

EDITORIAL NOTES

When one merely whispers the name “Dotzauer”, one immediately thinks of the cello, of his loved-hated studies, and more. It is easy to forget that his first instrument was the piano, that his music theory and composition teacher knew Johann Sebastian **Bach** personally, and that his elder son—Justus Bernhard Friedrich (1808—1874)—would become a renowned pianist.

His piano writing when accompanying the cello is never trivial and is full of that love for counterpoint that we discovered in **Phase 1** of this project. It may come as a surprise to some that he wrote at least five original compositions for piano, all of which are of a pedagogical nature. There are three collections of six waltzes for piano four-hands and two books constituting a piano method for beginners. It is not hard to imagine that he may have composed these for his son.

We now take a small detour from **Phase 2** of the **Dotzauer Project**, dedicated to chamber music, to give a look at the second collection of waltzes, classified as Op. 17.

Hunting for the source

This was not an easy task, and I would like to thank the *Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek* in Bonn, Germany, for granting me access to the first edition of this work. It appears to have been published in Leipzig by Ambrosius **Kühnel** (1770—1813) under plate number 747. Mr. Kühnel opened an engraving, printing, and retail firm called “*Bureau de Musique*” on December 1st, 1800. Upon his death in 1813, the firm was bought by none less than Carl Friedrich **Peters** (1779—1827), who would change its name into “*Bureau de Musique C. F. Peters*”, the same “Edition Peters” that we know and respect today.

It is incredibly difficult to pinpoint the exact publication date of a piece without a direct record from the publisher, but we can, with a certain degree of confidence, place this collection as one of the last pieces he wrote in Leipzig, before moving to Dresden in 1811. This hypothesis is supported by the *Three String Quartets*, Op. 19, being reviewed in the *AMZ (Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung)* in 1812, and the *Three Duos* for two violins, Op. 14, being performed in 1809.

After publishing this, he would soon move to Dresden with his wife Christiana and his first son, Bernhard,

then 3 years old. We can then easily imagine our cellist hero giving the first loving piano lessons to his son, writing four-hands duos to play with him.

The source contains the parts divided as *Secondo* on the *verso* page and *Primo* on the *recto*, an established layout unique to piano four-hands duets. The pagination is extremely dense, with the clear intention of using as few pages as possible to save on printing costs. Page turns are impeccable, though, something not easily achievable with this peculiar layout.

The 6 Waltzes for Piano Four-Hands, Op. 17

Gathering three, six, or twelve pieces in a collection had been a common practice ever since the baroque era, and Dotzauer makes no exception to this successful formula. Each piece is in rounded binary form (*AABB-CCDD-AB*), made up of a first part—the waltz, though Dotzauer doesn’t label it—and an accompanying *Trio*. Both have simple binary form with repeats, with a few exceptions that we will look at. All of them are in simple ternary meter ($\frac{3}{4}$) and repeat the first part after the *Trio*.

Another peculiar characteristic of 4-hands writing is that, almost at all times, one of the two players is using the two hands in parallel—usually the *Primo*. This is much harder than a non-pianist may think.

No. 1 in G major

The first part has a peculiar tonal structure: G major to E minor (instead of the usual Dominant) for **Part A**, then E minor as Dominant of A minor, going back to G major for **Part B**. This gives a breath of fresh air to this old-style form. The *Trio*, instead, is in C major, with a marked contrapuntal character. The *Primo*’s right-hand starts (**C**), followed by the left-hand before the *Secondo* can join. The final section wants to be as imposing as a fugue’s finale.

No. 2 in B minor

The only representative of the collection set in a minor key is a sort of tragic lullaby, with a lot of pathos, especially in **B**. It follows a more regular tonal pattern, from B minor to its Dominant (F-sharp), and back home at the end. The *Trio*, in D major, is a joyful march, with the *Secondo* filling the room with a bass line with hands proceeding in parallel. It moves over to A major in the

middle before coming back home to D.

No. 3 in E major

The form of this third piece is slightly different: a first, non-repeated, **Part A** is followed by a repeated **Part B**, with a fragment of **A** coming back as **A'** at the end. The middle part is in B major, even if the first one doesn't prepare the modulation. The *Trio*, in A major, has all the lightness of a Viennese waltz, thanks to the strumming accompaniment of the *Secondo*. Its tonal map is A major with a surprising detour to B minor, then E major > A major.

No. 4 in C major

This waltz's form follows that of its preceding sibling in E major (*A-BB-A'*), this time sounding like a royal fanfare, with the *Primo* imitating trumpets with its acciaccaturas, and the *Secondo* coming to the forefront in the middle section. The *Trio*, in F major, shifts to a bucolic scene, with bells ringing on a Sunday morning and people chattering in the marketplace. It is perhaps the most joyful and serene piece of the collection.

No. 5 in F major

This piece is all built around the same rhythmic cell (four quavers, one crotchet) being passed through the four hands, some times diatonic, some others chromatic, and yet never furthering from the tonal centre F. The second part is almost as if Dotzauer wanted to apply the principles of the *stretti* from the fugue to a minuet-like piece. The result is impressive. The *Trio*, in B-flat major, has a fluid melody rich in chromaticism passing like a fish in shallow water between the hands of the hunter, with the second part rooted in G minor.

No. 6 in A major

The last piece of the collection is a demonstration of the contrapuntal mastery of Dotzauer: the whole waltz is a canon between the two players, shifted by one bar, at the unison (or octave) in the first part, and a fifth below in the second. The *Trio*, in D major, is the only one where the *Secondo* simply accompanies the *Primo*. The melody alternates scales and arpeggios, following an elementary but very effective tonal path.

About this edition

This edition is offered in the same four-hands layout proposed by the source, with *Secondo* on the *verso* page,

and *Primo* on the *recto*. It spaces out the music more generously, though, ensuring that each waltz and each trio end with either a page break or, at least, a system break. This was not done in the source to save on the total number of pages.

Often with Dotzauer's music, it is difficult to ascertain whether a grace note is an 8th-note acciaccatura or a 16th-note appoggiatura. This edition chooses to represent all of them as acciaccaturas, as they give a more convincing musical sense wherever found.

Dynamics have been consolidated and placed at their expected position for modern notational rules. Cautionary accidentals have been added whenever it was clear they were missing.

Discovering that Dotzauer composed music not focused on the cello was an unexpected, and yet most welcome surprise, and its quality keeps me wanting to unearth more of it. I hope these waltzes will find their way in classrooms around the world, as they surely deserve more attention than what they have received until now.

The Editor

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