for romantic expression.

Significant improvements included:

- cast iron frames as opposed to wooden frames which allowed for larger and stronger strings under increased tension
- felt instead of leather on the hammers
- seven octave range (as opposed to five)
- establishment of the sustaining and *una corda* pedals.
- The result of these improvements included:
 - a more sonorous tone offering a broader palette of colours
 - a better sustaining power to support legato phrasing (of longer note values) and an *espressivo cantabile*
 - a greater dynamic range with more sensitive gradations from *ppp* to *fff* and an ability to balance textures
 - greater expressive direction given by the composer to the performer on the printed score
 - pianistic techniques involving wrists and forearms (as opposed to a purely digital action).

Composers such as Chopin and Liszt were quick to capitalise on these changes, frequently writing music which displayed virtuosity, technical accomplishment and showmanship in much the same way that Paganini had for the violin.

Chopin – Nocturne in E minor op.72 no.1 and Ballade No.2 in F major op.38

Frederic Chopin was born in 1810 in Zelazowa Wola, a small village 30 miles to the west of Warsaw where his father was a private tutor and his mother a companion and housekeeper to the wealthy, if divorced, Countess Skarbek. Chopin's father came from Lorraine in France, where there was a significant Polish community, and later he became a lecturer in French (as well as running a boarding house for pupils at the Lyceum) in Warsaw. Here the young Frederic grew up amongst intellectuals and musicians, with an easy access to aristocratic circles. His mother was a pianist of some ability and undoubtedly fostered his love of the instrument. From an early age he was regarded as something of a child prodigy, constantly improvising at the keyboard and notably performing a piano concerto by Gyrowetz in the Radziwill Palace when only seven years old. In the same year he presented the Empress Maria Feodorovna with two recently composed *Polonaises*. He was taught harmony by Jozef Elsner, a leading musician in Warsaw, from the age of 13, and joined the High School of Music in 1826 having already had his op.1 (Rondo in c minor) published. There he was immersed in the music of the great masters, Bach and Mozart especially, and visits to Berlin and Vienna also introduced him to the operas of Weber, Rossini and Meyerbeer.

By the time Chopin left Warsaw in 1830, he had composed a considerable quantity of music, all for the piano and mostly of the post-classical concert music type. These were works designed for the salon concerts and public benefit concerts which typically displayed pianistic virtuosity through forms of impressive figurations, hand-crossings, wide leaps, trills and double trills and arpeggiated passage-work. The familiar titles for which Chopin has become synonymous were already well established, the Waltz, Mazurka, Etude and Nocturne.

John Field, the Irish composer who settled in Russia, is credited with inventing the Nocturne 'a poetic mood-picture in sound' and those in Bb major and E minor are well worthy of study and certainly a positive influence on Chopin's writing. Chopin wrote 21 Nocturnes in all, and this one in E minor, probably composed sometime between 1827 and 1829, although not published until after his death, was Chopin's first with that title.

It is typical for the following attributes:

- slow tempo (only op.9 no.3 is as fast as *allegretto*)
- regular rhythmical flow in the left hand
- melancholic and reflective character
- melody – dominated texture, above a largely unvaried homophonic accompaniment
- extensive ornamentation, somewhat improvisatory in feel and imitative of the '*bel canto*' style
- very wide range of pitch (in the left hand arpeggio patterns as well as the melodic tessitura)
- significant rhythmic variety in the melody, including twos against threes and use of sextuplets etc
- largely conjunct melodic shapes, full of yearning appoggiaturas
- slow moving, functional harmony with chromatic inflexions
- clearly designed tonal scheme

- overall arch shape with a quiet start, building to an impassioned climax before subsiding to a final repose.

Andante

appoggiatura

acciaccatura

accented passing note

preparation

suspension

upwards resolution

p

double appoggiatura

4

The piece starts with the triplet patterns in the accompaniment which will permeate the whole Nocturne as a rhythmic ostinato. This regular flow of quavers in the left hand gives a structure which allows the melody freedom to explore the whole gamut of rhythmical durations from semibreves through to demisemiquavers and groups of ten and even eleven notes to a beat at the approach to the climax in bar 37.

The arpeggio figure which outlines the tonic chord of E minor has a rising trajectory over its two-beat length, the tonic note given due prominence at the start of each beat (low on the strong beats and an octave higher on the weak beats), the dominant also sounding twice, and the minor third only once. The sighing appoggiatura is especially significant, approached by a yearning rising minor 6th which anticipates the start of the melody and is strategically positioned in the rich tenor register of the instrument high above the root of the chord.

The harmony of this opening statement is straightforward. A bar of tonic at the start and dominant at the end (imperfect cadence) which is embellished with the chromatic diminished 7th chord at bar 5 beat 2. Between these two points the harmony changes on every strong beat: Vc7 - Ib - Vb7 - I.

Against this rhythmic and harmonic backdrop, it is to the *espressivo sostenuto* melody that the listener's attention is drawn. Starting high in the treble range (three octaves and more above the bass) it traces a descending shape which at almost all points moves in contrary motion with the accompaniment. The top G affects a plaintive sound as it sits on the minor 3rd of the chord, texturally distinct and given more emphasis by the anticipatory *acciaccatura*. The first three pitches imitate the end of the bass ostinato, and then the phrase falls by step to the D# (outlining a melancholic diminished 4th interval). Harmonic tension is felt firstly by the clashing passing note in bar 2, then more intensively by the suspension half-way through bar

3 and lastly by a double appoggiatura followed by a double accented passing note in bar 4. This sense in which the melody is at odds with the supporting accompaniment is complemented by the rhythmic movement, long durations at the beginnings followed by shorter notes towards the ends of each bar, the quavers moving cross-rhythmically against the triplets. The doubling of the melodic line in parallel 3rds at the end of the phrase offers some comfort to the cadential repose.

The accomplished pianist will achieve a successfully poetic and artistic interpretation of this opening by:

- a good legato touch, aided by judicious pedalling
- a fluid left-hand technique negotiating the large leaps with even tone
- an expressively singing melodic tone, balanced against the accompaniment
- rhythmic flexibility (*rubato*) which enhances the effects of dissonance and its resolution
- an awareness of the phrase-direction and harmonic progression.

6

VI aug 6th V(sus. 4) V7 I dim 7th

8

V9 (sus. 4) V7 I

The second phrase in bars 6 - 9 is quite different in character. The abrupt change to G major (the relative major) coupled with the rising melodic contour suggests an altogether more confident purpose. The chord on the 2nd beat sounds initially like a secondary 7th (G7 - V7 of IV), but in fact functions as an augmented 6th (the German variety) resolving to V in B minor (the dominant) which is indeed where the phrase cadences in bar 9 after more chromatic harmony, including a diminished 7th chord and a dominant minor 9th chord complete with a 4 - 3 suspension. Note how the tonic chord of the perfect cadence (bar 9 beat 1) is a bare fifth, allowing for the D# on the 2nd beat to complete a dominant minor 9th chord back in the tonic (E minor) for the return of the opening theme.

Other features of this phrase include:

- the twin melody lines which move closely together and largely in parallel
- the longer note values which draw attention back towards the more interesting and wide-ranging left-hand part
- the quicker harmonic rhythm as the melody rises in bar 6 and...
- the slower harmonic rhythm in the approach to the cadence as the melodic line falls.

Bars 10 - 13 are a repeat of the opening four-bar phrase with an increased intensity achieved by:

- mf dynamic
- melody in octaves (doubled an octave lower in the middle register giving a greater depth to the tone)
- a more declamatory style as the phrase rises away from the suspension
- a more consonant (and momentarily chromatic) 3rd bar (bar 12)
- triplets in the melody coinciding with the rhythm of the accompaniment
- inversion of the final parallel 3rds into parallel 6ths.

At bar 14 the music heads off in a different direction. Starting directly on a B minor chord, the harmony moves through a series of V7 - I progressions every half - bar:

Bar number	Chord	Key
14 ²	Vc ⁷	C major
14 ³⁻⁴	I (9–8 suspension)	C major
15 ¹⁻²	V ⁷	C major
15 ³⁻⁴	I	C major
16 ¹⁻²	Vb ⁷	D minor
16 ³⁻⁴	I	D minor
17 ¹⁻²	Vb ⁷	E minor
17 ³	I/IV	E minor/ B minor
17 ⁴	Iib ⁷	B minor
18 ¹⁻²	Ic	B minor
18 ³⁻⁴	V (4–3 suspension)	B minor
19 ¹⁻²	V ⁷	E minor

19 ³⁻⁴	I/IV	E minor/ B minor
20 ¹⁻²	V (9–8 suspension)	B minor
20 ³⁻⁴	Ic	B minor
21	V (4–3 suspension)	B minor
22	I (<i>Tierce de Picardie</i>)	B minor

This modulatory passage might naturally finish after six bars with a perfect cadence in B minor, but Chopin extends it for three more bars with the *sforzando* interruption at the start of bar 19, and then a long drawn-out cadence figure over a dominant pedal to defer the tonic chord until bar 22, the *tierce de Picardie* sounding all the sweeter for its delay.

Other features of this 9 bar passage include:

- the lower melodic voice assumes a more independent role
- the texture thickens during the rising sequence of bars 16 - 17 leading to a first climax at bar 18
- the ostinato triplet quavers become entwined with the upper parts
- false relations in the cadence (A/A# and E/E#).

The first 22 bars complete the opening section of the piece, which can be summarised as:

bars 1 - 5 A	imperfect cadence	E minor
bars 6 - 9 B	perfect cadence	B minor
bars 10 - 13 A'	imperfect cadence	E minor
bars 14 - 22 C	perfect cadence	B minor

At bar 22 the *tierce de Picardie* effects a move to the dominant major key, and the bass *ostinato* pattern changes shape, replacing the yearning appoggiatura figure with a stepwise descent back down to the tonic. These two contrasts, coupled with the whole eight-bar section resting on a tonic pedal, make this second section of the Nocturne sound much sweeter and more peaceful in mood, giving it the sense of being a drawn-out codetta. Note how once again Chopin derives the opening of the melody (x) from a rhythmically augmented version of the end of the bass ostinato pattern.

This melody is again wholly conjunct, in parallel 3rds throughout, and with some textural and harmonic reinforcement at the peak of the phrase where the diminished 7th chord is resolved after a double suspension at bar 26¹. The chromatic movement and false relation at bar 24⁴ (not evident in every edition of this work) adds some pathos to this passage.

The four-bar phrase which follows in bar 27 is a varied repeat, this time falling in shape during the diminished 7th harmony, with added lower auxiliaries in 3rds in the lower voices, before ending on a decisive dominant minor 9th chord in bar 30, the 4 - 3 suspension intensifying the return to E minor.

If the first half of this Nocturne has seemed gentle and restful with little obvious technical demand then it is at bar 31 where the action and drama begin. Structurally, the second half of the piece is a repeat of the first half, albeit with the final section now in the tonic major key (E major), but pianistically and emotionally it is altogether more powerful.

The image displays a musical score extract for Chopin's Nocturne in E minor, Op. 9, No. 3. It is divided into two systems. The first system shows the right-hand part (RH) for bars 31-34 and the left-hand part (LH) for bars 22-25. The RH part (bars 31-34) is marked *f* and features a melody of parallel thirds. Bar 31 begins with a trill on the note G4. The LH part (bars 22-25) is marked *p* and features a bass line of parallel thirds. Bar 22 begins with a trill on the note G2. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (*f*, *p*), articulation (trill), and performance instructions (*cresc.*). The RH part ends with a double suspension in bar 34. The LH part ends with a dominant minor 9th chord in bar 25.

The above extract compares the right-hand part of bars 31 - 34 with bars 2 - 5, the left hand part being identical (except for some small changes in the last bar). Here one can find examples of Chopin's fingerprint *fioritura* style, often likened to the singers' ornamentation of arias in the *bel canto* operatic world. The long sustained notes at the starts of each bar are retained but the quavers at the ends of the bars now turn into increasingly agitated pyrotechnics. Note also the *forte* dynamic and the very wide tessitura (one octave higher in bar 33, and two octaves higher than bar 5 at the start of bar 34).

The next phrase in bars 35 - 38 extends this increased excitement further, bringing the trills also to the longer notes and energising the rhythmic movement into groups

of 10 and 11 notes to a beat. At the moment of greatest passion (bar 37⁴ - 38¹) the hands are moving in opposite directions in a pattern of 11 against 3, the right hand fleeing up a chromatic scale whilst the left hand descends octave by octave to a unison B five octaves apart.

Calmer waters resume at bar 39 with the return of the opening phrase again in octaves, largely following the contours of bars 10 - 13, and the excitement subsides further with an I_c - V - I cadence extended over four bars by some diminished 7th harmonies. These bars are reminiscent of bars 19 - 22, but now the perfect cadence is in E major (the tonic major). This is the one and only perfect cadence in the tonic key throughout the whole piece.

A long coda section, based on the material from bars 23 - 30, follows and gradually the music winds down over a 12 bar tonic pedal, the melody falling in pitch, lengthening in note values and slowing to one chord per bar in harmonic rhythm as the dynamic reduces to *pp*. Diminished 7th chords (rootless dominant minor 9ths) substitute for chord V in the last five bars as the pace slows and the music dies away - *calando* - until the left hand ostinato triplet quavers finally stop and bring the piece to a close in bar 57.

Ballade No.2 in F major op.38

If the Nocturne is an example of Chopin's early style with its roots in the classical structures (of tonal scheme, harmonic function and texture) and the elements of pianistic display largely centred on melodic ornamentation, then the Ballade is altogether a much more mature and overtly romantic work, written during the period when he was living with the writer George Sand, largely in Nohant in the Indre region of France, and subsequently completed during his convalescence on the island of Majorca in 1839. Since leaving Warsaw, Chopin had moved to Paris (via Vienna) and flourished in the fashionable salons performing, composing and teaching. As his fame grew, he withdrew from performing in the larger concert halls, preferring the more intimate and artistic environment of the salons, and was increasingly successful in earning a living from the sale of his compositions.

Chopin was the first composer to title his piano works Ballades, essentially a narrative including dance elements similar to that of the poetic ballad and the four which he composed have become established as cornerstones of the 19th century piano repertory. According to Robert Schumann (to whom the Second Ballade was dedicated) the work was inspired by the ballad 'Switez' by the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz. This tells the tale of life in a rural Polish village where the young girls are threatened by invading Russian soldiers. They pray that they will be swallowed up by the earth and later transformed into beautiful flowers.

The image shows the beginning of Chopin's Ballade No. 2 in F major, Op. 38. The score is in 6/8 time and F major. It is marked 'Andantino' and 'sotto voce'. The first system shows the first four bars, with '1' above the first bar and 'phrase a' above the first four bars. The second system shows bars 5-8, with '5' above the first bar and 'phrase b' above the first four bars. Both phrases have 'x' marks above them, indicating specific intervals or notes.

The work begins with due innocence in the typically pastoral key of F major with a gently throbbing 6/8 rhythm which is characteristic of the barcarolle (and common to all four of Chopin's Ballades). A repeated anacrustic dominant note, in octaves, introduces the main theme (a) which has a folk-like sound with its narrow octave range and frequent intervals of a third. The first four-bar phrase rises to an early peak before falling the full octave to finish on the third. The subsequent phrase (b) emphasises this mediant note on every beat before finally falling to the tonic. These A's will assume a greater significance as the work develops.

The accompaniment is entirely chordal and homorhythmic, with the exception of the falling passing notes and dotted rhythms which hint at the sicilienne. The harmony is wholly diatonic, the repeated fifths in bars 2 - 3 suggesting a drone and the repeated Ic chords in bars 6 - 8 highlighting the instability of the rocking movement. Note the subtle changes of texture at the two cadence points, the falling ninth favouring the dominant approach chord.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The first system, starting at bar 17, is divided into 'phrase c' (bars 17-18) and 'phrase b' (bars 19-21). The second system, starting at bar 22, is labeled 'phrase a' (bars 22-26). The notation includes treble and bass staves with various musical symbols such as chords, notes, and dynamics like 'pp'. A bracket labeled 'x' is placed over bars 22-23 in the second system.

The two phrases (a + b) are then repeated again before, at bar 17, a new phrase (c) takes the music away from the tonic towards, significantly, A minor at bar 19 and then sequentially on to the dominant (C major) at bar 21. Here the second phrase (b) is reiterated a fifth higher before the music returns to the tonic via the chromatic diminished 7th chord (rootless dominant minor 9th) in bar 25 and a 9 - 8 suspension in bar 26.

A recapitulation of the opening completes the ternary structure of this first section of the piece (A) until an unexpected change of harmony interrupts the perfect cadence in bar 33. Phrase b now returns in A minor (perfect cadence in bar 37), the last two bars repeated as a descending sequence in G minor (via another diminished 7th chord) until the penultimate note is harmonised as a dominant 13th (instead of a 4 - 3 suspension), bringing the tonality back to F major. A repetition of this two-bar phrase (with an added acciaccatura) is followed by no fewer than six repetitions of the $V^{13} - I$ progression, in decreasing rhythmic units, the falling sicilienne motif (x) now featuring at the bottom of the texture.

The first section of the piece therefore has the following overall ternary structure:

Bars 0–24	Introduction	Dominant preparation
bars 1 ⁶ –5 ⁵	phrase a	F major
bars 5 ⁶ –9 ³	phrase b	F major
bars 9 ⁴ –13 ⁵	phrase a	F major
bars 13 ⁶ –17 ³	phrase b	F major
bars 17 ⁴ –21 ³	phrase c	A minor to C major
bars 21 ⁴ –25 ³	phrase b	F major
bars 26 ³ –29 ⁵	phrase a	F major
bars 29 ⁶ –33 ⁵	phrase b	F major
bars 33 ⁶ –37 ³	phrase b	A minor
bars 37 ⁴ –39 ³	end of phrase b	G minor to F major
bars 39 ⁴ –41 ³	end of phrase b	G minor to F major
bars 41 ⁴ –45	codetta	F major

Presto con fuoco

Cross rhythms dominate the frenzied violence of the second section of the piece (B), with its abrupt change of tempo, key, texture and dynamic. In bars 46, 48 and subsequently, the right hand patterns are in four-semiquaver groups (a), giving a 3/4 crotchet metre against the left hand 6/8 metre. In bars 47, 49 and subsequently, the left hand patterns are in three-semiquaver groups (c), producing a four beat metre against the right hand pairs of semiquavers (b).

The key (A minor) is a tertiary modulation (much favoured by composers of the early romantic period) and prefaced by the repeated As at the end of bar 45. The new tonality is firmly established by six bars of tonic pedal, underpinning the tonic and diminished 7th chords which alternate through this opening. Semitone steps are another important feature (F - E descending in the r.h. and B \flat - C ascending in the l.h.) and F - E again at the end of the given passage (bar 51) in rhythmic augmentation in the bass. The F in the r.h. pattern acts as a kind of appoggiatura figure, providing another link back to the F major key of the previous section, and here Chopin again emphasises the third degree of the scale in the shape of the l.h. motif.

The changes of dynamic and texture are perhaps the most immediately obvious contrasts in the dramatic mood here. After the homophonic and chordal opening, largely sitting in the middle register of the piano, the parts now move independently, at almost all points in contrary motion, starting from a position five octaves apart. The l.h. octaves add weight to the bass.

Bars 54 - 59 are a repeat of bars 46 - 51 a tone lower in G minor (effected through another diminished 7th and V7 harmony in bars 52 - 53), and then a half-diminished 7th chord in bars 60 - 61 brings the music to the dominant of D minor in bar 62. Here the sicilienne rhythm (x) finds voice amongst the turbulence of the semiquavers in a rising sequence (D minor - F minor - Ab minor) which explores the darker keys through ascents of minor thirds.

A point of climax is reached at bar 68. Here the tonality has reached Ab minor (the furthest point away from where this section started in A minor), and a crashing IVb \flat ⁷

chord with a 9 - 8 suspension resolves to chord V (Phrygian cadence) at bar 70. From here to the end of the section the music gradually subsides through a series of modally inflected chords, the musical temperature falling as the chords descend over a 9 bar dominant pedal and rising Ab minor scales.

When the parts exchange in bar 78 the Fb minor triads assume something more of a

The image shows a musical score for piano, consisting of two systems of staves. The first system covers bars 93 to 97. The treble clef part features a 9-8 suspension in the first bar, followed by a series of chords. The bass clef part has a chromatic descent. A bracket labeled 'z' spans the first two bars of the bass line. The second system covers bars 98 to 106. The treble clef part has a chromatic descent, with brackets labeled 'z'' above it. The bass clef part also has a chromatic descent, with a bracket labeled 'z'' above it.

Neapolitan sound and then a chromatic descent in parallel first inversion chords (bars 79 - 81) brings about a return to F major.

Bars 82 - 139 (development)

Section A now returns back at the original tempo, dynamic and key. The music begins at the start of the recapitulation (ie bar 26³) with the second phrase (b) abruptly truncated in its second bar. The third phrase (b in A minor) resumes at bar 88 until the second of the F major cadences is suddenly interrupted with a diminished 7th harmony at bar 95.

There then follows a long section of development based largely on motifs x and z. An enharmonic switch (from F# to Gb) takes the tonality to Db major and two-part imitation of z' ensues over a dominant pedal, which is then repeated in bars 103 - 106 a 4th higher in Gb major. The music becomes more impassioned at bar 107 '*stretto piu mosso*' and takes on something of the mood from section B, patterns of x and z working against each other in contrary motion in a wider textural spread with both hands in octaves. The climax arrives at bar 110 with a bold statement of the opening theme in Bb major, then in descending sequence in G minor followed by an unexpected switch to E major (Vd⁷ in bar 114) and a full statement of the theme in the tenor voice in the middle of the texture as the excitement subsides and the mood becomes tender once more. A similar statement follows in the bass in C major before the whole of the development section from bars 97 - 114 is repeated almost exactly, now a semitone lower than before. The bold statement of the theme at bar 135 is now in G minor and the music hurries straight into bars 140 - 167 (mirror reprise).

Section B starts in D minor and sounds for six bars as a tonal resolution of this material in the original key area (F major). However, at bar 146 the tonality moves towards A minor and another restatement of the music exactly as in bars 46 - 51, until a strong four-note chromatic descent under a cascade of A minor arpeggio

figures reaches a defining Ic chord in bar 156. After two false starts, the full theme from section A is stated in octaves in the bass (for the first time in A minor) under this Ic harmony. The dominant (V⁹) arrives at bar 164 and A minor is affirmed as the tonic for the exhilarating coda.

Bars 168 – 195 (coda)

The two principal ideas of the work having been reconciled in the key of A minor,

lower chromatic auxiliary

168 **Agitato**

poggiatura

I IIc7 V7

170

I V7 of G I V7 of F Ic II V7

Chopin launches into an exultant and bravura final section which exudes a joyous confidence and rhythmic energy in abundance.

After the long drawn-out Ic - V - I cadence (bars 156 - 168) the harmonic pace quickens (aided by the faster tempo) to two, and then four, chords per bar and the restless semiquavers decorate with lower chromatic auxiliaries (in an heterophonic texture) the falling appoggiatura figures (F - E) taken from the opening of the B section (bar 46). A circle of fifths progression precedes the cadence, and then the whole four-bar passage is repeated in bars 172 - 173 an octave higher, the false relations speaking here with an even brighter clarity.

The falling semitones which were such an important feature of the *Presto con fuoco* are now developed with even greater prominence. As the bass line moves chromatically down every half bar from the tonic to the dominant, with the upper melody line in parallel 10ths, so the lower melody line descends the same steps in rhythmic diminution, the three-bar sequence of colourful harmony completed with a fourth bar of exciting syncopation in the cadence figure. This four-bar phrase is also repeated (an octave lower), before a French augmented sixth chord (in bar 184) begins a passage of ambitious chromatic harmony where the bass rises through the full twelve steps of the chromatic scale to a point of climax at bar 188.

Here the music of the B section is reprised one final time, with a fuller right hand texture and even greater prominence given to the falling appoggiaturas before another climax concludes with a shattering French augmented 6th. Out of the resonance of this ten-note chord comes Chopin's final masterstroke, the opening theme, quietly and simply in A minor. The phrase is left incomplete for two beats of silence and reflection before the final perfect cadence, the pastoral mood of the opening now well and truly transformed.

Brahms - Intermezzo in A major op.118 no.2 and Ballade in G minor op.118 no.3

Where Chopin's oeuvre centred almost exclusively on music written for the piano, that of Johannes Brahms encompassed the whole range of works for orchestra (four symphonies, overtures, piano and violin concertos), choir (the German Requiem), chamber music and songs. And where Chopin's music was inevitably youthful (he died at the age of 39), Brahms wrote these piano pieces during the final years of his life when he was nearing sixty. Chopin's inspiration for composition included an element of improvisation and showmanship on the part of the performer; Brahms' style is altogether more cerebral and profound, skilled in aspects of counterpoint and rhythm which aptly position him alongside his illustrious German predecessors Bach and Beethoven. What Brahms and Chopin share, of course, is an essential romantic lyricism.

Op.118 comprises six short character pieces, not necessarily intended to be played as a set, composed in 1893 and dedicated to Clara Schumann. Unlike other romantic miniaturists, such as Robert Schumann and Edward Grieg, who gave their piano pieces more fanciful titles, Brahms calls four of them simply *Intermezzo*, the other two being *Ballade* and *Romanze*. There are no thematic connections between the pieces, nor any over-arching key structure, although the two major key pieces immediately follow on from their minor equivalents and there is a gradual descent from A major to E minor. Clara Schumann said "she was delighted with Brahms' ability to reveal such 'a wealth of sentiment in the smallest of dimensions.'"

Intermezzo No.2 in A major is one of Brahms most loved and often played pieces, both in the concert hall by professional artists (a frequent encore item after concerto performances) and by amateur pianists at home. It is eminently accessible by players of grade 8 ability (with large hands!). An *intermezzo* is an in-between piece, one which both reflects the past and also looks forward to the future; a comment from one of Brahms' contemporaries which could apply both to its musical style as well as in its interpretation of human experience.

Three motifs provide the melodic material for the opening A section, each starting on the anacrusis and of three beat duration. Motif (a) is characterised by its anapestic rhythm and lower *échappée* note, motif (b) by its dotted rhythms and rising shape which is then balanced by the falling shape of motif (c) in straight crotchets.

Andante teneramente

The musical score shows the beginning of the piece in A major, 3/4 time. The tempo is 'Andante teneramente' and the dynamics are 'p'. The score is divided into measures, with three motifs labeled 'a', 'a'', 'b', and 'c'. Motif 'a' is an anapestic rhythm starting on the anacrusis. Motif 'a'' is a variation of motif 'a'. Motif 'b' consists of dotted rhythms with a rising shape. Motif 'c' consists of straight crotchets with a falling shape. The score includes chord symbols: I, IVc, IVc, IV, Vd7, Ib, II*, Ic, V. There are also asterisks under some notes in the bass line.

Typical Brahmsian features of this opening four-bar phrase include the augmentation of the rising 3rd to a rising 7th in the repeat of (a), and the doubling of the melody in 3rds, 6ths and 10ths. Indeed, there is a distinctive sonorousness to the whole piano texture exemplified by:

- the polarising of the two melodic voices above the harmony in the opening chord
- the very wide spacing of the three-part textures at the starts of bar 1 and 2 (four octaves apart)
- the thickening of the texture to six parts in support of the rising phrase in bar 3.

A dreamy wistfulness emanates from the falling stepwise motion of the lower melodic voice (marked *) and the falling arpeggios in the accompaniment, enhanced by the restful harmony of chord IV over a very low tonic pedal in bars 1 and 2. A greater energy emerges in the second half of the phrase as the harmony changes beat by beat to the imperfect cadence.

4

p dolce

appoggiatura

retrograde inversion of a

VIIb(of IV) IVb Ic Vb7 Vd7 Ib(sus7) IIb7 V7 I(sus4/7)

in E major

The phrase is repeated (*dolce*) in a typically classical design, this time modulating to the dominant key. The reharmonising of this second phrase begins with a strengthening of the move to chord IV by a G \flat in bar 4 (secondary dominant) before the decisive turn towards the sharper tonality early in the phrase in bar 6. This striking harmonic progression is characterised by multiple dissonances, melodic dissonances (appoggiaturas) superimposed on harmonic dissonances (suspensions), until the tension is resolved on the second beat of bar 8. The double dissonances at bar 6³ and 7¹ are further emphasised by the closeness of the bass voicings low in the register. (Upwardly resolving suspensions, such as the D \sharp - E in bar 8, are sometimes referred to as retardations).

Melodic cohesion is achieved by:

- the rising 7th interval in bar 5 matched by a 7th descent in bar 7
- the shape of motif (a) appearing in retrograde inversion at the conclusion of the phrase.

This eight-bar section is then repeated in its entirety at a quieter dynamic level (*pp*).

The (b) motif is subtly varied in bars 10 - 11 in the following three ways:

- chromatic harmony (diminished 7th at 11¹)
- double suspension emphasising the high-point of the phrase at 11²
- lower melodic voice assuming greater importance as it falls by chromatic steps with anticipations.

14

anticipation

chromatic accented passing note

Vd13 Ib IIb7 V7 I(sus4/7)

This development of the material is taken further in bars 14 - 15. The inner melodic voice tracing a rising chromatic line as the lower voice descends by step (marked *), the double dissonances preceded by anticipations. Notice how the peak of the phrase is now followed by the descent of a minor 9th.

After an opening 16 bars which have largely looked towards the dominant key (with backward glances towards the subdominant), the middle part of this first section (bars 16³ - 34²) begins with an abrupt side-step to C major (the flattened submediant of the dominant), taking the harmony into new-found territory. This part also contrasts with the opening in the following ways:

- single line melody
- lower register melody with a narrower range and mostly stepwise movement
- melody has steady crotchet tread
- slow harmonic rhythm, changing on the 3rd beats of each bar to create metrical displacement
- inconclusive cadence points.

However, similarities exist too:

- phrase structure - 1 bar + 1 bar + 2 bars repeated
- regular quaver movement in the accompaniment
- largely five-voiced texture
- falling three-note scale motif (bar 19)
- quiet legato character.

The bass of the C major chord in 1st inversion turns out to be a dominant pedal, the inner voices rising chromatically to a dominant 7th at 18³, which is left unresolved when the bass rises to the tonic at bar 20. Another side-step to F major (the flattened submediant of the tonic) is followed by a German augmented sixth chord (21³), a diminished seventh chord (23³) before the IIb7 chord with its long-held accented passing note (G# in bar 24) leads the harmony back to the dominant. Metrical ambiguity pervades the whole of this passage. On the one hand, melodic accentuation can be found on the first beats of the bars through the dissonances (upper auxiliaries), melodic shapes (highest notes) and melodic hair-pins, but the accompaniment emphasises the third beats of the bars.

The build to the first climax of the piece is an extended phrase (six-bars) built on a sequential ascent of three-note chromatic steps (marked *) and variants of motif (a), over a dominant pedal. The dominant chord at the start of bar 25 is an important structural moment, the first root position chord of the piece on a downbeat, providing a brief moment of metrical and harmonic cohesion. Whilst the bass reiterates the low dominant note, the inner accompanying figures suggest a subtle 6/8 feel working cross-rhythmically against the melody.

The pedal is released one bar before the climax, stepping back to the subdominant (via V7 of IV), and then all parts move in a 6/8 metre (bar 29) to reveal the opening phrase of the piece, rhythmically augmented the top A now triumphantly supported by a sure-footed root position subdominant harmony and *forte* dynamic. Note the falling descent of the lower melodic line from bar 1, now in augmentation and reinforced an octave lower at two quavers distance (also marked *).

The expected recapitulation of the A section is delayed for a further four bars. The dominant pedal is now replaced by a balancing inner tonic pedal (in octaves, the lower voice reiterated in throbbing syncopations), whilst the three-note falling melodic line (*) is extended to a full seven steps, effectively counter-balancing the rising seventh of the earlier climax, and the preeminence of the outlying pitches in these phrase shapes is reinforced by an added 6th in the subdominant harmony. The sudden drop of tessitura, supported by the darker chordal texture, provides for a more melancholic and brooding character, aided by the falling accented passing notes in the melody and the gloomy appearance of motif (a) in the bass. Brahms heightens this change further with the switch to the minor key in bar 33, and the instruction *calando* (dying away).

What now follows is one of those extraordinary moments where Brahms combines artistic beauty with supreme compositional craftsmanship.

34

dolce

a inverted

a inverted

Ib IV Ib Vb7(ofV) Ic IIIb II V I (sus4/7)

- The theme returns in inverted form.
- It's a real (chromatically exact) inversion of the minor version heard in the bass in bars 33 – 34.
- Its pitch mirrors the bass version exactly about the A/B axis (major 13th) heard throughout bars 31 – 34.
- At the start of the piece, the three-note motif followed the pattern: consonance - dissonance – dissonance.
- In bars 34 - 35, the pattern is now dissonance (appoggiatura) - consonance – consonance.
- In bars 0 - 1, the harmony and metre are at odds with each other - root position tonic chord on the upbeat, followed by an unstable second inversion subdominant chord on the down beat.
- In bars 34 - 35, the harmony and metre are in agreement - first inversion tonic chord on the upbeat, followed by a root position subdominant chord on the down beat.
- In bars 0 - 2, melody and bass move in contrary motion, the rising melody aspirational if uncertain.
- In bars 34 - 36, melody and bass move together, both falling securely on to the downbeats.
- The imitation of (a) in the lower voice is metrically displaced, reinforcing the consonance of the harmony.
- The brighter tessitura and warmer textures support the return to the major tonality and *dolce* instruction.

A single statement of the opening four-bar phrase finally results in a perfect cadence in the tonic key. Bar 39 is the first root position A major chord since the very opening upbeat. A codetta ensues, based largely on the material of the middle section (bars 16³ - 24), but now sitting on a four-bar tonic pedal followed by a VI - IV - IIb7 - V7 - I progression. The metrical displacement heard earlier is further enhanced in this section by two typically Brahmsian hemiolas (bars 40³ - 43² and bars 44³ - 46²). Before metrical stability is finally restored in the cadence figure, but not before Brahms finds yet another re-harmonization of the (a) motif.

The last chord is a moment of welcome repose. Not only is it, finally, a root position tonic chord on a strong beat, but also it marks the moment when the opening two quavers of the piece eventually find their way to fall on to the tonic note, a remarkable example of Brahms' ability to set up expectation and delay its fulfilment.

più lento

46

p

a

*

V13

V7

I

The B section (bars 48³ - 76²) of this ternary form piece begins with three immediately apparent contrasts:

- F# minor key (achieved through the linking C# common to both tonic chords)
- triplet quaver movement throughout in the accompaniment in cross-rhythm with the melodic quavers
- three-part texture containing canonic fragments.

The melody is based on a new motif (x) followed by falling steps, which link back to the descending patterns of the A section (see motifs b and c), and a falling sequence in bars 50 - 51. The descent extends from the top F# in bar 48 down a minor 7th to the G# in bar 52 (see bars 30 - 32) and is full of yearning appoggiaturas made all the more expressive by the successive augmentation of the intervals (rising augmented 4th at bar 50³, falling 5th at bar 52¹, rising minor 6th at bar 52²) and the contrary contour of the bass line at each of these points.

48

p

x

appoggiatura

x

appoggiatura

x

appoggiaturas

x'

3

*

I

IVc7

IV7

I

IIIb

IIc7

II7

V7

Rhythmically, motif (x) is treated both to diminution and also displacement to a different part of the bar giving rise to a *hemiolaic* feel in the running quavers of bars 51 - 52. A typical characteristic of Brahms' left hand figurations are the descending triplet patterns where the bass of the harmony occurs on the final quaver of the beat, giving a further cross-rhythmical effect to the phrasing and providing for a more subtle sense of harmonic progression. Note the * bass pitches which show an

increase in the rate of harmonic rhythm towards the end of the phrase after an opening tonic pedal and also outline a retrograde version of the first four notes of the melodic line.

Equally familiar in Brahms' piano music is the sound of the inner voice in the tenor register which assumes a canonic role initially, an octave lower than the *dux* and at two beats distance. Later the *comes* line becomes fragmented, falling further and further behind the leading voice, doubling the main melodic line in parallel 6ths and, in bar 52, reinforcing the harmonic tension with a suspension.

Bars 53 - 56 develop these musical features further in a subsequent four-bar phrase which modulates to the dominant (C# minor), the perfect cadence in bar 56 finishing on the *tierce de Picardie* which allows for the return to F# minor for the repeat. Here the rising 4th of motif (x) extends again to a minor 6th and the whole trajectory of the melodic phrase expands to well over an octave.

57 *piu lento*
dux *x*
legato
una corda *comes*
 enharmonic change (A#-Bb) *rit.....*
 IIb7(inBbm) V I V13(in F#)
 enharmonic change (F - E#)

A peaceful tranquility and calm contentment pervades the middle portion (bars 57 - 64) of this B section. The melody is still based on motif (x) followed by the falling steps, but almost all the other features of the music have changed:

- narrow melodic range (augmented 4th) and conjunct except for the rising 4ths
- homophonic texture in six part chords, the melody and bass both doubled at the octave and an inner pedal (also doubled)
- F# major key
- consonant harmony
- *piu lento* tempo
- *pp* dynamic and *una corda* timbre (whispered and reverential)
- crotchet movement with the phrase displacement suggesting three bars of 4/4 time.

The flowing triplets and cross rhythms of the previous section are replaced by an homorhythmic unity, the contrapuntal textures by a close-knit homophony and the dissonant appoggiaturas absent in this gentle procession of consonant chords. Note, however, how the bass line is actually in canon with the melody, an octave lower and at two beats' distance creating a succession of parallel 3rds and 6ths (and their compounds).

Extra emphasis is afforded to the start of the final four beats (bar 59³); the enharmonic change (from A# to Bb) is supported by a thickening of the texture (to 8 parts), a dissonant IIb7 (in Bb minor) which resolves across the bar line to V and then I, before a dominant thirteenth chord pulls the tonality back to F# major.

This four-bar phrase is then repeated (bars 61 - 64³), but shortened to finish on the 2nd beat of the bar, with varied harmony and without the brief modulation to Bb minor - ending with a I_c - V imperfect cadence in F#.

The music of bars 48³ - 56 now returns to complete the AABA' structure of this central section of the *Intermezzo*. Here in bars 64³ - 76² the inner tenor voice takes the leading role in the canon with the upper voice following as the *comes*. The rising 4ths expand to rising 5ths (in bars 66 and 67) and the rising 6th to a full octave in bar 69. The harmonic progression has a firmer tread with the bass notes falling on the beat, and a glorious optimism develops from the *crescendo* in bars 65 - 68 such that the pinnacle of the phrase (bar 69) reaches the highest pitch of the whole piece (C#), the canonic voices swapping roles once more with both parts in quavers and the harmony changing in metrical affirmation. The melody descends almost three octaves, partly sequentially, over some chromatic inflections (Neapolitan and German 6ths) before a three-bar linking passage (bars 73³ -76²) sets up the modulation back to A major through a descending melodic sequence of falling appoggiaturas.

Bar 76 reveals most succinctly Brahms' linkage technique, the concluding appoggiatura figure of the B section turning neatly into the initial gesture of the recapitulation.

The ternary structure of the piece is completed with a repetition of the whole A section. Some important changes emerge in the opening two phrases, notably the first chord which exerts a stronger pull towards the subdominant harmony, denying a tonic start to the recapitulation, and the inversion of the (b) motif into a falling phrase of appoggiatura-like figures, thereby unifying the whole melodic content of the piece. The second phrase (bars 80³ - 84²) ascends to a top B (octave leap) with a fuller textural support than in the corresponding passage (bars 12³ - 16²). These opening eight bars are left unrepeated, so from bar 84 the original music resumes unchanged for the final 32 bars of the piece.

Ballade No.3 in G minor

Ballade No.3 in G minor is quite different in musical character with its spiky staccato theme and fierce accents which give it a driven energy and rather vehement muscularity, the dense piano textures rarely reaching above the treble stave. Like the preceding intermezzo, the Ballade is a set of very compact ternary structures inside an overall A B A form, and the central section has a contrastingly gentle and ethereal quality which seems to glance heavenwards.

Motivic development is at the heart of Brahms' compositional craft here, effected to enhance, rather than distract from, the musical soul, a remarkable fusion of skill and art.

Allegro energico

The image displays a musical score for the first system of Brahms' Ballade No. 3 in G minor. The score is written for piano and includes harmonic analysis. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature. The music begins with a forte (f) dynamic. The first measure features a V7 chord (F7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The third measure features an IV7 chord (C7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fourth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifth measure features a III7 chord (E-flat7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The second system begins with a triplet of three notes in the treble staff, followed by a V chord (F7) in the bass. The third measure features a VI chord (D minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fourth measure features a II chord (A minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventh measure features an IV chord (C7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The ninth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The tenth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eleventh measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twelfth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirteenth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fourteenth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifteenth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixteenth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventeenth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighteenth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The nineteenth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twentieth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twenty-first measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twenty-second measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twenty-third measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twenty-fourth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twenty-fifth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twenty-sixth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twenty-seventh measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twenty-eighth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The twenty-ninth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirtieth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirty-first measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirty-second measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirty-third measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirty-fourth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirty-fifth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirty-sixth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirty-seventh measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirty-eighth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The thirty-ninth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fortieth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The forty-first measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The forty-second measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The forty-third measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The forty-fourth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The forty-fifth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The forty-sixth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The forty-seventh measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The forty-eighth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The forty-ninth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fiftieth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifty-first measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifty-second measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifty-third measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifty-fourth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifty-fifth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifty-sixth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifty-seventh measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifty-eighth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The fifty-ninth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixtieth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixty-first measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixty-second measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixty-third measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixty-fourth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixty-fifth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixty-sixth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixty-seventh measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixty-eighth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The sixty-ninth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventieth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventy-first measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventy-second measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventy-third measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventy-fourth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventy-fifth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventy-sixth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventy-seventh measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventy-eighth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The seventy-ninth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eightieth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighty-first measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighty-second measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighty-third measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighty-fourth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighty-fifth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighty-sixth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighty-seventh measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighty-eighth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The eighty-ninth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The ninetieth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundredth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and first measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and third measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fourth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and tenth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eleventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twelfth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirteenth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fourteenth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifteenth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixteenth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventeenth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighteenth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and nineteenth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twentieth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twenty-first measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twenty-second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twenty-third measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twenty-fourth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twenty-fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twenty-sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twenty-seventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twenty-eighth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and twenty-ninth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirtieth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirty-first measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirty-second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirty-third measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirty-fourth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirty-fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirty-sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirty-seventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirty-eighth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and thirty-ninth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fortieth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and forty-first measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and forty-second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and forty-third measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and forty-fourth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and forty-fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and forty-sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and forty-seventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and forty-eighth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and forty-ninth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fiftieth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifty-first measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifty-second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifty-third measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifty-fourth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifty-fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifty-sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifty-seventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifty-eighth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and fifty-ninth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixtieth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixty-first measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixty-second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixty-third measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixty-fourth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixty-fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixty-sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixty-seventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixty-eighth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and sixty-ninth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventieth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventy-first measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventy-second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventy-third measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventy-fourth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventy-fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventy-sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventy-seventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventy-eighth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and seventy-ninth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eightieth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighty-first measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighty-second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighty-third measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighty-fourth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighty-fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighty-sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighty-seventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighty-eighth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and eighty-ninth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninetieth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninety-first measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninety-second measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninety-third measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninety-fourth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninety-fifth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninety-sixth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninety-seventh measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninety-eighth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundred and ninety-ninth measure features a V chord (D7) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The hundredth measure features a I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble. The piece concludes with a final I chord (G minor) in the bass and a triad in the treble.

The piece begins with a strikingly dissonant triple appoggiatura, rather as though the listener has tuned in late, mid-phrase, to a work that has already started. What emerges is an emphatic V⁷ - I progression which firmly establishes the tonic key, followed by a succession of strong root position chords, partly outlining a circle of fifths unadorned by sevenths, in a quicker harmonic rhythm which seems to hurry impetuously, before confidently moving to the dominant key.

The rhythmical energy exerted by the staccato quavers is strengthened by the typically Brahms'- like textures, the bass in bold octaves very low in register, and the chordal accompaniment in close triads often travelling low to the rich bass colours of the instrument.

The anacrustic motif (x) permeates almost every bar of the A section. This three-note rising scale pattern is immediately inverted and then altered to turn around at the start of bar 3 (see Intermezzo bars 34 - 35) to create a falling 3rd (z). This falling 3rd is treated in descending sequence whilst the pair of rising quavers (y) is augmented rhythmically, firstly in a dotted crotchet quaver pattern and then in minims, to create a five-bar phrase which descends through every pitch of the melodic minor scale. At

every point (except bar 2¹) the bass moves in contrary motion to the melody, until the forceful descent to the low D at the cadence in three parallel octaves.

A consequent five bar phrase follows, the inversion of motif (x) now turning back on itself to visit firstly F major (bar 7) and, sequentially, C minor (bar 8) which marks the start of a full circle of fifths. Here in bars 8 and 9 the positions of (y) and (z) are reversed in the sequential descent and rhythmical augmentation, and 7ths in the chords now help to propel the phrase towards the perfect cadence in the tonic (bar 10). The final chord (bar 10¹) contains a *tierce de Picardie* (and a *ritenuto* and *diminuendo*) before a *tenuto* on the falling 7th allows for a moment of reflection as Brahms sets up the expectation to move to the subdominant key.

Instead, at bar 10⁴ the tonality side-steps to E \flat major (submediant), a tertiary modulation which uses G as the linking pitch, and the new section begins somewhat more hesitantly:

- p dynamic
- lower melodic tessitura
- repeated first inversion harmony across the bar-line undermining the strength of the down beat.

Four one-bar phrases based on (x) and a new variant (x'), lift the harmony sequentially to F minor, followed by a descending sequence of triple suspensions (9 - 8, 7 - 6 and 4 - 3) in rapid harmonic rhythm where once again the strong beats are weakened by the ties in the middle voices (resolving ahead of the main melody) and the rising bass.

These six bars are repeated in bars 17 - 22, starting this time with a root E \flat chord and a stronger move towards F minor through a secondary dominant chord in third inversion. F minor is thwarted, however, by the diminished 7th and D \flat harmonies, before E \flat is restored via an authoritative V⁷ on the 2nd beat of bar 20.

The temperature continues to rise through the fingerprint Brahmsian rugged syncopations of bar 21 and a *crescendo*, before the briefest sniff of a German augmented 6th resolves on to a thumping *sf* 6/4 chord (delayed to the second quaver of the bar) to announce through yet more accented syncopations the return of the opening material in G minor.

Bars 23 - 32 are almost a straight repeat of the first ten bars of the piece, although there are differences in accentuation to notice. The start of the second phrase is given a greater energy and intensified passion with a *crescendo*, weightier left hand chords, an extra quaver in the anacrusis and the melody sitting a third higher. The move to F major is replaced by a change to D minor in bar 29.

A nine-bar codetta draws this opening section to a close, as the rhythmical energy subsides (the quaver chords have been almost incessant up to this point) and the harmonic movement is stilled through a long upper and lower tonic pedal.

The passage above shows how Brahms transforms the original chordal accompaniment pattern into the falling 3rd motif (z) which then becomes the primary motif of the B section starting in bar 41. This is another example of Brahms' linkage technique (see bar 76 of Intermezzo in A).

As at bar 10 - 11, where Brahms used the G at the bass of the G⁷ chord to become the 3rd of the subsequent E^b chord, here he raises the bass to Bⁿ (the 3rd of the chord) to become the root of the B major chord which follows in bar 41 to effect a tertiary modulation, this time in the tonally opposite direction.

The central section of this ternary structure (bars 41 - 72) has an altogether more subdued and reflective mood, the B major tonality revealing a wholly different world of musical colour. The melody seems to glide effortlessly above the flowing quavers of the accompaniment first rising, and then falling, in an archetypal classical shape, in regular four-bar phrases, and the tonic pedal helps to still the energy and excitement of the opening section. The essential ingredients of the first phrase include:

- B major key
- *pp* dynamic and *una corda* timbre with *legato* phrasing
- diatonic melody based on motif (x) and its fragments
- dotted rhythms taken from bar 3 (which are themselves a diminution of the harmonic rhythm of bar 1)
- melody in 3rds and 6ths
- three-part texture, the arpeggio accompaniment spanning shapes of two octaves
- metrically stable bass notes on the beat.

The overall structure of this section has its own symmetry:

	keys visited	features of interest
bars 41 - 44 A	B major - F# major	imitation between melodic voices melody ends at peak of phrase return to opening subject (bar 3 omitted)
bars 45 - 48 B	F# major - D# minor	
bars 49 - 52 A'	B major - D# minor	
bars 53 - 56 C	D# minor	
bars 57 - 60 A	B major - F# major	
bars 61 - 64 B	F# major - D# minor	
bars 65 - 68 A''	B major - E major	rhythmically varied descent from top note wide melodic leaps and more sinewy bass line
bars 69 - 72 codetta	B major	

The image shows a musical score for the final section of a piece, bars 68 to 72. The score is written for piano and features a complex texture with multiple voices. Key annotations include:

- 68**: The section begins with a *dolce* marking.
- Bar 69**: An *inverted imitation* is indicated between the upper and lower voices.
- Bar 70**: A *falling 7th* interval is highlighted in the upper voice.
- Bar 71**: An *appoggiatura* is marked in the middle voice.
- Bar 72**: The section concludes with a *rit.* (ritardando) and *dim.* (diminuendo) marking, followed by an *imitation* of the opening subject.

The codetta assumes a more expressive and contrapuntal style, the bass taking on a melodic role and the sequence of dropping 7ths in the upper melody falling strikingly on to appoggiaturas in the middle voice. The section finishes without resolution, the dominant 7th chord resting above the bass tonic.

Another linking passage follows, using the material from bars 10⁴ - 14 firstly in G major (another tertiary change), then in rising sequence (via a diminished 7th harmony) to A \flat major and then, dramatically in bar 76, through two parallel dominant 7th chords and a metrically displaced dotted rhythm to hustle in the recapitulation of the A section in G minor.

Bars 77 - 107 are an exact repetition of bars 1 - 31. In the coda (starting at bar 108) the harmony oscillates between G minor and E \flat major (a reference back to bar 11) over the tonic pedal as the texture and dynamic abruptly fade to reveal one last whisper of the gentle theme from the central section of the piece, now lower in

register and in the minor key, but rising in hope to finish enigmatically alone after the bass has faded away. With all the earlier fire and passion now spent, Brahms instructs *senza pedale* to strip away the sympathetic resonances of the bass strings to leave the final triad sapped of breath.

Grieg - Lyric Pieces op.54 Norwegian March no.2 and Nocturne no.4

The nineteenth century was a period of growing nationalism in music, with composers exploring their own heritages and seeking to define a distinctive cultural voice. Where Chopin's Polish roots can be found in his *mazurkas* and *polonaises*, Albéniz, Granados and De Falla's piano music is infused with Spanish folk-song, and the 'Mighty Five' (Balakirev, Borodin, Cui, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov) deliberately forged a Russian style through modality, non-formal harmony and rhythmic asymmetries. Grieg likewise found inspiration from the characteristic Norwegian folksong, and his imaginative lyricism and original harmony brought him significant success, not least in his much-loved Piano Concerto in A minor, the Peer Gynt and Holberg Suites and the 66 Lyric Pieces for piano which spanned the whole of his composing life. He also wrote 140 songs, mostly for 'the young girl who had a wonderful voice and an equally wonderful gift of interpretation' who later became his wife, Nina. The pride of the Norwegian government in his early triumphs, which boosted national morale, was sufficient to grant him a state pension at the age of 29.

Edvard Grieg was born in Bergen in 1843, the son of a wealthy merchant and British consul. His mother was a successful pianist who passed on her musical interests to her son. At the age of fifteen, he was sent to study at the Leipzig Conservatory where he claimed later to have "*learned nothing at all*". Although progressing briskly on the piano (he hated Czerny, Kuhlau and Clementi, but loved Chopin and Schumann), it was composition which interested the young Grieg more. The Leipzig Conservatory was the leading institution in Europe at the time and Grieg studied harmony and counterpoint with illustrious teachers such as Richter and Reinecke. His insistence on writing '*the chords I liked instead of those the figured bass required*' gives a clue to his distaste for formality and convention and desire for freedom. The comment may also mask his lack of success in writing in larger forms, although his impressionistic String Quartet had a strong influence on Debussy and his violin and violoncello sonatas are much-admired. Ravel also remarked that he never wrote anything that was not influenced by Grieg.

Taking Schumann as his role model, Grieg was a master miniaturist. The Lyric Pieces have sustained their popularity in the amateur and professional pianists' repertoire, suitable for both the salon and the concert hall. Amongst the most loved for their charm and variety of expression are the early Arietta (op.12 no.1) and Waltz (op.12 no.2), Butterfly (op.43 no.1), Little Bird (op.43 no.4), Erotik (op.43 no.5), To the Spring (op.43 no.6), Wedding Day at Troldhauen (op.65 no.6), Summer Evening (op.71 no.2) and Puck (op.71 no.3). All of these (as well as the other op.54 pieces) are especially worthy of study for their melodic inventiveness, harmonic idiom and resourceful pianistic style, well within the scope of a grade 8 level student.

Norwegian March

Norwegian March was written in 1891 at a time when Grieg was especially influenced by nationalistic features (evident particularly in Shepherd's Boy and Bellringing).

The folk style is evident in the:

- sustained drones and open fifths which pervade much of the bass part
- lightly dancing melodic rhythms
- narrow melodic shapes (with the falling 3rd prominent),
- melodic ornaments
- largely diatonic harmonic style.

The sense of the march can be detected through:

- unrelenting two beat metre

Allegretto marcato

I IVc (maj7) Vb/C (sus6) I (maj9) IVc (sus6) IIb7/C I (maj7)

VIIb7/C I (sus 6) I IIb7/G I IIb7/G I

- every beat sounded in the accompaniment, often in a right - left, right - left pattern
- frequent repetition of two-bar phrases
- long sequences of short phrases which *crescendo* and *diminuendo* to illustrate approach and retreat
- unrefined four-square style.

These apparently conflicting features are evident from the very start. A bold *ffp* for the opening octave (to allow the bass to sustain for the next five bars) is followed by quietly treading dotted crotchets which descend in mostly conjunct motion through each degree of the C major scale in parallel 6ths. Above this homophonic texture dances the melody, firstly in contrary motion and then in descending parallel 7ths with the alto voice, the syncopated rhythms suggesting a conflicting 3/4 metre through accents and ties on the 3rd quavers and mordents emphasising the 5th quavers.

What is most striking about the opening, however, is Grieg's unconventional harmonisation. A more straightforward approach might sound something like this:

Allegretto marcato

I I V⁷ V⁷ I VI III^b

5

IV I^b I^b IV I^b II⁷ V^{c7} I

Here the tonic is firmly established at the start with suspensions decorating the V⁷ - I progression. Secondary and first inversion chords descend in consonance with the melody in bars 4 and 5, before the move to the dominant in bar 6 (V^b in C major = I^b in G major).

Grieg starts with the top note of the melody harmonised as an unprepared 7th on chord IV, that dissonance repeated in descending sequence in each of bars 3, 4 (twice) and 5 before the first downbeat consonance of the piece is heard (chord V) at the start of bar 6. The whole harmonisation is diatonic, the first five bars in C major and the last three bars in G major.

The folk-style melody has three distinct elements, the initial rising three-note scale (x) which appears in contrary motion and rhythmic augmentation in the tenor voice, the falling and rising 3rd (y) and Grieg's fingerprint motif (z). The melody falls throughout the eight-bar phrase, partly sequentially, with variants: y' removes the central quaver of motif y to provide agogic accent to the syncopation, y' augments the falling 3rd to a falling 4th and z' swaps the position of the two falling intervals. The tonic is given little prominence over the tonic pedal at the start, but the dominant is repeatedly emphasised as the phrase draws to a close. Note how the whole melody uses every pitch of the scale except for F (the 4th) characteristic of Grieg's native Hardanger fiddle whose the sympathetic strings are tuned to degrees 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6.

This whole phrase is then repeated exactly as before, with an extra bar added at the cadence (bar 17). The melody is then developed in a series of starkly contrasting antiphonal two-bar phrases as follows;

bars 18 - 19	A minor	imperfect cadence	3-part texture	melody in bass	<i>ff</i> and <i>marcato</i>
bars 20 - 21	E major	Perfect cadence	4-part texture	melody in treble	<i>p</i> and <i>legato</i>
bars 22 - 23	C minor	imperfect cadence	3-part texture	melody in bass	<i>ff</i> and <i>marcato</i>
bars 24 - 25	G major	perfect cadence	4-part texture	melody in treble	<i>p</i> and <i>legato</i>

In the minor phrases, the final note of motif z is chromatically altered to give the sniff of a German augmented 6th harmony, but the major phrases take the original harmonisation of the melody from bars 1 - 2, emphasising the major 7th above the I_c chord in a complete I_c - V₇ - I cadence.

Bars 26 - 40 provide an aural representation of the receding march, the bare fifths in the bass softly treading into the distance in a characteristic right - left - right - left pattern. Above this the dance continues in a short repetitive phrase which is a rhythmic diminution of motif x. The rhythmic conflict is sustained through three-note chords on the 3rd and 6th quavers in the right hand against the marching bass on quavers 1 and 4. Initially, major and minor versions of motif x alternate (as in bars 18 - 25). As the bass moves through a complete cycle of 5ths, the melodic chords fall step by step through a sequence of suspensions, creating dissonance at every point until the sound fades away completely at bar 38.

The musical notation shows a sequence of chords in a treble clef from bar 29 to bar 38. The chords are marked with 'suspension' and 'resolution/preparation' labels. The sequence starts with a suspension in bar 29, followed by a resolution/preparation in bar 30, a suspension in bar 31, a resolution/preparation in bar 32, a suspension in bar 33, a resolution/preparation in bar 34, a suspension in bar 35, a resolution/preparation in bar 36, a suspension in bar 37, and finally a resolution in bar 38.

The second section of the piece begins at bar 41. Having explored some of the lowest sounds of the piano, the tessitura abruptly changes to the very highest register of the instrument.

The musical notation shows two staves starting at bar 40. The top staff is in a treble clef and contains a melodic line of eighth notes with accents, marked with 'sempre ppp'. The bottom staff is in a bass clef and contains a bass line of eighth notes with accents, also marked with 'sempre ppp'.

Here motif z has been modified to fall by step, therefore creating a closed phrase which turns around on itself through the first three notes of the C major scale. Tension is dissipated as the passage sits still on a dominant pedal and then, at bar 43, an inverted dominant pedal.

At bar 45, the phrase starts for a third time, but now motif z is restored to its original form. The second syncopated note of y' falls, however, to resolve the dissonance and the music continues in a cascade of descending two - bar, and then one - bar, sequences for 24 bars (up to bar 68) covering five octaves of the instrument and using every white note in an entirely diatonic and extraordinarily repetitive C major passage.

What changes, of course, is the musical effect. The passage starts as a tinkling musical box, delicately quiet, and gradually descends step by step into a brutal and ferocious march. The harmonies are close-knit triads, sequences of suspensions similar in style to bars 29 - 37. In the high register the dissonances sound as innocuous cluster chords, but in the bass register they become angrily accented discords, all the more menacing as they descend into the darker sonorities of the instrument with the melody powerfully doubled in forceful octaves. The decorative mordents which adorned the dancing z motif are now both impractical and inappropriate to the affection.

The image shows a musical score for piano, consisting of two systems of music. The first system begins at bar 68 and ends at bar 73. It features a right-hand melody with a complex texture of chords and a left-hand accompaniment of power chords. Dynamics include *ff* and *fff*. Motifs *x'* and *x* are indicated above the first system. The second system begins at bar 74 and ends at bar 79. It continues the right-hand melody and left-hand accompaniment. Dynamics include *dim.* and *p*. The key signature changes from C major to A-flat major at bar 69.

At bar 69, the march reaches its climax. The melody switches to the top of the texture (still in octaves in the rich tenor register) whilst the right - left - right - left ostinato accompaniment thunders below with accented power chords in the lowest register of the piano. This dramatic moment is highlighted by a sudden change of tonality to A \flat major (the flattened submediant), an impact made all the greater by the long passage of tonic key which preceded it. The melody is the closed two-bar phrase (from bar 41), but motif x modified to start on the 3rd (rather than the 1st) degree of the scale.

After four bars, the passage is repeated back in C major, motif x now restored to its original form with an *fff* dynamic. A third attempt at the phrase suddenly stops and the march quickly recedes with a brisk *diminuendo* a small fragment of the end of the melody echoing into the distance (bar 78).

At bar 80 the music of the opening returns, but now rather more subdued and reflective, the energy of the march seemingly spent. Important musical differences are apparent:

- octave lower
- *p tranquillo*
- two two-bar closed phrases, each ending on the tonic
- no modulation to the dominant.

After four bars (bar 85), the material from bar 18 appears and Grieg then simply repeats the rest of the first part of the movement again. At bar 147, the *tranquillo* section from bar 80 returns, extended into a lingering coda. Entirely built on a tonic pedal (featured as an inner pedal in bars 151² - 153¹) motif x permeates these final bars in inverted and augmented form, firstly below the melody (bars 147 and 149), and then high above the melody (bars 151 - 153), bringing a restful unity to this monothematic work.

Nocturne op.54 no.4

If the Norwegian March is clearly rooted in the national characteristics of the *Slåtter* with its rigid rhythmical structures, folk-style drones and diatonic harmony, then this exquisite Nocturne reveals Grieg's expressively poetic and forward-thinking approach. Many of the sounds of this piece find an echo in the music of the 20th century French impressionists, especially the piano music of Debussy.

The primary features of the music which identify it as a Nocturne include:

- slow tempo
- regular rhythmical flow in the left hand
- gentle poetic character, largely *piano* and *pianissimo*, although with two impassioned climaxes
- melody dominated texture, a *cantabile* melody in the upper voice
- bird-like calls in bars 15 - 20 and 56 - 60
- bars of silence
- chromatic harmony within a largely functional framework

The image shows the beginning of the Nocturne in 9/8 time, marked 'Andante'. The left hand accompaniment features a chromatic scale through a descending 4th, with annotations for 'falling 4th' and 'Grieg motif'. The right hand melody begins on the submediant note. Dynamics include *P* and *Ped.* (pedal). The score includes a bracketed section labeled 'chromatic scale through a descending 4th' and a 'Grieg motif'.

- slow harmonic rhythm.

Section A (bars 1 - 14)

The gently throbbing rhythmical accompaniment sets the mood at the outset. Written in compound triple time (9/8), the bass line descends by chromatic steps on each main beat whilst the inner chords sustain the C major harmony with ties across the pulse to give a lightly syncopated feel. Despite the C major tonality established in the first bar, the melody begins on the submediant note, outlining the root and fifth of A minor, in a shape reminiscent of the opening of Grieg's popular Piano Concerto composed some eight years earlier:

The image shows the beginning of Section A in 9/8 time, marked 'Allegro molto moderato'. The left hand accompaniment features a chromatic scale through a descending 4th, with annotations for 'poco rit.' and 'ff' (fortissimo). The right hand melody begins on the submediant note. Dynamics include *ff* and *poco rit.*

The height of the first melody note is given added emphasis by the *acciaccatura*, accent and octave leap, but it arrives as part of the direction of travel of the bass line. The falling fourth motif is an important unifying device in the work, decorated in its repetition to form the characteristic 'Greig motif'.

At bar 5 the melodic phrase is extended to three bars by virtue of a rising scale (in contrary motion with the descending bass), in duplet quavers which work cross-rhythmically against the accompaniment. Chromatic auxiliary notes and passing notes create additional tension on beats 2 and 3 of bars 5 and 7, the strongest dissonances being the chromatic accented passing notes at the starts of bars 6 and 8. These stresses are enhanced by the entry of an alto voice in the texture, doubling at the octave the inner part of the left hand chords.

The image shows a musical score for bars 5 to 8. The top staff is the treble clef, and the bottom staff is the bass clef. Annotations include:

- rising accented passing note**: points to the first note of bar 5.
- lower chromatic auxiliary note**: points to the second note of bar 5.
- chromatic accented passing note**: points to the first note of bar 6.
- two bar descending sequence**: a bracket spanning bars 6 and 7.
- half dim 7th chord (VIIc7 in G major)**: points to the first chord of bar 5.
- half dim 7th chord (VII7 in C major)**: points to the first chord of bar 6.
- dim 7th chord (Vb9 in C minor)**: points to the first chord of bar 7.
- half dim 7th chord (VIIc7 in F major)**: points to the first chord of bar 8.
- half dim 7th chord (II7 in G minor)**: points to the second chord of bar 8.
- German augmented 6th**: points to the final chord of bar 8.

During bars 1 to 4, the chromatic steps of the bass highlighted the descent of a 4th from tonic to dominant under a sustained C major harmony. At bar five the harmony becomes more richly chromatic, but the same semitonal steps are there in the bass, heading from tonic towards dominant in a harmonic rhythm of (largely) one chord per bar. The chords descend in a series of half-diminished 7ths (and a brief diminished 7th) in a cycle of fifths progression until a German augmented 6th on the final beat of bar 8 seems to be the preparation for the intended dominant resolution.

Instead, Grieg delays the arrival of the dominant (G major) by repeating three times the phrase from bar 5 (now with the more decisive V7 chord instead of VIIc7), each time side-stepping in a fresh tonal direction until finally arriving at his intended destination with a yearning double appoggiatura at bar 14.

The image shows a musical score for bars 9 to 14. The top staff is the treble clef, and the bottom staff is the bass clef. Annotations include:

- phrase from bar 5**: a bracket spanning bars 9, 10, and 11.
- V7 (13)**: points to the first chord of bar 9.
- A flat major (Neapolitan)**: points to the first chord of bar 12.
- p**: dynamic marking for the first staff.

A short codetta (bars 15 - 20) brings this opening section of the piece to a close. Sustaining the same throbbing syncopated accompaniment rhythm, bird calls hover high above the treble staff. Remarkably, these notes D and A are precisely the same pitches Vivaldi chose for 'The Goldfinch', and they increase in rhythmic vitality in much the same way too. The pattern uses the same falling fourth motif with which the piece started, ending in a trill which rises to a perfect fifth. This perfect 5th is then echoed in inversion in the bass in bar 17, completing the dominant 9th chord. As if jumping on to a higher branch the bird call is repeated a minor 3rd higher in a move of Debussy-like non-functional harmony.

Grieg Nocturne:

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Grieg's Nocturne. The first system (measures 15-20) features a treble staff with a melody of eighth notes and triplets, marked *p*. The second system (measures 11-12) shows a treble staff with a melody of eighth notes and a bass staff with a syncopated accompaniment of eighth notes, marked *cresc.* and *f*. The third system (measures 13-14) continues the accompaniment and features a chromatic appoggiatura in the bass staff. Annotations include 'phrase from bar 5' and 'chromatic appoggiatura' with arrows pointing to specific notes. Harmonic analysis labels include V7 (13), Vc7 (A minor), and I (G major).

15 *p* 3 3 3

11 *cresc.* *f* phrase from bar 5

13 *cresc.* *f* phrase from bar 5 chromatic appoggiatura appoggiatura

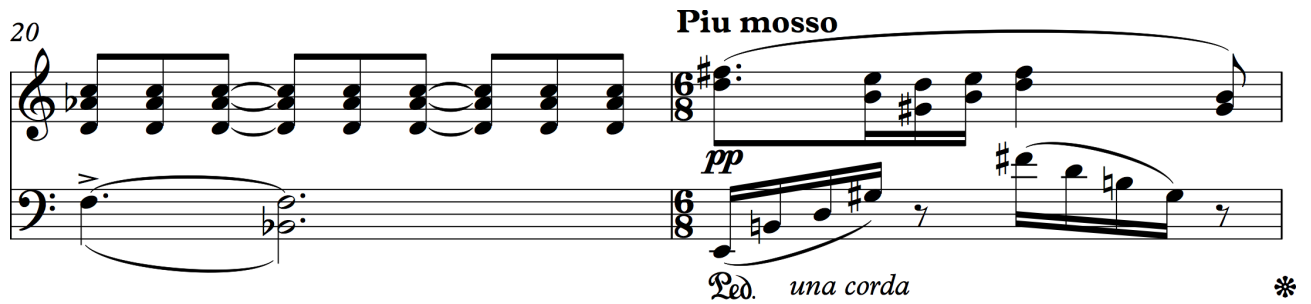
V7 (13) Vc7 (A minor) I (G major)

The Goldfinch:

Vivaldi I



Even more remarkable and adventurous is the extraordinary transition into the middle section of the piece. Here Grieg allows the Bb^9 chord (the flattest tonality of the music so far) melt into an unprepared E^9 chord (at the opposite side of the tonal spectrum). This is achieved through the enharmonic equivalence of the tritone - D/Ab (in bar 20) and $D/G\#$ (in bar 21).



The musical colour and rhythmic impulse change at the same time with the following contrasts:

bar 20	bar 21
Andante	<i>più mosso</i>
9/8 metre	6/8 metre
syncopated quavers	running semiquavers
piano	<i>pianissimo and una corda</i>
single line melody	double line melody (largely in parallel 3rds)
chordal accompaniment	arpeggio accompaniment

A greater sense of flow emanates from bar 21 with the faster pace, the shortening of the bars and the quicker rhythmical impetus. The piano timbre is hushed, however, and the phrases rise and fall in small conjunct waves. Harmonic movement is stilled, with E⁹ rising to E¹¹ in bar 23, and then shifting to A^b 9 in second inversion at bar 25 (a whispered *ppp*) and then D⁹ at bar 27 - each of these changes effected by a semitonal descent of the bass as the melodic lines rise. A rapid *crescendo* reaches its climax at bar 29 - a ringing G¹³ chord made all the more sonorous for its widely-spaced texture and bell-like effects in the upper voices. This change of harmony (from D to G) is an expansion of the same bass notes heard in bar 17.

motif from bar 21 in 3/4 time

rhythmic augmentation

29

ff

poco rit.

V13 (in C major)
Ped.

*

Note here at the climax how the melodic motif from bar 21 has been rhythmically altered to give a sense of three beats in the bar against the prevailing 6/8 metre, and then augmented as the passion rapidly subsides in bars 31 and 32.

Four bars of dominant harmony, followed by a half-bar of silence prepares for a return of the opening music at bar 34. The completion of the ternary structure is not without further twists of harmony. Where bar 9 set up a move towards an eventual dominant, at bar 42 the D⁷ chord is followed by an extra bar (bar 43) - a repetition of the material a fourth higher on G⁷ - which then results in a finish of the same passage on the tonic (at bar 48).

The A section is extended by a further six bars, exploring flatter tonalities in a descending melodic sequence which balances the sharper tonalities of the central B section of the piece. Grieg's love of the descending chromatic bass line reaches its zenith in bars 48 to 54 where the full descent of the complete scale from G to G is achieved. The last six pitches of this scale support a sequence of parallel 7th chords, a progression much enjoyed by early 20th century composers (and a host of jazz musicians) on successive beats, the compound metre of the music now subsumed by the duplet movement of the melody. The four-note melody produces an hemiola effect, two bars of 9/8 time sounding as 3 bars of 2/4 time, the four notes being a rhythmical diminution of the phrases ending in bars 47/48 and bars 49/50.

52

appoggiatura appoggiatura appoggiatura

poco rit.

C7 B7 Bb7 A7 Ab7 G7

The G⁷ chord prepares the coda (bars 55 - end) which is a repeat of the codetta (bars 15 - 20). The bird calls start on high A and E (the same falling fourth which began the piece), accompanied by the same descending chromatic bass line, now supported with subdominant harmony. The descent is halted for a bar's silence and then the calls repeat a semitone lower on a mournful F minor harmony. This also fades away into the night sky before finally, at the opposite end of the textural spectrum, the tonic is quietly reasserted in a peaceful and restful conclusion.