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Richard Strauss: The Two Concertos for Horn and Orchestra

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RICHARD STRAUSS:
THE TWO CONCERTOS FOR HORN
AND ORCHESTRA

A THESIS

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CHAPTER ONE

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY
OF RICHARD STRAUSS

Sensitive to the point of morbidity yet striding often with a bearish tread, intellectual as a Renaissance Venetian yet capable of taking delight in toy devices, humorously light-hearted yet weighed down by a sense of self-importance, romantic and cynic, innovator yet traditionalist, master of the hidden hint yet prone to say the obvious twice.

Richard Strauss's ancestors before the nineteenth century are lost in German antiquity. His mother (a lesser influence artistically, but of great value in social and economic terms) was of the Pschorr Brewery family, a family of art patrons who had seen to their daughter's musical training.

His father's background was at once more plebian and more provincial than that of his mother. The grandfather, Johann Urban Strauss (born 1800), had his way with a young girl of formidable name, Maria Anna Kunigunda Walter-Richards, at the tender age of twenty-one. Johann was a policeman in Parkstein of the Upper Palatinate but soon after his son Franz was born on February 26, 1822, he deserted the family. Maria returned to her father's home and her uncle assumed the care of the child. Her father was the Master Watchman of Parkstein and was thus responsible for the town's musical activities, as had his family for generations.
Thus it was that Franz Strauss came to be exposed to music, however humble, early in his life. As his son would later recall, his character was shaped by this bitter and unpleasant childhood. He assumed the duties of a nightwatchman and studied a little Latin. His uncle led him in studies of guitar, clarinet, and all the brass instruments. By age nine, he was already giving lessons in a number of instruments and performing professionally with his older relatives. All these experiences conspired to make him, in his son's words, "quick-tempered, tyrannical, and extremely temperamental."²

Franz's studies in these many instruments enabled him to obtain a position with the music establishment of the Munich Court. He was appointed court guitarist but he quickly established himself in another area by rising to the first horn position in the court orchestra. In 1845 he applied for citizenship from the Bavarian government. Six years later he married Elise Sieff and had two children by her. Unfortunately his family was carried off in a cholera epidemic in 1854. On August 29, 1863 he married Josephine Pschorr and on the following June 11th, his son was born.

Franz Strauss came to be regarded as the finest horn player in Germany (when asked about this reputation, he replied: "I do not prove it; I admit it"³). He was the player of choice for the premieres of Das Rheingold, Die Walküre, Die Meistersinger, Parsifal, and Tristan und Isolde (under von Bülow). The irony of this was that Franz hated Wagner's work and never lost an opportunity to say just that. He once quoted
 Wagner as saying "Old Strauss is an unbearable fellow, but when he plays his horn one cannot be cross with him." Wagner even gave evidence of fearing his criticism. The story is told that the composer had the horn solos in the Beckmesser pantomine of Die Meistersinger played beforehand by Hans Richter (who premiered the Brahms Horn Trio, Opus 40) lest Strauss object that the part was unplayable.

Into such a home environment was Richard Georg Strauss born. The family lived at 2 Altheimer Eck which was behind the Pschorr brewhouse in Munich. The site made a deep impression upon the young Strauss and one of the results of this was that the house became the basis for the setting of an early opera, Feuersnot. The boy's musical training began at age four and his first compositions appeared at age six.

His earliest extant work was the Schneiderpolka which his father notated as Richard played at the keyboard. The first work which he notated on his own was the Christmas Carol written at age seven. His uncle, George Pschorr, paid for the publication of Richard's orchestral Festmarsch in Eb by Breitkopf and Härtel in 1881 (five years after the work was composed). This same march was premiered by the amateur orchestra "Wilde Gungl" under the baton of Franz Strauss. This group played many of his early works.

Another work which was written within this early protective and supportive circle of family and friends was the First String Quartet (1881). The final movement was based upon a theme by Mozart and was dedicated to the Benno Walter
Quartet, who premiered it on March 16, 1881. Benno Walter was, as the surname implies, a relative of Franz and had been Richard's violin teacher. This same Benno Walter was later the dedicatee of the Violin Concerto, Opus 8.

Obviously the young composer was highly influenced by his surroundings. The greatest early influence was, of course, his father:

His father, a peppery, opinionated, outspoken man, was... a composer who thought that Wagner was a subversive and that no true music had been written since Mendelssohn and Schumann.... Richard inherited his father's musical instincts.... Franz Strauss kept his son on a very conservative musical diet, and the result was apparent in Richard's juvenile compositions. They were skillful, but they represented the early part of the nineteenth century. Richard could have been a touring prodigy a la Mozart....

In point of fact, Franz worshipped Mozart, and Richard soon adopted the same creed and maintained it for the remainder of his life:

Any one who has been in his society during a good performance of a Mozartean masterpiece can vouch for the sincerity of his worship, at any rate. The writer remembers his saying once, after he had heard the Jupiter Symphony with rapt attention: "We can still all of us learn something from that." In keeping with this is his advice, habitually given to all very young aspirants who come to him with portentous Symphonic Poems and tell him that Tod und Verklärung and the Symphonia Domestica have been their models: "Go home and study Haydn's Symphonies and then the Symphonies of Mozart, and come to me again in two years' time."5

The year 1883 proved to be a significant one in his life. He traveled to Berlin where he met Hans von Bülow and became his assistant in Mainingen. The friendship and advice of the older musician were invaluable aids to Strauss as he...
composed and, of course, their relationship started him on a new second career as a conductor. Their correspondence reflects all this. On December 3, 1883 he wrote von Bülow to thank him for performing his Serenade for Thirteen Winds (Opus 7):

I assure you that your kind interest will spur me on to further effort, further activity, and I only hope that the works which follow may justify the distinction you, revered Herr von Bülow, have conferred on the nineteen year old composer of the Wind Serenade. 6

This and other early performances helped spread Richard's work, first through Germany and then throughout the Western world. On December 13, 1884 the New York Philharmonic Society under Theodore Thomas gave the world premiere (or so the New York Times claimed) of his Symphony in E. 7

In 1886 Strauss composed the first important tone poem of his career, Don Juan, and with it he pointed the way for dramatic new changes in the development of music. This work also marks the end of his student period in composition and therefore shows a remarkable insight by him into the process of musical composition. During the next ten years he created the major programmatic orchestral works for which he became famous as a musical revolutionary. These works include Tod und Verklärung (1889), Till Eulenspiegel's lustige Streiche (1895), Also sprach Zarathustra (1896), Don Quixote (1897), and Ein Heldenleben (1898). They demonstrate that he was no longer satisfied with the anti-Wagnerian and backward-looking musical philosophy which he had espoused with his father and
had come to admire and study Wagner. This was largely due to
the influence of Alexander Ritter (a violinist in Munich and
friend of his father) and was later nurtured by von Bülow
himself. It must be mentioned for clarity's sake that he was
not turning his back on Mozart but rather expanding his per­
ception of the progress of music. The quotation cited earlier
should remind the reader that Strauss maintained a life-long
love and respect for the work of Mozart.

His father was, needless to say, less than pleased by
this musical about-face. On February 11, 1884 Franz penned
his protest in a letter: "Please, my dear Richard, when you
create something new, take care that it be melodic. . . ."8
Two years later, on February 2, 1886, Franz gave more compo­
sitional advice:

The greatness of a work lies solely in its
simplicity. Think of the ancient Greeks! That is
not to say that one needs to imitate, but one needs
to train one's thoughts toward noble clear simplicity.9

It is interesting to compare these words with Richard's
later commentary on his own writing:

In my own music I find myself continually
leaning toward simplicity and pure melody. The
simpler and clearer, the better. The more compli­
cated music becomes, the more unlikely it is to
survive, unless it possesses the true melodic
character.10

Because of von Bülow's help in securing a conducting
post, Richard found himself at this time looking across his
baton at his own father:

When from 1886 to 1889 I first conducted
operas as "Royal Director of Music" in the Court
Theatre at Munich. . . my father, who was then 65,
still occupied his seat as first horn player as he
had done for 45 years, always arriving from a fabulous sense of duty one hour before the performance was due to begin, concerned not only lest he should bungle his own difficult solo passages in Cosi fan Tutte, but also worried lest his inexperienced son at the conductor's rostrum should make a blunder.

In 1889, Strauss was appointed Director of the Berlin Royal Opera. From this time until the closing days of World War II, his primary output both in composition and conducting was concerned with music drama. Virtually every Strauss authority affirms that his operatic high points were with Salome (1906), Elektra (1909), and Der Rosenkavalier (1911). One biographer has stated that "if Beethoven's creative life can be labeled 'discipline, maturity, eccentricity' then Strauss' can be labelled as 'music, program music, and music drama'."

During this music drama period, his international stature underwent intense scrutiny:

From 1888, when Don Juan had its premiere, to 1911 when Der Rosenkavalier was staged, the most-discussed man of European music was Richard Strauss. His symphonic poems were considered the last word in shocking modernism and his Salome in 1905 and Elektra in 1909 caused riots and scandals.

His two American tours (1904 and 1921) firmly established his place in the repertoire of this hemisphere but also gave a conservative press (which insisted that true artists must suffer in every way, especially financially) the opportunity to castigate him for his impressive economic success. Furthermore, after Der Rosenkavalier, each new work was adjudged to be inferior because of his failure to plow new musical ground (as he had certainly done in the past). They were declared to be merely a potpourri of his amassed compositional
and orchestrational techniques and lacking in creativity and
innovation. He was seen to be on a decline and that opinion
of him has remained even to this day, almost thirty years
after his death.

When Hitler came to power, it was only natural for the
Nazis to call upon Germany's most famous living composer to
lend his name to the new order of government. Thus it was
that in 1933 Strauss allied himself to them by accepting the
presidency of the Third Reich Music Chamber. He held this
post for two years until the toll of bureaucratic harassments
and ideological annoyances (for example, one can easily vis-
ualize the problems connected with his having a Jewish libret-
tist, Stephan Zweig) led to his resignation. He lived out the
remainder of World War II in Switzerland and suffered the
crowning indignities of losing his overseas royalties to pay
German reparations and also having to be cleared by a de-nazi-
fication trial (in which it was demonstrated that he had not
gained by the Nazis having been in power).

The physical damages brought on by the war had a pro-
found psychological impact upon Strauss. In a letter to
Tietjen (the Intendent of the Operas of Breslau and Berlin;
Strauss dedicated Danae to him) he reflected on the bombing
which destroyed the house in which he had been born. He
remarked that it was not just a matter of personal despair
but also a sign of the destruction of Germany and of German
culture and civilization, particularly German musical life
and history.14
In March 1945, when most Germans must have been looking over their shoulders at the possibility of defeat, Strauss wrote to Gregor in the very nadir of depression: "Goethe's house, the world's greatest holy place, destroyed! My lovely Dresden, Weimar, Munich, all gone!" Ten days later the Vienna State Opera suffered the same fate. Every opera house in which Strauss had lived and worked and enjoyed his great successes were now heaps of rubble. It was as if everything he had attempted to achieve in a long life-long devotion to music had been symbolically destroyed within a few months.  

Shortly after the war, Strauss was able to return to his home in Garmisch (in Bavaria). This town was occupied by Allied soldiers who spared Strauss from having to evacuate his home as other Germans had been ordered to do. Thus he was free to receive visitors and to continue composing. One visitor at this time was, according to his daughter-in-law, Alice Strauss, an American private:

He was from Texas, an ardent music fan and an excellent oboist. I remember his saying to Papa one day: "You have written so many pieces for various instruments, but never one for oboe. Why not?" Papa liked the idea and wrote a little concerto in three movements soon afterward.

Unfortunately Frau Strauss did not have a perfect memory. The oboist was John de Lancie who was really a sergeant in the OSS and later was the first oboist with the Philadelphia Orchestra in his native Pennsylvania (he was from Pittsburgh).

For the remaining few years of his life, Strauss was occupied with a little conducting, composing, a little recognition, and a great deal of time spent in quiet leisure (his favorite pastime being a card game known as skat). On September 8, 1949 he died of complications stemming from simple old age.
What conclusions can be drawn from these few facts in this man's life? First, we know immediately that he was very much ruled by his family. His early musical training was at the hands of close relatives and those colleagues of his father who met his exacting requirements of musical conservatism. Certainly this explains the young Richard's anti-Wagnerian vehemence in contrast with his later close association with von Bülow (and the latter even declared him as the inheritor of a musical dynasty stemming from Wagner). Another and more important family consideration is the incredible influence that his father had upon him. The philosophical influence of his father was great but Richard's love and respect are shown in the works for solo horn which he created and in the magnificent writing for horn found in his tone poems and operas. The solo works include the following:


3. "Andante" from an unfinished sonata (in manuscript) (1888).\(^1\)

In addition to these three early works, there are also two concertos for horn and orchestra. These three works just cited were dedicated to his father and were no doubt performed by the elder Strauss at home and/or in public recitals. Even as late as Der Rosenkavalier we still find the influence of family ties: "Dedicated to my dear kinsfolk, the Pschorr Family in Munich."
Another important consideration beyond the family perse is the apparent need to be dominated by stronger personalities. To trace his life is to find him shifting from one influence to another. At first it is his father, then von Bülow and finally to his wife Pauline de Ahna. The dominance of the first has been shown, of the second there is sufficient documentation in their correspondence, and of the latter one quotation will serve to show Strauss's complete submission. As Strauss approached the threshold of his own home, he paused and wiped his feet carefully upon a small square of dampened doormat that lay before the door. Advancing a step, he wiped his feet once more, this time upon a small dry doormat. Stepping across the doorsill he stopped and wiped his feet for a third and final time upon a small rubber doormat that lay just inside the door. . . in that moment I saw, for a flash, the truth. Here was no Titan or demigod; before me stood only a married man.

A third important characteristic in Strauss's compositional career is seen in the contrast between his relatively happy and successful youth and the miseries of his mature years. It should be remembered that after Der Rosenkavalier he was besieged by demands that he continue into the musical twentieth century by providing works which would comprise the logical evolutionary stages after Elektra. Though filled with the Wagnerian heritage of expanding chromaticism, he was also his father's son and so it was that he returned to the late Romantic style. This trend in his writings carried him back, eventually, to the Mozartean-Mendelssohnian style of his youth. Why would he make this about-face? Perhaps for a few basic reasons:
1. His father's death in 1905 touched him deeply.

2. He had the aforementioned classic-early-romantic ideals of his father instilled in him from his youth.

3. The wars in Europe shattered his youthful haunts. His Germany, his opera houses, and even his birthplace were all destroyed.

Little wonder, with these events weighing heavily upon him, that he returned to his earlier musical values by the same gradual road which had led him to the zenith of transition from one milieu to another. In this context, also, must be seen the comparison of writings listed above on page six. Having gone full tilt towards the style as exemplified in Salome and Elektra, he then wrote of his continual "leaning toward simplicity." Obviously, having been to the extreme, he sought new direction in returning to the clarity of the late eighteenth century-early nineteenth century style. This same urge to turn backwards struck other composers at this time, most notably Stravinsky in his borrowing from Pergolesi and Hindemith in his rethinking of the Baroque Preludes and Fugues.

His late works are the same statements of classic ideals in more recent dress as had been his early ones. "...and in the 1940's when he was composing his last instrumental pieces he voiced the Mozartean attitude in twentieth century terms so eloquently that the gap in time was completely bridged." Even Der Rosenkavalier can be seen as the masterwork which marked this shift. The difference, however, being that the early work in this style
was a choice made for him by family and friends and the late works are in this style because Strauss made the choice himself.

It is with this understanding that a study of the two concertos for horn, written at the poles of his compositional life, reveal most clearly this return. Though the underlying basis for style is different, the concertos reveal the bridging of those many years.

There was something over-ripe about it—the pure reflection of the individual romantic artist surrounded by the reality of everyday life in his time. Even in those among his works which once appeared revolutionary, such as "Don Juan" and "Salome", which represented the musical "progress" of their time, his function in musical history is felt to be one of summing up, of bringing to a close. When he had carried the process of dissolving traditional harmony to its furthest limits in the dissonances of "Elektra", he threw the rudder hard over to change the course of development.20


9Ibid., p. 29.


11Richard Strauss, Preface to Ein Orchestermusiker Über Das Dirigieren, by Hans Diestal as contained in Recollections and Reflections, p. 41.


13Schonberg, p. 411.


17This is a hitherto unknown work which was discovered by horn scholar Bernhard Brüchle. He reported his discovery in "An Unknown Work for Horn by Richard Strauss," Horn Call, November 1972, pp. 21-23.

18Deems Taylor, Of Men and Music, as quoted in Marek, p. 14.


20Krause, p. 9.
CHAPTER TWO

THE FIRST CONCERTO

Is there not a tribute of filial affection in the horn concerto that bears his eleventh opus number, as well as a certain filial self-sacrifice in thus embodying ideas that are sure in the nature of things to be buried forever: for who ventures to produce concertos for the French horn in these days?21

The horn is an instrument which evokes love from its hearers and mutual sympathy among its players. Its origins are found in pre-history with the need for communication over long distances between groups of foragers. Despite technological changes over many years, from animal horn and conch shell to metal coils, the horn has never completely lost its connection with the hunt. Indeed, a type of horn is used in hunts to this day. Needless to say, this heritage has often found its reflection in the types of melodies written for the instrument by many composers.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the horn was a valveless instrument whose sounds were limited to the pitches of the harmonic series. Until 1753, the horn players were confined to the first sixteen partials of this series which included four tones currently regarded as out-of-tune. Apparently they were not so regarded in the seventeenth century as the eleventh partial (over a fundamental of C) was
used as both F and F$\text{"}$.

In 1753 a horn player in Dresden discovered the concept of hand-stopping. This is a technique of closing the bell of the horn and thereby adjusting the whole harmonic series up or down by a semitone. By making adjustments between embouchure and the degree of bell closing, the hornist was able to produce a relatively complete scale with the tones of a variety of timbres and intensities. Since only virtuoso players could overcome the inherent weaknesses of this system, only the solo works of the composers tend to use these tones extensively. In writing for the average player, these hand-produced tones were used with great restraint. For example, the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven requires only two stopped tones.

News of the invention of a valve horn was published in Leipzig in 1815. Had this occurred during the 1800-1810 period of Beethoven's creative life, it might have been a more significant event. Unfortunately, few works utilizing this development were forthcoming very soon and so the valved horn languished. Another factor of no small merit was the natural reluctance of the established hornists to relearn their craft on what was essentially a new instrument. A third reason for the immediate failure of this innovation is the fact that valves require cylindrical pipes and that the addition of these several inches of non-conical tubing was a compromise to the ideal timbre of the horn.
Beethoven did use the valve horn in two late works: the Ninth Symphony and the Missa Solemnis. This helped both to introduce this improvement to other composers and to "legitimize" the use of a valve horn. This signaled the release of a flood of works for valve horn: the Schumann Adagio and Allegro and Concertpiece for Four Horn and Orchestra, the Rossini operas William Tell and Semiramide, the Cherubini Sonata in F, and many other works. In some Wagner operas the horn parts are for valve horn. For example, Lohengrin requires only valved instruments.

It is interesting to note (in light of this latter fact about Wagner) that the Beethoven Ninth Symphony was premiered with one Joseph Rudolph Lewy (1801 - 1881) on a valved instrument. This hornist also played at Wagner's Dresden premiere in 1846. He was in the audience at Wagner's Bayreuth debut in 1872 when the foundation stones of the Festival Theatre were laid. It seems likely that he would have met Franz Strauss (the Wagnerian hornist of choice) during these years of association with Wagnerian opera.

The valve horn continued side by side with the hand horn for most of the nineteenth century, but its obvious advantages in playing technique won over composers and caused it to assume dominance. The famous Treatise on Instrumentation by Hector Berlioz (1844) contains a separate chapter on each instrument. At that time, Berlioz was compelled to include a considerable account of the hand horn technique so that composers could understand best what was possible on
the instrument. However, the editorial notes of Richard Strauss in his 1911 revision declares much of the material on the horn to be "obsolete" and "only of historical value."

The ultimate development of the horn was the F - B\(^b\) double horn, invented by Friedrich Gumpert in 1890. Strauss declares, in his Berlioz revision, that most horn players "today" use this F - B\(^b\) double horn.\(^{22}\)

These matters of valve and hand horn shall be returned to later in discussing both the first and second concertos of Strauss. However, suffice it to say now that Franz Strauss received his training and flourished as a performer and pedagogue during the period in which both instruments were in common usage. This had an impact on his playing; but, more important for this study, it had a considerable influence on the kinds of themes his son Richard wrote for this instrument.

The First Concerto for Horn and Orchestra in E\(^b\) (Opus 11) was written during the winter of 1882-1883. At this time, Strauss was a student at the University of Munich. His course of study there was comprehensive because his father wanted to ensure that his son would have a broad education (in the manner of the ancient Greeks) and an understanding of and an appreciation for disciplines other than music.

Richard was nineteen at this time and, as has been shown, had written a number of works prior to this. Even though this concerto is quite advanced beyond his earlier works, Strauss soon abandoned this style for that of the
"music of the future". Had he not come under the influence of Wagnerian apostles about this time, the First Horn Concerto might have served as a point of departure for mature works in an early Romantic style. As it is, the Concerto is now seen as the last of his student works.

The work was dedicated to the composer's father *(Seinem lieben Vater)*. Unfortunately, Franz Strauss did not feel at ease in performing this work. The First Concerto was often played by Franz in the family circle but was at the extreme of his technique. "Johanna Strauss... wrote... Dennis Brain that she... remembered her father 'struggling with the solo part, which he found very tiring, even using the high B flat crook'."23 Evidently the seven high Bb's were deemed far too treacherous for a public performance.

The concerto had a number of early performances. The first public performance was given in 1883 by Bruno Hayer (a student of Franz Strauss) in the Tonkünstlerverein. This Munich performance was with piano (the reduction probably made by Richard himself as there exist copies of a piano reduction by him in his own hand). The first orchestral performance was given by Gustav Leinhos (principal horn of the Meiningen Orchestra) with von Bülow conducting, on March 4, 1885. It is possible that von Bülow programmed the work not only as a favor to the composer but also to spite a Strauss too timid to play the work in public.

The Dresden premiere was performed by Oskar Franz who later described Strauss as "that greatest of all modern
It has been said by one writer that Strauss eventually changed the dedication of the concerto to Franz.

The *New York Times* states that the First Concerto was known and played in New York City from 1884 onward. This is hard to believe, however, because the work was not published until 1886 by the Joseph Aible firm in Munich and it is unlikely that a manuscript copy of a horn concerto by an unknown young composer would have traveled so far so quickly. Certainly his music was gaining recognition, but even a hometown firm was reluctant to print the music until Strauss had been conducting professionally for a few years.

In 1885, the famous horn virtuoso Henri-Adrien-Louis Kling (1842 - 1918) prepared a revision for horn and piano which was eventually published by Breitkopf and Härtel of Wiesbaden. The Kling edition is interesting in that it is said to have contained a number of phrasing changes from Strauss' original. No doubt this was done to make the score more playable by nineteenth century soloists, but it did obscure the composer's Mozartean model of smooth, fluid line. Since improved playing technique quickly allowed performers to do as the composer wished, the Kling edition has become obsolete.

The Aible firm was purchased by Universal Editions A. G. (Vienna) in 1904 and the new owners brought out a piano reduction edition of the concerto (U. E. 1039) in 1905 and a full orchestra edition (U. E. 1592) in 1908 - 1909. Because the whereabouts of the original Strauss manuscript are unknown,
one must assume that the Universal Editions closely follow
the manuscript with which the Aible firm had originally
worked. The Universal Edition score has been engraved by
the American firm of Kalmus Music Company. A piano version
is published in America by G. C. Schirmer (Vol. 1888) but
the printing history of this score does not reveal its source.
It is very similar to Strauss' own piano reduction and it
could well be that his work was the basis of the Schirmer
edition.

The most striking thing about this ebullient and amazing work is in Strauss's use of the
same thematic material for the concerto's opening
and for its third movement, here changed into 3\(\times\) time,
a bold and advanced thought. The strong and elegant
use of the solo instrument and the confident orches-
tration, together with a rejection of sonata form in
the outer movements, all add up to making this by
far the most important and interesting of these ear-
ly works. The Violin Concerto of the previous year
cannot match it.\(^{25}\)

The First Concerto consists of the three traditional
movements and is written for a standard orchestra of paired
woodwinds, two horns, two trumpets, and strings. In terms
of orchestration it is interesting to note that the ensemble
horns are in E\(\flat\) while the solo horn is in F. The solo horn
is obviously intended to be a valve horn, whereas the ensem-
ble horn parts are written for hand horns. Strauss evidently
realized, or was so advised by his father, that a soloist
would more than likely be familiar with the new technique
and that section horns could not be expected to be able to
do more than the hand horn. Another factor could be the
composer's desire to maintain the sound of a classical orchestra by restricting himself to writing hand horn parts.

The first movement boldly avoids sonata form. For a young composer with a conservative upbringing, this was an unexpected turn of events. Instead, the movement is in quasi-rondo form. The opening fanfare, Figure 2-1

thus serves as a brash, attention-demanding call from the soloist, an introduction to the concerto, and also an announcement of the A theme of the rondo. In the first respect it is not unlike the opening of the Piano Concerto No. Five of Beethoven. The orchestra takes up this idea and works with it for the next twenty-two measures. The soloist returns with the B theme, a much more hornistic theme, which begins in this way:

Figure 2-2

The soloist continues with this for some length. The orchestra then has a tutti section based on the A theme before the soloist returns with the C thematic section. This section opens with this assertive idea:
The second part of the C section has a more developmental quality and is built upon the rhythmic figure of a triplet. This rhythm permeates the entire concerto and the upward motion of the pitches as found here also reappears in other places in the concerto.

The drive of this rhythm leads to a return of the pattern from Figure 2-3 which now serves as the final statement of the soloist in this movement. The soloist concludes this final statement with a cadence formula taken from the Mozartean compositional style:

The orchestra takes up the triplet motive, shifts to a short section which begins with this idea:
and then concludes the movement with a restatement of the A theme. Since there is no break between movements, this A theme is also a transition to the second movement and therefore presents the necessary modulatory material needed to prepare the coming key of A\textsubscript{b} minor. In terms of key relationships, this is not a true rondo as new ideas which clearly demarcate sections are not always in the "correct" keys; however, by using other devices, most notably orchestration, Strauss makes his plan readily apparent. Of the examples quoted above, Figures 2-1 and 2-2 are in E\textsubscript{b}, Figure 2-3 leads to a section in B\textsubscript{b}, Figure 2-4 begins a section exploring several keys, and Figures 2-5 and 2-6 are in B\textsubscript{b}.

The second movement is in ternary form. The opening section (A) is a smaller ternary with the following as the beginning of the theme of the "a" section of this small ternary:

This melody evolves into a more astringent theme ("b"). This theme begins in the minor dominant but quickly moves
through a number of keys which are made possible by the slow
tempo.

Figure 2-8

Strauss then closes this small ternary with a return to the
opening idea ("a").

At this point, Strauss takes the triplet pattern which has served as the accompaniment figure since the beginning of the movement and transforms it into a driving rhythmic background for the middle section of the movement. At the same time he employs an intricate set of key relationships in order to have the middle section appear in the unlikely tonality of E major. If the opening a\textsuperscript{b} minor has C\textsuperscript{b} as its relative major and that C\textsuperscript{b} is the enharmonic equivalent of B major, then it can be seen that the new key has a somewhat subdominant quality. It is also true that E is the enharmonic equivalent of F\textsuperscript{b} which is the Neapolitan of the dominant of a\textsuperscript{b}, but Strauss does not seem to use the new key in the manner of a Neapolitan and therefore it seems unlikely that this is his intention.

This B section has as its theme a melody which is also reminiscent of the B theme (Figure 2-2) in the first movement. It begins as follows:
These four measures occur twice; however, the material following the pitch b at the end of Figure 2-9 is different in the second statement. After this short middle section Strauss returns to a slightly varied repetition of the A section of the second movement.

The closing movement has an eight measure introduction which not only reestablishes the opening key of E♭ but also creates a rhythmic momentum with upward-moving arpeggios in a triplet pattern. Strauss begins what he has labeled a Rondo in 6/8 with the following opening idea:

The section based on this A theme lasts for thirty-five measures. As in the first movement rondo themes, the horn introduces the new material each time and its solo work is followed by an orchestral tutti.

The second theme is more lyrical and begins as follows:
This theme is in F major and this part of the B section lasts for thirty-eight measures. After this there is another melodic idea which begins by using F as a dominant and maintains this Bb tonality. In this way Strauss cleverly modifies the expected dominant of the B section of the Rondo. The second thematic idea contains the ubiquitous triplet figure. This triplet idea has been described as a hunting horn motive and it is used not only connectively (as in this place) but also thematically (as mentioned earlier in the first movement).

At this point, Strauss makes a four-measure quotation of the fanfare which opened the concerto. No doubt this is to make clear the relationship of the fanfare to the material found in the last movement. In this way the cyclic nature of the concerto is emphasized. The orchestra then plays a short tutti section based upon the rondo theme followed by the solo horn recapitulating the first theme of the B section, however, this time it is in the tonic key.
The rondo theme in solo horn and then orchestra follows. This latter tutti leads to a dramatic quasi-cadenza section which is built upon the same material which appeared earlier at the end of the first movement in the patetico section (see Figure 2-5). The movement closes with an extended coda which opens with the following idea:

Figure 2-13

A careful study of the complete theme statements (of which the above figures are only the opening measures) will reveal the derivative nature of the Figures 2-2, 2-3, 2-4, 2-6, 2-8, 2-9, 2-10, 2-12, and 2-13 from Figure 2-1. This demonstrates a quality often found in Strauss' mature works: the ability to make a great deal out of very little.

Unity within the concerto is also found in Strauss's use of quotations. One example, cited above, is his quotation of the opening fanfare in the last movement. Another is his use of the patetico section from the end of the first movement as a cadenza in the last movement. A third example, not mentioned earlier, is his quotation at the end of the second movement of the opening few notes in the B section of the same movement. Here the quotation is disguised by use of an enharmonic spelling, but the ear is in no way fooled.
While there are pages in the teen-age works of Strauss (the first horn concerto, for instance) which at the diagrammatic harmonic level, could easily have been written by Mendelssohn, or even, surprisingly, by Weber, one needs only a few seconds to realize that here, for all of the influence of the early romantic masters, is a wholly original technique.?

There is one problem connected with this concerto and that is in the correct version of measures 271 - 274 of the last movement. The two versions are as follows:

**Figure 2-14**

![Figure 2-14](image1)

**Figure 2-15**

![Figure 2-15](image2)

Figure 2-14 comes from the Universal Edition score and is therefore also in the Kalmus score. Figure 2-15 is found in a handwritten piano score of Strauss and is also in the Schirmer edition cited above. The problem seems to revolve around two questions:

1. If one must choose one or the other version, which one is correct? The Universal Edition seems to have direct claim to the original orchestral score, while the other version is certainly in the composer's own handwriting.

2. On the other hand, the handwritten score contains
places where Strauss gives two performance versions of the same measure without specifying which is the preferred one. These ossia passages do not appear in the full score. Is it possible that Strauss merely wrote in one alternative version and failed to include the other in the measures in question? Or, did he see some changes as necessary for a non-orchestral performance? Or did he actually change his mind as to how these measures should really sound?

The resolution of these questions seems impossible at this point. The original manuscript appears to be lost and Strauss is dead. Even if the former were not the case there would be an inevitable argument over a former version versus a later version as there is in the case of some other composers, Bruckner, for example. It would seem safe to conclude that either version is valid in performance.

...An early example of certainty in the creation of fine melody, and it shows a genuine sense of form, savouring to the full a feeling for the sounds of nature reminiscent of Wever. The song-like themes are characteristic of the later Strauss in their soaring breadth of conception.28

21 Aldrich, ibid.
no date given), p. 6. This had to have been written after 1904 since Franz refers to Strauss' editing of the Berlioz orchestration text (see note 22 above) as "newly revised".

25 Jefferson, p. 47.

26 The musical examples in this chapter are drawn from the orchestral score of the First Concerto as published by Kalmus Music Company.


28 Krause, p. 35.
CHAPTER THREE

THE SECOND CONCERTO

In the last years Strauss turned again to orchestral composing, though on a small scale. The Second Concerto for Horn (in E-flat Major) can be considered as a reminiscence of his father. It is a virtuoso piece for the horn, old-fashioned pretty music. Mendelssohn might have composed it.29

As noted in Chapter One, Strauss was shattered by the effects of World War II. The physical landmarks of his personal and musical life had been, to a large extent, destroyed and the German culture to which he had devoted his life lay in ruins as well. It is not surprising that he retreated into the musical world of his youth, into the memories of his father, and his early ideals.

He made plans for a tone poem on the Danube River. In this way he could bridge the gap back to his early tone poem period, as well as borrow an idea from Bedrich Smetana's Moldau. These plans did not, however, result in a finished work. They did serve to, in the words of one author, "get his creative powers flowing which started a stream of small works of an abstract nature in his old age."30

His plans for the Second Horn Concerto were laid long before the work was completed. In 1941 he made a series of groupings of his works into what he titled "good programs."
One of these lists included the following pieces:  

**Bourgeois Gentilhomme Suite**

Second Horn Concerto

**Macbeth**

**Don Juan**

**Death and Transfiguration**

The Second Horn Concerto, however, did not appear until 1942. In that year Strauss conducted several works by Mozart at the Salzburg Festival. This required preparations which may have rekindled his love for the earlier master. Certainly, the Second Sonatina for Winds in Eb which appeared in 1945 is a work reminiscent of Mozart. It was given the dedication: "To the divine Mozart at the end of a life filled with gratitude." Clearly, Mozart weighed heavily on Strauss' musical thoughts at this period of his life.

One author has stated that all the late works have a Mozartean quality. Phrases such as "relaxed, transparent structure", "reduction of the instrumental apparatus", "no pretentions to be anything but beautiful and easily appreciated music", "themes... are of a slender and graceful lightness, which is almost Mozartean... stand out from a straightforward harmonic background and engage in virtuistic (sic) arabesques", "real symphonic development is excluded in favor of a naively joyous interplay of themes" abound in describing the late works.

Strauss seems to have seen these works in a highly subjective light. It is as if the late pieces were therapeu-
tic to him in his old age as writing exercises, or, perhaps, they are a type of private memoir. He did not press for performances with the zeal that he did in his younger days. He thought of these last works as "occasional works" and stated that they were "without musical-historical significance." At one time he said his main purpose was to "spread joy" with these works.

Suddenly, Strauss found his eightieth birthday upon him. Torn asunder by five years of a new devastating war, the world had undergone an enormous transformation. The dream of existence amid happiness, peace and beauty was shattered for the time being. Although his mind was still active, he was not spared the burdens of old age. Pain led more and more frequently to doubts and resignation. In the sphere of active work Strauss looked back to his youth. There were also large-scale new works, the Second Horn Concerto. 

The Second Horn Concerto was written in 1942. It appeared without dedication, although in Strauss's mind it was probably in honor of his father. The premiere performance was given in Salzburg on August 11, 1943. The soloist was Gottfried von Freiburg who was accompanied by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (of which he was the principal horn). One source states that the orchestra was under the direction of Karl Böhm; however, the American hornist, Philip Farkas, spoke with Herr von Freiburg in 1957 and he recalls that the latter said the orchestra was conducted by the composer. Since Farkas is relying on twenty years of memory it is possible that he has made a small error in this regard. It is highly likely that Strauss was present at the rehearsals, as
he evidently gave von Freiburg a series of performance nuances
which the horn player later gave to Farkas. It is also possi-
ble that Freiburg himself did not recall the event accurately.
He played the work on the Vienna horn, which is comparable to
an American single F horn, an unforgiving instrument. A tape
was made of this performance and it reveals many missed notes.

Another early performance did not go well either.
The American premiere, given by Anthony Miranda with Thomas
Scherman and the Little Orchestra of New York, was scathingly
panned by critic Virgil Thomson. He stated that the work
was both poorly played and poorly conducted. This performance
was given in Town Hall (New York City) on October 8, 1948.

The first major American performance (by a well-known
soloist and orchestra) was by James Stagliano with the Boston
Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Eleazar de Carval-
ho, at Tanglewood, on August 7, 1949. This was part of a
series of Strauss' works played that summer to honor him on
the occasion of his eighty-fifth birthday.

The work, which was without opus number, was pub-
lished by the Bonn branch of Boosey and Hawkes. They pub-
lished a piano reduction edition (presumably by Strauss) on
October 6, 1950 and the full orchestral edition on October 17,
1950.

It is above all the music of Strauss's old
age which demonstrates most clearly his ability to
create music of classical clarity and perfection of
A certain diminution of his powers of invention seems to have been balanced in these works (Horn and Oboe Concertos, the two Sonatinas for Winds, etc.) by an even greater feeling for classical proportions. The themes are not, indeed, so much "unfolded" in the classical sense as "illuminated" from different angles.

The Second Horn Concerto is scored for an orchestra of classical proportions. It employs paired woodwinds, horns, and trumpets over a full complement of strings. Timpani appear in the last movement. In contrast with the First Concerto, the ensemble horns here are in F and the Solo Horn is in Eb. The former situation is likely based on the same consideration as in the earlier work; that is, Strauss put the ensemble horns into a setting in which they would be most at ease. In 1883, that meant hand horn parts and, in 1942, that meant non-transposing parts.

In the latter situation, Strauss may be attempting to recall the hand horn sound, although the opening four measures alone are not for hand horn. Strauss was, of course, a master of horn player psychology, as well as horn orchestration. He apparently realized the impact this mental transposition would have on the thoughtful performer.

The first movement is a highly eclectic creation. The opening fanfare in the solo horn (utilizing bold octave leaps) is reminiscent of the First Concerto. Measures 82 - 103 have a highly contrapuntal texture involving solo clarinet, solo horn, solo cello, solo viola, solo oboe, and solo flute. Involved in this section is a fugal treatment of the following idea:
The first impression the listener has of this section is that of a concerto grosso, but there may be the intention of a reference to the Classical sinfonia concertante.

At measure 171 there is a brief reference to the heroic sounds from previous Strauss works, such as Ein Heldenleben. The composer accomplishes this by having a strong restatement of the opening fanfare in one-half of the orchestra over a C minor triad in the other half.

Norman del Mar has found in this movement similar reminiscences of other earlier Strauss works, including Intermezzo, Aus Italien, and Der Rosenkavalier. Probably any number of his other earlier works come to the mind of the informed listener.

During World War II he composed a series of reflective works mostly for small orchestra—the Oboe Concerto (1946), the Horn Concerto #2 (1942), the Metamorphosen (1945) for twenty-three solo strings. There also were the Four Last Songs, for soprano and full orchestra. About this music there is mixed feelings. Some listeners find in it what they also find in Strauss' last operas—the final flicker of post-romanticism, the musings of a great composer in his full, venerable mastery. Others dismiss the music, with actual irritation, as works of tremendous skill that repeat past formulae and have nothing to say.

As in the case of the First Horn Concerto, the first movement is not in sonata form. In this concerto, the first
movement is a series of alterations between solo sections and tutti sections which, on first hearing, seem to be the formal makeup of a somewhat rambling creation. On closer examination the movement is closely knit. The opening motive as stated in solo horn

Figure 3-2

\[ \text{Allegro} \]

\[ \text{E}^b \]

\[ \text{horn} \]

is not only reminiscent of the opening fanfare in the earlier concerto but is also the basis of the whole movement. It occurs melodically as in this instance, and as contrapuntal material, as at measure 54.

There are four other motives used in this movement. One has already appeared in Figure 3-1. The other three occur in the following order:

Figure 3-3

\[ \text{Allegro} \]

\[ \text{F} \]

\[ \text{horn} \]

Figure 3-4

\[ \text{Allegro} \]

\[ \text{horn} \]

Figure 3-5

\[ \text{Allegro} \]

\[ \text{horn} \]
These five ideas are constantly interweaving throughout the movement. This creates what is probably a derivation of Theme and Variations. Strauss made a career of stretching forms into nearly unrecognizable conditions. Cecil Smith has identified some examples of this technique (as in *Ein Heldenleben*, being a huge sonata form). 44

There are three Classical references during this concerto movement. These are important to note since the significance of Mozart and the youthful ideals of the composer in connection with this particular work and period of his compositional life have been noted above.

The first of these references is in measure 54. At this cadence point, Strauss borrows the open fifth sound of early horn writing:

Figure 3-6
The second reference is 100 measures later. In this instance, Strauss uses descending arpeggios as his borrowed materials:

Figure 3-7

The problem with this quotation is that while it has the sound of a cadential melodic pattern, it really leads nowhere. Probably, Strauss wrote this with tongue in cheek.

The last example is another cadential figure in the Classical style, but it has added significance in that the same formula was used by Strauss in the same place in his First Concerto: at the point where the soloist makes his final statement before the Coda/Transition into the second movement (see Figure 2-5). Here is that reference:

Figure 3-8

This formula is cleverly disguised by the use of syncopated chromaticism in the accompanying strings. It further differs from his earlier use of it in the First Concerto in that it occurs at the end of a long diminuendo; this usage is in stark contrast to the exalting triumph of the First Concerto, first movement.
The second movement is a very clear-cut ABA form and its 72 measures form a very concise musical statement. The opening A section is in two parts: an opening statement of the theme in the orchestra followed by a slightly varied repetition of this theme in the solo horn. The thematic material of this A section involves a melody which has some aspects of being a stately dance:

Figure 3-9

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3-9}
\caption{Example figure 3-9}
\end{figure}

This melody is accompanied by a rhythm pattern which, at measure 13, becomes a part of the theme itself:

Figure 3-10

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3-10}
\caption{Example figure 3-10}
\end{figure}

This A section is in the highly conventional key of A\textsuperscript{b} (sub-dominant to the tonality of the whole concerto), but yields to D major in the B section. The manner in which the new key is approached leads the listener to conclude that he is to hear this almost as a new piece. The closing of the first A section is harmonically identical to the closing of the movement and the new key is so totally removed from the former tonality of A\textsuperscript{b} that the contrast between the two sec-
tions at this point could not be greater. Perhaps the shift of a tritone is another aspect of Straussian humor.

The B section is essentially a long meandering theme in the strings which has added to it, occasionally, long chords in woodwinds and the solo horn. The theme begins as follows:

Figure 3-11

At measure 50 there occurs a four-measure transition back to the closing A section. In this section the horn starts in immediately with the theme (Figure 3-9) but has as an accompaniment the string theme from the B section (Figure 3-11). This contrapuntal writing thus serves to unify the B and A sections.

Strauss has labeled the third movement a Rondo and a careful search will produce a structure of ABACADA. Each of these A sections is in the home key of Eb while the other sections are in Eb, Bb, and Ab, respectively.

The movement opens with the following solo horn statement:

Figure 3-12
It is interesting to note that Strauss has the horn move through the various tones of a single chord. The opening measures of the first movement were similarly constructed. No doubt he had the limitation (and therefore the idiomatic sound) of the hand horn in mind as he wrote these themes. A more direct comparison between this movement and the opening of the first movement can be seen in the oboe solo in measures 9 - 12 in which the oboe plays a series of downward leaping octaves; this is an inversion of the octaves in Figure 3-2.

The B section theme is in longer note values of dotted half note and dotted quarter note. This more relaxed quality is reinforced by the woodwinds and strings, with the exception of the first violins, which keep up a moving eighth note figure throughout this section. By means of this, Strauss achieves a partial relaxation of the musical tension in the A section without completely releasing the reins.

The second A section begins with the opening five notes of the rondo theme (see Figure 3-12) being used as the basis of a series of imitative entries throughout the orchestra and including the solo horn. Then, Strauss begins a modulatory transition which prepares the listener both tonally for the coming key of Bb and psychologically for the developmental quality of the C section. This transition exploits the descending octave figure heard earlier in solo oboe. This motive is accompanied by a new idea in cello and first horn (not solo horn), which begins as follows:
The C section opens with a short melodic motive in solo horn:

At measure 111 Strauss begins the developmental aspect of the C section. First he involves the horn in a series of highly intricate rhythmical interchanges with the strings. This includes references to the obvious chromatic possibilities contained in the second and third measures of Figure 3-14 and he borrows the \( \frac{3}{4} \) rhythms of the first movement to use in a different manner in this new context.

By combining, at measure 123, the drive of the four dotted quarter notes (see Figure 3-14) and its chromaticism with a brief accelerando, Strauss achieves a pounding intensity of motion for the main thrust of his "development". In measures 127 - 159 Strauss juxtaposes four basic motives of this movement in varying ways. A reduction of measures 138 - 140 shows these four motives together.
The motives a, b, c, and d in Figure 3-15 are easily recognized as fragments of ideas scattered throughout the earlier parts of this rondo. The developmental quality of this C section, then, derives not from the pursuit of one idea in a variety of guises, but in the combining and recombining of several ideas to produce a constantly varying texture.

The third A section reviews the rondo theme and then uses motive "b" from Figure 3-15 to prepare the new key of section D. The first four measures of the opening theme of section D are remarkably similar in rhythm, direction, and contour to the cello-horn melody noted earlier in Figure 3-13.

This theme is accompanied at various times by motives a, b, and c from Figure 3-15. In fact, motive b appears in the ultra-penultimate measure of the horn solo.
The final A section presents the opening theme (and particularly motive b of Figure 3-15) in several timbres. It ends in a highly chromatic passage out of which the dominant key (B♭) emerges at the start of the coda.

The coda opens with the solo horn presenting the material which began the C section. The coda reviews in quick succession all the motives presented in the course of the movement and thus serves not only as the virtuosic finale, but also as a formal summation.

Only one final observation need be made. It is worth noting that in several places Strauss gives the horns of the orchestra important solo roles. In hearing a recording of this work one can easily be confused by this bit of orchestration. An example of this auditory trickery occurs in measures 153 - 163 of the first movement. The solo horn carries the musical material until measure 161 when the ensemble first horn breaks in for two measures. This particular example shows Strauss' understanding of the needs of a horn player. He has broken up a long and taxing solo into two more manageable sections and he has given the soloist a two-measure "breather". He accomplishes this, while still maintaining a continuous horn timbre, by using a horn from the ensemble.

A different example can be found in measures 103 - 105 of the first movement. In this case Strauss does what could be described as the musical equivalent of the visual art's trompe l'oeil. He has the second horn in the orchestra play
the opening theme and the solo horn play the theme with which
the orchestra is working at that point. If one does not know
the passage, and the horn players match their tone qualities
carefully, the listener can be quickly immersed in a quandary
over which horn is which. Even in old age, Strauss maintained
his wit.

After listening to both his earliest and
latest works - the Brahmsian Piano Quartet (1884)
and Violin Sonata (1887), and those compositions
in which he nostalgically returned to the style
of his youth, notably the concertos for horn and
for oboe (1942, 1945) - it becomes difficult to
remember that between these two periods Strauss
produced music that shocked and outraged the
world of music, and made him one of its most
provocative figures.45

31Richard Strauss, "Some Good Programmes of My Work,"
as contained in Recollections and Reflections, p. 110.
36Ibid. 37Ibid., p. 449.
38Philip Farkas, personal letter, Indiana University,
39Virgil Thomson, New York Herald Tribune, 19 October
40Krause, p. 183
41The musical examples in this chapter are drawn from
the orchestral score of the Second Concerto as published by
43Schonberg, p. 424.
44Cecil Smith, "Richard Strauss," New Republic,
24 October 1949, pp. 21-22.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOME COMPARISONS
WITH OTHER SOLO WORKS FOR HORN

Through all of Strauss’s works there runs one prevalent ambition, the desire to find new ways in which the vocabulary of key-signature tonality can be augmented without at the same time being allowed to deteriorate into a state of chromatic immobility.46

Strauss did not compose his horn concertos in a musical vacuum. There were many precedents in horn literature to guide him. From among these a few may be extracted for comparison. Certainly an influential body of literature is to be found in the Four Concertos of Mozart.

Of these Four Concertos, the last three are in Eb (the First Concerto is in D). The Concert Rondo, K. 371, is also in Eb. This decided key preference may have been an influence on Strauss as both of his concertos are in Eb. Of these Mozart works, the latter three are also cast in the standard three movements. The First Concerto lacks a slow movement and the work as a whole has several compositional and historical peculiarities connected to it.

Each concerto was intended to be for horn and chamber orchestra. This orchestra consisted of strings plus either two oboes or two clarinets (as upper woodwinds) and either
two bassoons or two horns (as lower woodwinds). Strauss clearly tried to retain much of this intimate sound even when writing for the larger forces contained in the Second Concerto. This can be heard in passages where solo instruments appear within the orchestral texture (see Figure 3-1) or when solo instruments appear with orchestral accompaniment (see Figure 3-9).

Another Mozartean quality which Strauss used extensively in his Second Concerto is the conception of the solo horn as a *primum inter pares*. When in his Third Concerto Mozart needed an ensemble horn during the exposition before the solo horn's entrance, he felt free to use the solo horn as a member of the orchestra.

Figure 4-1

Strauss maintained this freedom in his writing. An example of this may be seen in the previously cited passage where the ensemble horn provides a breathing place during the solo horn line. Another example (Figure 3-6) occurs at a cadence when the solo horn is ending a phrase at the same time the first violins are commanding the listener's attention. A comparable passage in Mozart can be found in the first thirty-six measures of the Fourth Concerto (K. 495).
The last movements of these Mozart concertos are all hunting scenes cast as rondos. This quality can be easily recognized in the closing movement of Strauss' First Concerto (see Figure 2-9). The closest thematic relationship with Mozart can be found in the Rondo from the Second Concerto (K. 417) whose theme opens as follows:

Figure 4-2

In terms of form or structure, Strauss tends not to follow Mozart in the first movements since all the Mozart concertos have modified sonata forms for first movements. He also does not follow Mozart in the slow movements since the latter has used rondo form in the three extant slow movements.

Clearly Strauss is after the aura of a Mozart horn concerto without being obligated to write completely in that style. He is trying to present Mozart in terms of either the late nineteenth century or in the style which Strauss adopted late in his life. That he was familiar with these works is clear from a statement he once made:

But I learned how to play well when I accompanied him (Franz Strauss) time and time again in Mozart's beautiful horn concertos and in Beethoven's horn sonatas (sic).

The mention by Strauss of the Beethoven Horn Sonata (Opus 17) demands some discussion. The Beethoven Sonata is similar in some ways (except in the use of piano instead of
orchestra as the concomitant medium) to the Mozart concertos. Modified sonata form in the first movement and a rondo in the last movement are two similarities. The slow movement is, in this sonata, barely a movement at all. It is more of a large transition between first and last movements. In fact, it proceeds *attacca* into the third movement.

It is this latter quality which bears on the Strauss concertos. It has been noted already that in his First Concerto, the final two movements are connected. In the Second Concerto, the first two movements are connected. Perhaps Strauss wished to make an allusion to the classic era with this formal device.

In terms of key, the Beethoven Sonata provides no corollary since it is in F. However, much of the chromaticism used by Strauss may be derived from possibilities which Beethoven had explored in his earlier work. One must remember that the horn was a highly limited instrument in Beethoven's day and the chromatic capabilities were few. Even in Strauss' day, the horn had not been liberated from this image although the addition of valves, as discussed earlier, had freed the instrument from many of its limitations. Surely his familiarity with the Beethoven sonata helped prepare him to explore more chromaticism by a solo horn just as Romantic composers in general were guided by Beethoven's work into exploring orchestral resources.

In a letter to his mentor, Hans von Bülow, Strauss had proposed a repertoire for some chamber music concerts to
be presented in January of 1886. In this repertoire, he included the Horn Trio (Opus 40) of Johannes Brahms. Since Brahms wrote the Trio in 1865, it seems reasonable to assume that Strauss would have been familiar with the work before he wrote the First Concerto. After all, his father Franz was a musical reactionary and Brahms was one champion of conservative musicians. Therefore, just as Richard accompanied his father in Mozart and Beethoven, he likely did the same in Brahms.

From Strauss's point of view, the Brahms Trio is an interesting work. It is in Eb and calls for a horn pitched in that key. From the material Brahms presents it is clear that he has conceived the work for the sound of a Waldhorn, even though the Trio is virtually unplayable on that instrument. It has already been noted that Strauss used a similar device with his Second Concerto. By calling for a valveless horn in the title, a composer can often summon up that sound from a horn player even though the part clearly requires valves.

The first movement of the Brahms Trio is in a modified rondo. Brahms recognized that material for Waldhorn would never work in the development section of a sonata form. Therefore, he alternated the woodland theme which opens the movement with a more intense secondary theme. The intensity of this latter section he derived from the piano and the violin while leaving the horn generally with long, held notes.
The Trio is in four movements. The middle movements (a Scherzo and an Adagio) have no bearing on either of the two Strauss concertos except that they provided a model for Strauss to use in his use of modulation. For example, the Scherzo contains a small ternary which begins in $E_b$, shifts to $B$, and then back to $E_b$. The trio section of the Scherzo is in $a^b$ minor. While not an exact match, there is a strong similarity between this $E_b$ to $B$ modulation and the $a^b$ to $E$ modulation which Strauss used in the second movement of the First Concerto.

The closing allegro of the Brahms Trio provides an interesting use of a theme which one would expect to find in a Mozartean rondo. This theme begins as follows:

\[ Figure \ 4-3 \]

\[ \text{Allegro} \]

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{Allegro} \\
\text{E}_b & \quad \text{B} & \quad \text{E}_b \\
\text{B} & \quad \text{E}_b & \quad \text{B} \\
\text{E}_b & \quad \text{B} & \quad \text{E}_b
\end{align*} \]

However, the movement is in sonata form. Brahms accomplishes this by having the horn only play the theme when it falls within the capacity of a hand horn. Brahms alters the theme in places to make it fit this capacity. In this manner, he leaves the developmental and modulatory material to the violin and piano. The horn is present basically to give a hunting atmosphere whereas in the first movement its tone quality was essential to the themes themselves.
One obvious work for comparison is a concerto by the composer's father. Being a virtuoso horn player in the nineteenth century, it was only natural for Franz Strauss to have written solo vehicles for his own use. The Concerto for Horn, Opus 8 (1860) is certainly the most famous of these solo works. It is in C minor and written for valve horn in F. Franz wrote a Second Concerto (Opus 14) in Eb but this work remains in manuscript.

The First Concerto is in three movements which are designed to be played without interruption. The outer movements cover essentially the same material except that the second half of the last movement is in the parallel major.

The thematic material of the opening movement consists of three ideas which begin in this order:

Figure 4-4

Figure 4-5

Figure 4-6
In the last movement, the theme in Figure 4-5 is omitted and a derivation of Figure 4-6 is the section which occurs in C major.

In terms of key, the relative major-minor relationship of $E^b$ and $c$ minor is obvious. There are some other similarities with Richard's First Concerto. The themes of Figures 2-2 and 4-4 both occur within the same emotional and psychological framework. The concertos both begin with a fanfare-like introduction after which these two themes have the effect of a sudden calm. It might be noted further that both introductions rely on \( \frac{\text{measure title}}{\text{measure title}} \) to provide the proper majestic quality.

In the same way, Figures 2-3 and 4-5 provide similar contrasts with the earlier material. Figure 4-6 has no counterpart in the first movement of Richard's Concerto; however, there is a corollary relationship with the coda to the closing Rondo (see Figure 2-12). In both of these themes, there is the quality of the "big finish", that is, both themes allowed the soloists to close their respective concertos with a suitable virtuoso display. These two passages demonstrate the composers' knowledge of horn technique in that the themes sound virtuosic but are really not very difficult technically.

The slow movement of the concerto by Franz Strauss is a ternary design. It is in $A^b$ (subdominant of the relative major) with the middle section being in $f$ minor. The thematic material has the same contrast of lyricism against intensely strong emotion which characterizes the same movement in
Richard's First Concerto. The movement closes with a short, written-out cadenza.

One author has listed eight elements of the mature style of Richard Strauss. At this point, it is fitting to see how the concertos fit in with these stylistic characteristics:

1. His melodies have a huge, arch-like sweep.
2. There is a remarkable richness of coloration in the harmonies.
3. Strauss modified traditional forms to fit the needs of his material.
4. Strauss tended to use lavish orchestrations.
5. Material often appears which seems present to purposely shock the listener.
6. He used counterpoint a great deal.
7. He presented material which tended to contrast the "earthy versus the bourgeois".
8. He used large orchestras. This was due to the fact that large forces became expected of him and because they were available to him even during World War I.

Some of these qualities have already been noted, such as the harmonic usage, the modification of form, the orchestral concerns, and the use of counterpoint. The shock value of musical material is irrelevant to the two Horn Concertos and to contrast social classes musically does not fit the function of concerto composition.

The huge sweeping melodic constructions is an issue which is relevant to the concertos. An orchestral example of Strauss' horn writing may be found in Ein Heldenleben (note the key is Eb):
Of course, this two-and-one half octave surge is an extreme example but it shows Strauss' mastery of horn writing. This same master produced the long melodic phrases noted above in Figures 2-2, 2-3, 2-9, 3-2, 3-7, 3-12, and 3-16. The themes consist of short patterns strung together to make long melodies. They also generally can be characterized as having a fairly large range; for example, in Figure 3-12 the solo horn covers an octave and a half in less than two measures. For an instrument with the reputation of being somewhat unwieldy, this is a remarkable writing.

One final comparison: between the two concertos themselves there are a number of similarities in form, tonality, compositional devices, and other concerns of the craft. However there is one subtle difference which should be noted. The First Concerto is a work by a young composer who is experimenting with "new wine in old skins," to use the Biblical phrase. This imparts to the First Concerto a freshness which spills over into the performance interpretations.

On the other hand, the Second Concerto, while striving for the same Neo-classical lightness, is a product of the end of the master's life. He knew how to achieve the effects he wanted and the sense of experimentation and "newness" of in-
spiration is absent. Some passages have a contrived sound (such as the passage utilizing Figure 3-1); they are too clever, too full of the composer's accumulated knowledge and technique. Nevertheless, it is an interesting work and is a valuable part of the hornist's repertoire.

I wish to say, quite briefly, the following: if my works are good and of any importance for a possible further development of our art, they will maintain their position in spite of all positive opposition on the part of the critics, and in spite of insidious denigration of my artistic intentions. If they are worthless, not even the most gratifying box office success or the most enthusiastic acclamation of the augurs will keep them alive.54

47 The musical examples from the Mozart Concertos for Horn are drawn from the piano score (Vol. 1807) as published by G. Schirmer.
50 The musical example from the Brahms Horn Trio is drawn from the score as published by International Music Company.
51 The musical examples from the Franz Strauss First Concerto are drawn from the piano score as published by Carl Fischer, Inc.
52 Jefferson, p. 47
53 Mason, p. 52.
54 Richard Strauss, Preface to Aus Dem Musikleben Der Gegenwart by Leopold Schmidt as contained in Recollections and Reflections, p. 22.
SOURCES CONSULTED


