Johann Nepomuk Hummel and his Forgotten *Potpourri*: An Evaluation of Fantasie and Potpourri Musical Genres of the Nineteenth Century

Ayaka Yorihiro

Senior Comprehensive Paper

Department of Music & Dance, Swarthmore College

Spring 2020

Acknowledgements

All of this would not have been possible without the extraordinary help of so many people. I would like to thank Professor Barbara Milewski for all of the academic and emotional support that she gave me through the process of writing my comps paper, especially given the recent crisis; Brad Gersh for helping me through the musical analyses and offering his insights into interesting parts of Hummel's piece; Carol Briselli for introducing me to this piece of music and supporting me through my four years at Swarthmore as I took on many challenges as a violist; Donna Fournier and the astonishing library staff for finding me sources even in remote circumstances; the wonderful Music Department faculty and staff for helping me learn more about and improve on performance, music theory, music history, ethnomusicology, and more throughout these four years; my mentors in the Computer Science department for always giving me emotional support and being accommodating; my dear friends for listening to me talk about all of this material and reminding me that I need to give myself breaks; Official HIGE DANdism for providing uplifting music that I repetitively listened to while drafting this paper; and last but not least, my family for always encouraging my love of all things but especially music, and guiding me to the finish line of college.

Introduction

Last spring, I asked my private lesson teacher for more viola repertoire from the nineteenth century. Generally speaking, the viola repertoire is sparse to say the least, and there are few pieces originally written for solo viola, especially from the nineteenth century. My teacher pointed me to Hummel, who I had never heard of before. Then again, many composers of viola repertoire are composers less known to the general public: Hoffmeister, Stamitz, Bruch, Vieuxtemps, just to name a few. A basic search for "Hummel Viola" on the video platform, YouTube, offered me a surprising variety of results: A seven-minute piece titled, "Fantasie for Viola and Piano;" "Fantasie for Viola and Orchestra" nearly three times as long, and a another 20-minute long piece titled "Potpourri (mit Fantasie) for Viola and Orchestra in G minor, op. 94." Interestingly, these and other variously titled selections all point more or less toward shorter and longer versions of the same piece, as evident from the introduction and conclusion that they each contain. A bit more research revealed that the piece seems to be most widely known to violists as an eight-minute work titled *Fantasie for Viola, Strings, and Two Clarinets* (commonly performed with a piano reduction), including a notable central quotation of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. The *Fantasie* is a standard work in the viola repertoire, and remains a popular piece to this day, especially on conservatory curricula. With its dramatic introduction, *Don Giovanni* section, and dramatic conclusion containing shifts, ornamentation, and runs up a scale, the *Fantasie* is a great piece for violists who wish to showcase their skills with an entertaining and pleasant composition.

Surprisingly, the *Fantasie* is not the piece that Hummel originally composed, but rather a piece created and published by A.E. Fischer, Bremen, and Carl Fischer, New York in 1900, 63

years after Hummel's death. Hummel's piece, in fact, had a very different beginning. Composed in 1820 as *Potpourri for Viola and Orchestra (op. 94)*, it contained arrangements of not only arias from *Don Giovanni* but also from other operatic works by Mozart, as well as an aria by Rossini. Most interestingly, it contained an original central fugue, bringing the approximate length of the piece to 20 minutes. It was Fischer who years later excised the fugue and the excerpts from operas other than Don Giovanni. Those sections of the 1820 *Potpourri* contain more difficult passages and require stamina on the part of the performer, but the level of skill required to perform both pieces is not dramatically different. All of this raises a number of questions: why would Hummel create a piece that contained a learned fugue amidst reworkings of popular operatic arias by other well-known composers? Why would Fischer remove these passages from Hummel's work long after the composer's influence and status as a Classical-Romantic composer had waned?

This paper will first examine the generic form of the potpourri and its umbrella genre, the fantasie, during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. I will then explore the inclusion of several highly popular operatic arias in Hummel's *Potpourri*, looking at the manner in which themes from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, as well as Rossini's *Tancredi,* are incorporated into the piece. I will also explore the significance of the original fugue material central to the piece, focusing on its structural function. Ultimately, I argue that Hummel's *Potpourri* reveals the ways in which composers working in various locations in Germany during this period navigated competing demands for musical entertainment in a shifting European musical landscape, especially between learned connoisseurs and a general public seeking lighter musical entertainment. Performer-composers, caught between these

competing interests, attempted to resolve this tension by improvising and composing potpourris and fantasies that could appeal to varying aesthetic interests simultaneously. As my paper will demonstrate, ultimately the growing rift between the notion of a "performer" and a "composer" resulted in the eventual decline in the popularity of the improvised potpourri and fantasie genres, and a separation between learned and popular musical styles was cleaved once and for all, making it unpalatable to compose instrumental musical works that catered to such popular and learned tastes at once.

The Fantasie, Potpourri, and Key Players

By definition, the fantasie is a "piece freely constructed without a definite formal scheme."[1] The potpourri genre is generally characterized as a "medley of various melodies [that are] in no way related to each other."[2] During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, the term potpourri often referred to a subgenre of the fantasie, a freely constructed improvisatory work consisting of a medley of excerpts from popular pieces: "well-known opera melodies of various composers were chosen with a view to bundling them together into a charming bouquet, to which the musical florist then added his own more or less fitting introductions, transitions, and finales."[3]

Improvisation occupied an essential role in the musical training of most advanced keyboardists and composers during the early nineteenth century. Subsequently, many instrumental performers incorporated improvised works as an integral part of their concerts. Improvising a fantasie at the end of a concert, a pianist was able to connect with the audience

---

[1] Hugo Leichtentritt, *Musical form.* [1st English ed.]. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951). 174
[2] Leichtentritt, *Musical form.* [1st English ed.]. 196
[3] Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *Potpourri for Viola and Orchestra - Piano Reduction (op. 94)*. Edited by Norbert Gertsch and Johanna Steiner. (Munich: G.Henle Verlag, 2007)

and display the essence of his or her creative skills: "Improvisations authorized their players to call themselves learned professionals, ready and able to produce music and communicate actively with the public, rather than through the cultural capital of aristocratic patronage and institutional affiliation."[4] While at this time the bulk of a pianist's concert involved pieces written by other composers, providing an opportunity to showcase their technical abilities, the fantasie at concert's end showcased the pianist's personal creativity and knowledge. In some cases, a learned pianist would ask for themes from the audience to improvise and string together. Additionally, pianists evoked various styles in their improvisations: "free fugues, Italianate *cantilena*, the north German free fantasia style, or the more modern genre of the potpourri, with its free loose, variative treatment of popular melodies."[5]

One of the key performer-composers who cultivated this culture was Austrian pianist, composer, teacher and conductor Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837). A student of Mozart granted the honored title of grand-ducal Kapellmeister at Weimar in 1818, Hummel had "an aura of tradition and learnedness," and was known at the time to be a sensation and possibly one of Europe's greatest pianists: "it was said that without seeing Goethe and hearing Hummel play, no visit to [Weimar] was complete."[6] Hummel had a reputation as one of the most distinguished pianists and composers of the day, on par with Beethoven as one of his rival contemporaries. At a time when cults surrounded individual performer-composers, Hummel was placed in a position where he was frequently compared to Beethoven. While Hummel struggled and ultimately

---

[4] Dana A. (Dana Andrew) Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 65

[5] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 65

[6] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 79; Joel Sachs and Mark Kroll, "Hummel, Johann Nepomuk," (Grove Music Online: 2001)

"accepted the second-place status to which he was often consigned," performing in the concert hall as a virtuoso pianist allowed Hummel to shine in ways that his rival could not, especially after 1800 when the latter suffered from progressive loss of hearing.[7] Beethoven was a virtuoso in his own right, but Hummel's "purling, brilliant style, well calculated to suit the manner of the time" frequently won the hearts of his audiences, even those who were sided with Beethoven.[8] The composer's skill as a virtuoso pianist and his rank as a Kapellmeister additionally offered Hummel the approval of many highly regarded critics. Including fugal, imitative, and contrapuntal passages into his works, Hummel generally strove to satisfy the demands of higher-end critics to incorporate learned elements within his fantasies.[9] This was rare among his contemporaries. Simultaneously, he won the heart of the public by choosing familiar tunes and elaborating on them in a fashion that allowed the listener to easily identify them. As Kapellmeister, he primarily worked as a conductor to the court theater, dealing with a varied repertoire, "including works by the most important composers of the past (especially Mozart) and, over the years, newer operas by Weber, Rossini, Auber, Meyerbeer, Halévy, Spohr and Bellini."[10]

The specific themes Hummel employed varied on occasion, but suited the interests of the public and Hummel's needs for improvisation:

> "By asking the audience to suggest themes for improvisation, he looped the audience in while simultaneously claiming the artist's sovereign right to deconstruct the themes. He most often chose tuneful melodies from French and German comic operas, with clear and balanced phrases, simple harmonies, and clearly defined sub-phrases that lend themselves to sequencing and development. Florid Italianate melodies almost never appear, perhaps

[7] Mark Kroll. *Johann Nepomuk Hummel: a Musician's Life and World*. (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 57
[8] Kroll. *Johann Nepomuk Hummel: a Musician's Life and World*. page 58; Original quote from Thayer and Forbes, *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, 368-69
[9] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 71
[10] Sachs and Kroll. 2001. *Hummel, Johann Nepomuk.*

> because they resist breakdown into subsidiary motives. He improvised so often on 'Là ci darem la mano' and 'Fin ch'han dal vino' from *Don Giovanni* that many suspected he knew what audiences would request and engineered the choice of melodies to suit his own strengths."[11]

When Hummel incorporated a "known theme," it seemed "less in order to vary it than to treat it freely in many forms, with several turns of phrase and in several styles."[12] While improvising his fantasies, Hummel employed a common order of operations - a free slow introduction, followed by elaboration of themes that lead to a climactic fugue, followed by a brilliant finale - one utilized by his contemporaries as well. Hummel's fantasies achieved a delicate balance between the learned and popular elements; that balance allowed both connoisseurs and the public to enjoy the same improvised music: "[Hummel's fantasies] modeled a utopian vision, a social 'fantasy' in which people belonging to different social groups with unequal levels of knowledge and education co-existed in a mutually beneficial and harmonious alignment of interests."[13]

Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870), a Bohemian pianist and composer of Jewish descent who was Hummel's longtime friend, colleague, as well as closest rival in free improvisation, could be characterized as an artist who appealed toward the popular end of the spectrum, while also incorporating skillful elements that deviated from expected learned elements. Unlike Hummel, Moscheles never had the distinguished titles of Kapellmeister or Musikdirektor, and instead made his living as a freelance composer, touring composer-pianist, and teacher. He travelled throughout Germany, Paris, London, and Prague as a recitalist during the years 1815 to 1825, and gave concert tours in Britain and elsewhere in Europe throughout the 1830s - indicating the

---

[11] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 73-74
[12] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 74
[13] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 77

success and popularity he had as a performing pianist throughout the beginning of the nineteenth century.

As a performer of fantasies, Moscheles was more interested in combining and interweaving preexisting popular melodies than the inclusion of learned elements into his work. This is demonstrated in the critical reception: "they were rather artificially assembled melodies, variations on known themes--in short, much more like musical potpourris than creations of the moment [i.e.] (fantasy)."[14] Additionally, Moscheles was known for his tendency to ask the audience for tunes to improvise on, lending greater potential for engagement from the audience. While Moscheles indeed integrated fugues into his fantasies on occasion, the fugues were given a different weight: "[Moscheles] took a fugal subject from Handel but did not improvise a fugue as Hummel would have. This was clearly a choice and not a matter of ability. Moscheles was capable of turning on the counterpoint when necessary."[15] For example, in 1826, a critic noted on Moscheles's improvisation that featured a clear juxtaposition of very different tunes - one from the comic opera *Le maçon* by Auber, and a Handel oratorio melody - in which Moscheles placed greater weight on the former, elaborating on the more lightweight melody throughout the piece, to its glamorous coda. Instead of counterpoint in fugue, Moscheles frequently exhibited his knowledge and skill of thoroughbass and chordal harmony. In an indication of his aesthetic principles, Moscheles wrote: "the treatment of a melody, and the clearness as well as unity and an interesting fusion of the leading subjects, are the most important ingredients in a composition."[16] The performer-composer abided by these standards by creating relations

---

[14] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 80
[15] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 81
[16] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 81-82; Original Quote from Charlotte Moscheles and Ignaz Moscheles, *Recent Music and Musicians*, 207

between thematic fragments of distinctively different styled pieces. Moscheles also abandoned the formulaic structure of the free Fantasie that Hummel and other contemporaries used, speaking to Moscheles's flexibility and spontaneity. Moreover, Moscheles had a wider range of repertoire - "comic operas, Handel choruses, French *vaudeville* tunes, and the florid melodies of Rossini, the latter mostly avoided by improvisers," along with folk songs. He was also more willing to improvise on unfamiliar pieces than his contemporaries.[17] In these ways, Moscheles established himself not only as a skillful improviser but a rather distinctive one true to his particular interests while also appealing to the general public's musical tastes.

Opera and popular tunes

Both Hummel and Moscheles incorporated popular tunes of the day, but what precisely was well-loved during the time? Let us additionally examine another musical culture in the early Nineteenth Century - changes in the operatic tradition. Historically, the beginning of the Nineteenth Century is a complicated time, marked by socio-political unrest in the aftermath of the French Revolution, including the Napoleonic wars and Napoleon's dramatic rise and fall as emperor. With the collapse of the preexisting socioeconomic status quo that followed the French Revolution, aristocratic patronage no longer became the single source of support for composers,leading to a redefinition of the composer as an artist rather than a servant. While this meant that composers needed to actively attract audiences and supporters, this also opened the door for certain composers, such as Rossini, to gain recognition and fame that was previously unimaginable.

---

[17] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 85

During this time, the German speaking lands went through a transition of taste, developing a preference for grandiose, grave, and more serious operas. With the sociopolitical emergence of the bourgeoisie as a new force, nationalism in German opera was also cultivated. Works with librettos in languages other than German, as well as works by foreign composers, were increasingly rejected by the German musical community. Instead, works like Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* were canonized as the beginnings of a genre consisting of "serious opera in German that aspired to grandiose, even transcendental status."[18] In the realm of a newly emerging German operatic scene, Mozart quickly became a central figure, especially after his death. His works were canonized, and many theorized about the importance of Mozart's works in promoting the use of supernatural and magical plots by giving those elements more weight in serious plots.[19]

On the other hand, the Italian speaking lands enjoyed the rise of Rossini, whose legacy consisted of not only opera seria, but also pleasurable comic operas with beautiful melodic writing. One could characterize Rossini's style as one representative of the "Restoration" period. Similar to the time period where political radicalism loosened, leading to some number of previous monarchs and rulers attempt to regain their status, Rossini's lack of radicalism and innovation was displayed both by his tendency to reuse the same melodic writing in comic and serious plots, and his frequent, possibly excessive, use of embellishment and ornamentation. Rossini's success started in 1813 with his comic *L'Italiana in Algieri* and his *opera seria Tancredi*, which were both first performed in Venice. Later, Rossini's comic operas gained more

[18] Carolyn Abbate and Roger Parker. *A History of Opera* Updated edition. (New York:W.W. Norton & Company, 2015), 174
[19] Ibid.

traction, and were exceptionally well received; in a 19th-century musical culture where many works failed to continue being relevant, Rossini's comic works remained popular.[20]

Nineteenth-century musical culture and politics began to bifurcate along national lines: the German speaking lands idolized Mozart and operas with more "serious," complex harmonic language. Italian opera retained a preference for "beautiful" singing, a style considered "lighter" in contrast to early German romantic opera. To each of these musical cultures, the other seemed to be dissatisfying: Germans found most Italian opera to be near farce (with the exception of Rossini), while they believed German opera to contain a more sophisticated focus on harmony and complex orchestration.

A Closer Look at Hummel's Potpourri

Both German and Italian strands of opera find an intersection; Hummel's *Potpourri* is a piece composed by a Austrian composer, was intended for German audiences, and consists largely of excerpts from operas by Mozart and Rossini. The *Potpourri* contains borrowings from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, as well as Rossini's *Tancredi*. Additionally, it contains another borrowed item, labeled *Boleros* in the original autograph, to which its original content is not known. In total, 395 measures out of the overall 686 within the *Potpourri* consist of borrowed material. As a Kapellmeister, Hummel frequently conducted each of the original operas of the borrowings, which were all very popular works at the time. It is worthy to note that while *Tancredi* is a serious opera and *Don Giovanni* was a *dramma giocoso* - a jocular drama - the other two are comic, and the section titled *Boleros*

[20] Abbate and Parker. *A History of Opera* Updated edition, 190

evokes the image of a lively dance-like excerpt. How were each of these operas incorporated into the *Potpourri*? Let us explore each borrowing, and its original theme, in detail.

The first borrowing occurs in measures 29-88 of the *Potpourri*. The original excerpt arises from Don Ottavio's Aria *Il mio tesoro intanto* in the second act of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, where Don Ottavio, the nobleman tenor, speaks of his pledge of avenging the man who has killed his fiancée's father and asks for authorities to protect his fiancée.[21] Following the key of B ♭ major within the *Don Giovanni* excerpt, Hummel's *Potpourri* quotation is also set in B ♭ major. Hummel's excerpt starts out as a near duplicate of that of Mozart, with the viola switching between the lead tenor line and the top string line of the accompaniment, while elaborating with a couple of original ornamentations. The key harmonies start out being very similar as well, occasionally utilizing a different inversion from the original. However, in the section parallel to the B section of the aria, Hummel's excerpt diverges. In listening to this section in the Hummel rendition, the listener can recognize distinctive sounds within Mozart's original B section, for example the D-D ♭ -C-E♮ line in the top strings in Hummel's measure 53, and an elaborate cadenza starting on a low F note starting from Hummel's measure 62. Otherwise though, Hummel elongates certain phrase ideas, while keeping the harmonic rhythm by including new harmonies. By newly elaborating on top of distinctive motives from the original, Hummel injects parts of his original work, while ensuring that this interluding section "belongs" to the overall arc of *Il mio tesoro intanto*. Starting from measure 67 in the Hummel however, the *Potpourri* returns to its previous mode of operation - mirroring the original Mozart. By doing so, Hummel sends the message that his rendition is faithful to the original, despite the

[21] Julian Rushton, "Don Giovanni (ii)," (Grove Music Online: 2002)

small differences that occurred in what substituted for the B section. The *Don Giovanni* section contains an interesting dynamic between being painstakingly true to the original work, and showcasing Hummel's skill of intertwining new material and the original material, so that the result seems nostalgic and refreshing to the listener at the same time.

The next borrowing appears in the *Boleros* section. Though the source remains unknown, its harmonic function is helpful to understanding its role in the larger piece. . This section is in D major - the major key of a third above the previous key - B ♭ major. My analysis claims that to make this transition, Hummel first pivoted to the key of d minor through a g minor chord, then included an Italian sixth leading up to the dominant of D, which is resolved by a D major tonic.

The *Le Nozze di Figaro* borrowing appears in measures 160-246 in Hummel's *Potpourri*. The original tune is featured at the beginning of Figaro's Cavatina *Se vuol ballare*, occurring in the first act of the opera. In the Cavatina, Figaro expresses his intentions of thwarting the Count's antagonistic plans by having the upper hand.[22] As in the parody from *Don Giovanni*, Hummel once again maintains the key of F major from Figaro's Cavatina, a minor third above the previous key of D major. The corresponding Hummel section starts by quoting the first 20 measures of the Cavatina by passing the corresponding melody and harmonization around the orchestra, employing horns and a combination of flute, oboe, and string pizzicati. These first 20 measures are the only parts of the original Cavatina that Hummel utilized for this section; more precisely, Hummel takes the melody featured in these first 20 measures, and develops them in four more iterations. However, even in these first 20 measures, Hummel made a couple of modifications from the original Cavatina. The key difference of Hummel's harmonization of the

[22] Julian Rushton, "Nozze di Figaro, Le," (Grove Music Online: 2002)

melody (which remains consistent throughout the remainder of this section), is that the second beat of measure 9 of the Cavatina contains a F major dyad, where Hummel's rendition contains an F♯ minor dyad. First, Hummel introduces the solo viola as an encircling, ornamenting figure of eighth notes around the main melody, which is played by the oboe. Harmonically, we can point out two places containing ideas distinct from Figaro's Cavatina. The first is caused by both the E♭ and the F♯ introduced in measure 188, corresponding to the earlier discussion. This causes the chord progression in measures 188-189 to be $ii^{\circ 6}_{5}$/ii, V^7/ii, ii° (root position), V^7. However, in the corresponding measures 9-10 of Mozart's melody, we have the chord progression I, IV, V^7. The inclusion of the F♯ in Hummel's version brings about a richer and more interesting harmonic path through the excerpt.

The next iteration of this melody, starting at measure 208, contains an interesting progression of harmonies which is strikingly different from Mozart's original. The viola takes the original Mozart melody, while the orchestra develops complicated harmonies that shift between tonal centers of d minor, f minor, and F major. While the original harmonization of this theme is purely in F major, this rendition starts with a d minor triad. Measure 231 contains a A major chord - the dominant chord to d minor - leading the listener to expect a d minor resolution in the following measure. However, Hummel once again surprises the listener by harmonizing the next measure by a first-inversion tonic chord in f minor. Not only was the A major dominant chord not resolved properly, but it was also led to a tonic of a key where A major does not exist. However, we can observe that there is this sense of unusually smooth voice leading - the top- and bottommost string lines both moved down a half step. Moreover, this fact leads to the revelation that A major and f minor are hexatonic poles - a term given to describe relations between any

minor triad, and the major triad that is a sharp third above it, and vice versa. While hexatonic poles do not share any common tones, the progression between them is done simply through a movement by half steps on each note. Hexatonic poles were characterized as "the weirdest cases that arise" by music theorist Hugo Riemann, but they subtly appeared in many nineteenth-century works.[23] Nevertheless, the presence of this set of hexatonic poles exemplifies Hummel's harmonic creativity and difference compared to his predecessor. The final iteration of the *Figaro* melody is very similar to the first, besides the fact that the ornamentation done by the solo viola is in sixteenth notes, instead of the previous eighth notes. Harmonically, the final iteration emulates the first.

The first borrowing from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* happens in measures 254-276 of the *Potpourri*. The original tune is the ending of the aria *Solche hergelaufne Laffen*, in which Osmin, a bass who is the sinister overseer, fumes about the necessity of hanging vagabond fops. [24] Hummel's *Potpourri* features the chaotic coda to which "Mozart added 'Turkish' music for comic effect."[25] Once again, Hummel continues to emulate the original tonal center, set in A minor. Surprisingly, Hummel preserves most of the material from the original piece, making a chromatic scale in the solo viola the only material not evident in Mozart's original. The solo viola oscillates between emulating the solo bass and the top string part from the original aria.

The second borrowing from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* happens in measures 345-371 of the *Potpourri*, after Hummel's fugue, which we will discuss in full detail later. The original tune is featured in the quartet *Ach Belmonte! ach mein Leben!*, preceding the finale of the second

---

[23] Richard Cohn, "Uncanny Resemblances: Tonal Signification in the Freudian Age," (Journal of the American Musicological Society 57, no. 2: 2004), 285-324
[24] Julian Rushton, "Entführung aus dem Serail, Die," (Grove Music Online: 2002)
[25] Ibid.

act, when the two couples in the main cast reunite and settle their doubts about one another's romantic faithfulness. Both the original work and Hummel's reworkings of it are in A major - a contrast from the earlier key of A minor. Much like the previous borrowing from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Hummel only makes a single pass through the borrowed theme. Similar to the treatment of the theme from *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Hummel has the orchestra replicate a similar version of the original theme, while having the solo viola arpeggiate around the corresponding harmonies. Most notably, Hummel changed some of Mozart's harmonizations in measures 361 and 362, bringing more harmonic variety to the original. Mozart's original chord corresponding to that of the last beat of measure 361 in the *Potpourri* contained a A♮ instead of a A# and a D instead of a C#, implying the continuation of the previous IV chord. Additionally, the original chord corresponding to the last beat of measure 362 did not contain a B♮ and had an F# instead of a F♮, implying a second inversion IV chord with an added C#, which could be characterized as a passing tone. Thus, in the phrase corresponding to Hummel's measures 360-363, Mozart has the chord progression I^6-IV-$vii^{\varnothing 6}{}_5$-IV-V. However, with the changes in the *Potpourri*, we have the chord progression I^6-IV-$V^4{}_3$/ii-ii-$ii^{\varnothing 4}{}_2$-V. These differences bring more of emphasis to ii, which does not even appear in the original phrase. Additionally, we can observe a greater harmonic flexibility in Hummel's version from the brief modal mixture that occurs with the $ii^{\varnothing 4}{}_2$ chord, which exists in A minor but not in A major. Through subtle changes of a number of notes, Hummel presents a more diverse array of harmonies and a flexibility that the Mozart original did not exhibit.

The last quotation in the piece occurs in measures 402-540, and is from *Tancredi*, which is one of Rossini's most beloved serious operas. The original Cavatina, *Di tanti palpitti*, is sung

by the lead tenor. A major hit among audiences, it describes his thoughts about causing his lover much pain.[26] While the Hummel excerpt appears in the original Rossini key of F major, it also involves a series of abrupt modulations as a mechanism to transition to D major, the key of Hummel's finale. The passage in measures 402-436 is a near-to-exact quotation of Rossini's theme. Small differences between Hummel's version and the original include embellishments: Hummel's measure 416 contains turns while Rossini's equivalent does not, and equivalent of the last measures (435-437) in Rossini's score contain an elaborate ascend and descent through the F major scale, while Hummel's version merely reinstates the original version of the same passage. In terms of harmonizations, the two versions are roughly equivalent. Starting from measure 442, however, Hummel presents a strikingly different harmonization of the same simple theme. While the solo viola plays the same melody as the original aria, the accompanying string solos introduce complexity to the theme through ascending and descending chromatic scales that invoke a flavor of d minor below the stable F major melody.

Another interesting passage to consider in these modified versions of Rossini's aria is the interlude from measure 450. In the second phrase starting from measure 454, there is a brief tonicization of a minor (iii) and g minor (ii) through diminished sevenths and secondary dominants. However, by measure 456, Hummel returns to the F major tonic-dominant sequence of harmonizations. In the last arrangement of this theme, Hummel performs a series of modulations, starting from an abrupt tonal shift to D ♭ major, most likely due to the fact that F would be the starting note of the original theme when transposed to D ♭ major, and Hummel ended the previous phrase with an F in the solo viola. In a similar vein, it transposes to b ♭

[26] Richard Osborne, "Tancredi," (Grove Music Online: 2002)

minor, with a similar rendition of the theme, and then to G ♭ major, ultimately leading to D major, where the theme is repeated once more. It seems clear that the incorporation of *Di tanti palpiti* into the Potpourri allowed for Hummel to showcase his creativity as a composer, through the elaboration of a theme that contained simple harmonies.

Overall, there are three main ways that Hummel adapted each of these original themes: 1) by providing an almost exact replica of the original excerpt but adding small differences in ornamentation through some sections; 2) by having the solo viola arpeggiate around the chords generated, while the orchestra conforms to a somewhat-varied version of the original theme; 3) through an extensive repetition of a small theme. We can summarize our discussion of borrowed themes in the *Potpourri* in the figure on the next page, containing details of both quotations and portions of the work written by Hummel. The figure makes it evident that the *Potpourri* doesn't follow the format that Hummel commonly used for his free fantasies: a free slow introduction, followed by elaboration of themes that lead to a climactic fugue, followed by a brilliant finale. However, we can observe that the arrangement of tonal areas within the piece moves up by thirds: G-B ♭ -D-F-A-F-D. The fact that Hummel's arrangements were all true to the originals in terms of tonal area raises the speculation that the organization of the piece, specifically the ordering of borrowed themes, was done so with the aim to construct these sections that tonally ascend by thirds. Additionally all of these themes are melodically straightforward, making them inherently easy to sing and follow. An increased emphasis on repetition, especially on the melodies from *Figaro* and *Tancredi*, allow for the listener to appreciate anew the original melodies while also offering them to appreciate them in a new light. Simultaneously, Hummel is able to showcase his own skills of including new harmonies and possibilities in "unwinding" a

theme through multiple iterations. Thus, from our evaluation of the *Potpourri*, we gain an understanding of how Hummel altered themes in his presentation of them through a fantasie-like framework, and the kinds of themes he took as subjects.

Measure #	**Tonal Center**	**Original Work (if applicable)**	**Original Composer**	**Characterization of Parody**
1-29	g minor	N/A - Introduction	Hummel	N/A
29-88	B ♭ major	*Il mio tesoro intanto - Don Giovanni*	Mozart	Replica of A section, with varied B section
94-158	D major	Unknown	Unknown	N/A
160-246	F major	*Se vuol ballare signor Contino - Le Nozze di Figaro*	Mozart	Ornamentation and change of harmonies through repetitions of single theme
254-276	a minor	*Solche hergelaufne Laffen - Die Entführung aus dem Serail*	Mozart	Replicated theme with solo viola switching between vocal line and top string line
277-331	a minor	N/A - Fugue	Hummel	N/A
345-371	A major	*Ach Belomnte! ach mein Leben! - Die Entführung aus dem Serail*	Mozart	Arpeggiation of harmonies in solo viola while orchestra replicates the theme
402-540	F major	*Di tanti palpiti - Tancredi*	Rossini	Ornamentation and change of harmonies through repetitions of single theme - more in a theme and variations style
541-686	D major	N/A - Rondo-like finale	Hummel	N/A

Fugue

At this point, one can not help but wonder: why did Hummel insert a fugue into a piece filled with pleasant reworkings of opera melodies? On the opposing end of the opera-loving public, music critics and connoisseurs of the day wanted to ensure that free fantasies were not entirely tailored towards opera quotations and other popular music. When connoisseurs indicated that a fantasie should include more learned elements, they generally meant an expectation of

contrapuntal material, most likely in the form of a fugue. Throughout the nineteenth century, there was a wide range of discourse surrounding the fugue - what qualifies as a fugue, how to incorporate it into contemporary styles of music, and more. Regardless, it was agreed upon that "fugue was the quintessential contrapuntal genre and as such was only with difficulty susceptible to integration into the modern style."[27] In response, composers turned to works of the past for inspiration, especially Bach's keyboard fugues. While the sheer number of fugal works declined over the nineteenth century, most prominent composers revisited the genre as a "historical revival or archeological relic."[28]

Because of the fugue's history and its standing as a complicated form, the fugue was considered as the ultimate indicator of learned material. The skill needed to compose, much less improvise, music that contains as much complicated structure as the fugue, takes years of difficult training. Moreover, this complicated structure and its multitude of melodic lines makes it more difficult for a wide variety of listeners to appreciate. The fugue was thus the perfect form for connoisseurs to claim their legitimacy as "connoisseurs," distancing themselves in this way from the general public who did not possess the aesthetic means or training to appreciate such high-minded art. Those who could not participate in this musical discourse could be dismissed as "lacking in taste."

A Closer Look at the Fugue in Hummel's Potpourri

The fugue, inserted between the two excerpts from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, is one of the defining elements of Hummel's *Potpourri*. It involves four voices: the solo viola, along with solo first violin, solo second violin, and solo cello. The fugue has the solo viola initiate the

[27] Paul M Walker, "Fugue," (Grove Music Online: 2001)
[28] Ibid.

fugue subject in A minor, a real answer in E minor - a fifth above A minor - is played by the solo second violin while the viola intertwines with an introduction to the countersubject. A solo cello enters with the fugue subject in A minor, and a solo second violin enters with the fugue subject in E minor. Hummel includes fragmentation and stretto of the fugue subject, as well as augmentation of the beginning of the countersubject, as he steps through the key areas of B ♭ -F, and G-D, as made evident by the entrances of the fugue subject. The last iteration of the fugue subject, starting at measure 325, indicates the return to A minor as the overall key area. A detailed analysis of the fugue can be found in Appendix II.

What significance does this fugue bring to the *Potpourri*? Upon proclaiming the piece as a potpourri, Hummel had, to be sure, already geared it away from the connoisseurs. Moreover, the fugue has a fundamentally different flavor from the rest of the piece, which is based around the "unwinding" of simpler melodies. The simple fact that Hummel included the fugue seems to suggest that he wished to please the connoisseur while also pleasing a broader, perhaps less musically sophisticated, public. It also showcases Hummel's skill in counterpoint, especially in the rapid shift in tonal centers.

While the positioning of the fugue in *Potpourri* is different from those in improvised Fantasies by Hummel, which customarily precede the finale, it is most likely intended to give the fugue as much weight as possible. As previously mentioned, the tonal centers of the *Potpourri* are organized as follows: g minor, B ♭ major, D major, F major, A minor, A major, F major, D major. While the shorter excerpt of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* preceding the fugue is also in A minor, the fugue occupies most of the A minor section, which is placed in the very center of the piece. Not only is the fugue placed in the middle of the piece, but in terms of tonal centers, it

is also placed at A minor - the apex of the series of modulations by rising thirds, before the keys descend back by thirds. Additionally, while the *Don Giovanni*, *"Boleros,"* and the first *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* excerpts placed before the fugue could all be characterized as more lively, involving a much more active solo line with a wider range of dynamics, the second *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Tancredi* excerpts following the fugue are mostly *piano* (as seen in the second *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* excerpt), and annotated as cantabile (as seen in the *Tancredi* excerpt). From this, we can observe that the *Potpourri* was structured to make the fugue both the center and the climax of the entire piece. We can further speculate that Hummel might have ultimately wanted to appeal to the connoisseurs, offering the fugue literally as the centerpiece of a piece primarily made up of elaborations on opera excerpts. By making this appeal, Hummel would be able to gain the approval of harsh critics who demanded technological complexity, while still being able to entertain the general public through presentation of familiar opera tunes.

The Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung and Criticism

Gaining the approval of critics was essential, especially because these critics were able to influence other connoisseurs' opinions of performer-composers through journalism. The (Leipziger) *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (later abbreviated as AMZ), published in Leipzig by Breitkopf and Härtel from 1798 to 1868, was a leading journal for news on musical culture and politics during the early nineteenth century. Through its weekly publication, the journal strove to accomplish the ambitious goal of writing articles on many aspects of music: history of music, innovations in music theory, reviews on compositions, biological informatives of composers and performers, and more. Most notably to this discussion, the AMZ strove to

provide "reports on the state of music in leading cities of Germany and of other countries," and generally aimed at "educating the public to an understanding of contemporary music."[29] Simultaneously, the AMZ was distinguishably the only contemporary journal that had a wide coverage of musical culture across the European continent. However, we can observe a slight bias through the amount of coverage that occured in this weekly journal: "The regular reviews from Leipzig, Berlin, and Vienna appeared about once a month. ...Outside of Germany the most important centers of musical news were Prague (regarded virtually as a German city) and Paris, both with bi-monthly dispatches. News from Italy, from such cities as Rome, Florence, and Naples, was printed about three or four times a year, at the close of each season."[30] Nonetheless, in an age when knowing about and attending international concerts otherwise proved difficult, the AMZ had a key role in informing and influencing people's opinions about "public" musical culture. From the AMZ's wide-ranging reports, readers were able to associate themselves with a larger, unified European culture of music even while only attending local concerts in a constrained fashion. Through investigating articles from the AMZ relating to improvised fantasies, we can discover that not only does the journal provide an insight to the musical culture of the time, it also reinforces the expectations of high-brow connoisseurs upon fantasies and potpourris.

In covering the fantasies performed at the end of concerts, writers from the AMZ expressed concern for the genre:

> "In the period 1810-1820, many writers for the AMZ, channeling the values of the professional music guild, began worrying about the stylistic eclecticism of piano improvisations …Trouble only came when pianists put their improvisational talents in

[29] J. Barbour, "Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung, 'Prototype of Contemporary Musical Journalism,'" (Music Library Association Notes 5, no. 3: June 1, 1948), 325.
[30] Barbour, "Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung, 'Prototype of Contemporary Musical Journalism,'" 326.

> service of lighter and more popular styles--variations and potpourris elaborated on simple, well-known songs and airs from comic opera-and called such performances by the honored name *freye Phantasie*. Variation-like modes of elaboration lacked the techniques of 'development' or 'leading-through'-*Durchführung*-that many professionals considered indispensable to any 'good' improvisation based on a theme or motive."[31]

From the AMZ's perspective, the free fantasy was also a term that they could use to describe moments in a composed piece that unexpectedly broke the norms of standard formal procedures of form, harmony, and tone.

Descriptions given by writers from the AMZ involving Hummel give us a more accurate perspective on how the improvised fantasie genre was viewed by journalists during the day. In an article in the AMZ, a correspondent in Mannheim wrote "the wealth of ideas that [Hummel] takes the happy occasion to unfold [in his fantasies], and the manner in which he once again reworks each one of them, show him to be one of the greatest musical geniuses in the world."[32] Towards the beginning of the 1820, there was increased concern claiming that "improvising could perhaps become an epidemic fashion among our concert public."[33] In an article published in the AMZ titled "Thoughts on Free Fantasies, with a retrospective look at Hummel's fantasy, published in the Museum for Piano Music, Vol.6," the author criticized the contemporary state of pianistic improvisation among advanced pianist-composers, claiming that improvisations had degraded into simple plain variations on a theme. Here, Hummel's published Fantasie op.18 is respected as a model that improvisors should follow. In the following decades, this criticism widened its aim towards amateurs and other musical consumers. Thus Hummel's improvisations

---

[31] Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 66
[32] *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1818, 380, as cited in Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 71
[33] *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1820, 214, as cited in Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 72

were regarded as a brilliant exception in a genre of music that was otherwise considered banal and composed for amateurs.

"Thoughts on Free Fantasies" includes the author's opinion of an ideal work in the genre of improvised fantasie:

> "Those endearing dallying sylphs called variations fearlessly form ranks against strict counterpoint, and pure melody can indeed be wedded [*vermählen*] with a canon, whether one- or many-voiced, forward- or backward-moving. The master remains unbounded in his creative power, and here true talent copulating [*begattet*] with true art, can show itself in a beautiful light, quite apart from the delicious diversion the listener inevitably enjoys through the alterations."[34]

The author demands for learned counterpoint and popular, flourishing variations uniting, with the counterpoint being the more dominant factor. The inclusion of counterpoint in the form of fugue and placing emphasis on this counterpoint, was the factor that many performer-composers lacked. On the other hand, Hummel's fantasie improvisations precisely included both qualities of counterpoint and extensive variation on flourishing, recognizable melodies. For this exact reason, Hummel was well-regarded from writers of the AMZ, which represented the views of the connoisseurs.

While journalists who were associated with the AMZ viewed Moscheles as an equally skilled improviser, the attitude of their writing exhibited a tension between their expectation for the composer's fantasies and what they really were. Similarly to Hummel, Moscheles was celebrated for his capability to "develop and intertwine [given themes] in the richest variety and the most luxurious colorations, furnishing the greatest pleasure."[35] However, Moscheles's fantasies frequently met harsh remarks, as well as attempts to explain the motivation behind the

---

[34] *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1824, 314-15, as cited in Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 73

[35] *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1823, 773, as cited in Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 80

composer's choices. An AMZ author indicated Mocheles's tendency of satisfying amateurs and accommodating for the lighter tastes of his French audiences during the composer's earliest concerts in Paris: "he is capable of winning over artists and dilettantes… the latter mainly through his free fantasies, which he consciously addresses to Parisian taste to the extent that his German origin allows."[36] Moreover, a Viennese writer for the publication *Wiener Zeitschrift* criticized Moscheles's fantasies as lacking artistic inspiration: "[Moscheles' so-called fantasies] were rather artificially assembled melodies, variations on known themes-in short, much more like musical potpourris than creations of the moment (fantasy)."[37] Another reporter in *Wiener Zeitschrift* made an attempt to put this to words diplomatically in 1818: "It gave us a special pleasure that Mr. Moscheles took into consideration the fact that the numerous assembled public would not consist exclusively of connoisseurs [*Kunstkennern*]. Among the connoisseurs present, everyone knew that a more artistic, deeper development of the main idea was within his powers." [38] In an article written two years later, another correspondent tried to partially justify Moscheles's penchant: "If [Moscheles's] free fantasy was not satisfying to all parties, this might be ascribed to the pressures of the day, to the *effort to be popular*, or to the circumstance that a true artist's genius cannot flow as freely when external circumstances are affecting him."[39]

We can see that each of these criticisms claim that Moscheles's fantasies are lacking, but there seems to be an additional factor in the mix. The last quote, blaming the apparent lack of

---

[36] *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1821, 194, as cited in Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 79
[37] *Wiener Zeitschrift* 1825, 260, as cited in Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 80
[38] *Wiener Zeitschrift* 1818, 666, as cited in Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 80
[39] *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1820, 431, as cited in Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 81

satisfaction by Moscheles's fantasies to a pressure towards popularity, provides us a rather clear idea. The journalists of the AMZ and other publications seek the improvised fantasie to contain complex contrapuntal structures, along with what they regard as artistic, genuine development, for the sake of preserving the genre for themselves. Moscheles's fantasies, which involved more of the interplay between themes and frequently lacked learned elements of fugue, were degraded by the AMZ and other journalists.

Through the AMZ's authority as a journal that reliably covered musical information, as well as concert coverage all over the European continent, its writers were able to propagate its opinions of a high-brow ideal of the improvised fantasie, along with its opinions on each performer-composer according to their ideals.

The Growing Sense of Separation

What did journals such as AMZ imply for performer-composers creating their own improvised fantasies? There was certainly an increased pressure for them to incorporate original fugues, and place less emphasis on arrangements of popular pieces. The demands of the connoisseurs were not only expressed, but they were also amplified by the authority of the AMZ. Improvised fantasies without contrapuntal elements were publicized to be lacking true artistic maturity as well as unsatisfactory by those that defined the musical culture of the time. While the connoisseurs found value in improvised fantasies and potpourris as a venue in which performer-composers could unleash their improvisatory talents, they were wary of the prospect of the genre's lowering in artistic value. As free-form genres that had no formal rules, and as instrumental genres that frequently involved embellished vocal melodies from operatic works, the fantasie and potpourri intrinsically did not quite fit the formal demands of the connoisseurs.

Nevertheless, they strove to keep the genres as distinguished as possible by insisting on contrapuntal fugue - a complicated and well-crafted form of music established from pre-Baroque periods.

However, at the same time, it was not necessarily the case that public concert attendees were in full agreement with the attitudes of the high brow critics associated with the AMZ, even with its authority in dictating the musical tastes across Europe at the time. The first edition of Hummel's *Potpourri* (Op. 94) by C.F. Peters, published in Leipzig in 1822, includes a suggestion for a cut from measure 268 to 331, specified for the case of eliminating the fugue for "a public performance."[40] From this, we can infer that the general public wasn't as enthusiastic about the fugue. This was also most likely a reason why the fugue in the *Potpourri* did not proportionally take up a large amount of the piece. Potential consumers and performers of the *Potpourri* most likely knew that they, along with their audiences, would be content to forego the fugue. The public was, it seems, more excited to hear their favorite tunes from beloved operas -- from operas that they could not get enough of -- and to be included in the concert experience as active members. For the public, the improvised fantasies and potpourris were "temporally expanded" experiences, special in their own way; through these potpourris audiences could activate a memory, a reminiscence of not just their favorite opera numbers, but even perhaps, of being at that particular opera. Contrapuntal fugue had little to do with all of this - making it an extraneous, unnecessary, and unfitting portion of their temporal and sensory experience.

Performer-composers were effectively caught between two parties with opposite agendas, each seeking opposing elements out of the improvised fantasie and potpourri. Most performers

---

[40] Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *Potpourri for Viola and Orchestra - Piano Reduction (op. 94)*. Edited by Norbert Gertsch and Johanna Steiner. (Munich: G.Henle Verlag, 2007)

who featured the instrumental, improvised fantasie in their concerts were able to satisfy the general public by being skilled in improvisation and having a wide repertoire of popular melodies. However, from the journal writings of the AMZ, we can observe that many performers were not able to satisfy the needs of the connoisseurs. Hummel was an exception in this regard; while the composer himself was aware of the fact that he could not perfectly satisfy all parties, he was able to provide both flourishing variations of popular melodies and contrapuntal fugues, so that both parties might be at least reasonably satisfied.

Over the trajectory of the mid- and late-nineteenth century, musical genres associated with improvisation - especially instrumental genres that combine serious, contrapuntal elements alongside light-hearted, operatic elements - waned due to increased separation between musical camps, and tastes: composers and performers, instrumental music and opera, connoisseurs and the general public. While the nineteenth century featured a number of notable piano virtuoso composers including Beethoven, Liszt, and Chopin, most composers no longer concerned themselves with performance. Though long a requirement for a composer to be an extraordinary performer, an increased focus on the musical "work" that occurred after Beethoven's death largely put an end to such musical versatility. With the refinement of both instrumental and opera genres, "successful" music became even more determined by the connoisseurs, leaving the preferences of a more pluralistic, diverse public behind.

In the *Ausfuhrliche theoretische-practische Anweisung zum Piano-Forte-Spiel* published in 1828, Hummel wrote:

> "While I should have devoted my greatest efforts to pleasing the connoisseurs, I nevertheless sought to please non-connoisseurs as well. For there is no audience anywhere in the entire world that consists solely of connoisseurs [...]; they would have to be very pedantic, obstinate connoisseurs who would never feel the occasional urge to enjoy something that appeals to a mixed community of music lovers; or very untalented,

> inept artists who are unable to design and execute music that could appeal to connoisseurs as well as to others."[41]

By the end of the nineteenth century, the separation between connoisseurs and the general public, as well as instrumental and operatic genres, had rendered Hummel's goals, as well as his ways of achieving them, obsolete. Hummel, as a leading exponent of improvisational fantasie, had become an older, forgotten chapter of musical history.

Conclusion

Perhaps this is a good time to revisit one of our initial questions: why did Fischer present a shortened, redacted version of Hummel's *Potpourri* in 1900? There was certainly some demand for viola *concertante* pieces. While the viola had some success as a solo instrument starting from the mid eighteenth century, "the number of new works decreased steadily, and concertos were replaced by more popular forms such as the fantasia, elegy and paraphrase. From about 1830 one can hardly find any new *concertante* works for the viola."[42] By the time Fischer presented the abridged version, the potpourri genre had been eclipsed by more popular, recognizable forms. Thus, it seems, Fischer presented the abridged version of the piece with the more familiar name *Fantasie*, possibly in an attempt to attract more violists. Additionally, by the twentieth century, there was a clear distinction between sophisticated, serious works and light-hearted works. Thus, it was likely very unusual for there to be a piece that united both types of content, especially in the way that Hummel's *Potpourri* did - incorporating a fugue within a piece full of arrangements of opera numbers. The fugue, which previously had significance as Hummel's vehicle of displaying his contrapuntal skills to impress the connoisseurs, has by then

---

[41] Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *Potpourri for Viola and Orchestra - Piano Reduction (op. 94)*. Edited by Norbert Gertsch and Johanna Steiner. (Munich: G.Henle Verlag, 2007)

[42] Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *Potpourri for Viola and Orchestra - Piano Reduction (op. 94)*. Edited by Norbert Gertsch and Johanna Steiner. (Munich: G.Henle Verlag, 2007)

been rendered as a confusing and extraneous section. In a way, the results of the trajectory of musical culture in the nineteenth century manifested themselves in Fischer's instinctive decision to remove Hummel's fugue.

Moreover, we can speculate as to why the cut was made between the *Don Giovanni* section and the D major finale. Out of all of the arranged material, the *Don Giovanni* section is one where the solo viola asserts the role of the singer, more than one simple musical phrase is represented, and Hummel's skills in devising an arrangement are all included. Moreover, *Il mio tesoro* remained a well-known and beloved opera aria into the twentieth century; violists playing the *Fantasie*, along with their audiences, could enjoy playing a recognizable excerpt from one of the most famous operas in all of music. Additionally, the *Don Giovanni* section is the most convenient - not only does it immediately follow the introduction, but its original transition to the D major *Boleros* section can be reutilized as a transition to the D major finale. No matter what the ultimate reasoning, however, the *Don Giovanni* section was the only borrowed material featured in the reduced version. With this, A.E. Fischer, Bremen, and Carl Fischer of New York enjoyed a lucrative editorial gamble by satisfying demands for viola *concertante* works with the short and light-hearted *Fantasie*. However, by doing so, they not only reduced Hummel's *Potpourri* by two thirds, but more significantly, swept away Hummel's original composition along with the cultural significance of the potpourri genre.

Let us revisit a key player that we had briefly discussed -- Beethoven, the prodigious composer that Hummel was constantly compared with during his day. While Hummel's *Potpourri* was composed in 1820, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony was in the works between 1822 and 1824, with its premiere in 1824. The final movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony broke

many of the norms of instrumental music of that time; although symphonies were purely instrumental at that time, this movement features a vocal quartet that breaks out into song followed by a chorus, both singing an elaborate theme and variations with one of the variations being a powerful fugue. We can observe that Beethoven was aiming for nothing less than genre hybridity in the finale of his Ninth Symphony. Beethoven, as Hummel, was working within and through the same unstable musical climate of the day,combining genres of instrumental and vocal music, as well as theme and variations and fugue, but in case within a symphony rather than an improvised fantasie. A writer from the AMZ describes this last movement: "Like in a potpourri, in short periods, all previously-heard principal themes are paraded before us once again in colorful succession, as if reflected in a mirror."[43] However, while the Ninth eventually gained great praise from Beethoven's followers and connoisseurs, the results of its May 7th, 1824 premiere suggest otherwise: the expenses stripped most of the gains, making the total profit only 420 gulden, many critics noted on the poor execution of the piece due to its lack of rehearsals, the public was astounded by the degree in which this new piece differed from the symphony they were comfortable with, Rosenbaum, a journalist, notes "for all the large forces, little effect."[44] On a second, most likely better, opportunity for the public to listen to the Ninth Symphony, "the house was less than half full" due to the unusually nice weather of the day of the performance.

---

[43] Thomas Forrest Kelly. *First Nights-Five Musical Premieres*. (Yale University Press, 2000), 175; Original quote from the *Leipziger Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung 26, no. 27 (July 1, 1824): cols 437-42*

[44] Kelly. *First Nights-Five Musical Premieres.* 170; Original quote from the *diary of Joseph Carl Rosenbaum*

In contrast, Hummel continued to be renowned for his improvised fantasies, even in 1830. An article previewing Hummel's March 21st concert in Paris featured in *Le Globe* discussed Hummel's improvisatory talents:

> "There are few musical imaginations richer and more abundant than Hummel's. Even while only writing for the piano, he makes one dream of an orchestra, voices, dramatic effects: a simple piece without accompaniment frequently produces impressions of the same type that a symphony of Beethoven makes one feel. This wholly poetic manner of feeling and making his art speak reveals itself above all in improvisation; it is there that Hummel is prodigious and perhaps without rivals. Improvising, for him, is not a work of mechanism and memory; he is not content to take a theme, modulate it and embellish it for a few minutes, then to leave it there to recommence the same operation on a second theme, nay even on a third; no, he seeks a thought, and develops it in all its facets without formulas, without making a patch work, by an effort totally spontaneous and daring."[45]

Even in times when the improvised fantasie came under criticism and the genre waned in popularity, it remained Hummel's strong suit, as the performer-composer was equally appreciated by connoisseurs and the general public. Although we will never be able to perceive exactly the kind of experience that Hummel's audiences cherished, the *Potpourri* gives us a snapshot, a refined approximation, of the shifting musical tastes and standards during the first three decades of the nineteenth-century, and the distinct beauty of Hummel's improvisation.

[45] Kroll. *Johann Nepomuk Hummel: a Musician's Life and World*, 126

Works Cited

Abbate, Carolyn, and Roger Parker. *A History of Opera* Updated edition. New York:W.W. Norton & Company, 2015.

Barbour, J. "Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung, 'Prototype of Contemporary Musical Journalism.'" Music Library Association Notes 5, no. 3 (June 1, 1948): 325–337. http://search.proquest.com/docview/740687561/.

Cohn, Richard. "Uncanny Resemblances: Tonal Signification in the Freudian Age." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 57, no. 2 (2004): 285-324. Accessed May 4, 2020. doi:10.1525/jams.2004.57.2.285.

Gooley, Dana A. (Dana Andrew). *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Hummel, Johann Nepomuk. *Potpourri Op.94 ("Fantasie") für Viola und Orchester Kavierauszug*. Edited by Norbert Gertsch and Johanna Steiner. Piano reduction by Johannes Umbreit. Munich: G.Henle Verlag, 2002

Kelly, Thomas Forrest. *First Nights - Five Musical Premireres*. Yale University Press, 2000.

Kroll, Mark. *Johann Nepomuk Hummel: a Musician's Life and World*. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2007

Leichtentritt, Hugo. *Musical Form*. [1st English ed.]. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951.

Osborne, Richard. "Tancredi." *Grove Music Online.* 2002; Accessed 2 May. 2020. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-5000005711.

Sachs, Joel, and Mark Kroll. "Hummel, Johann Nepomuk." *Grove Music Online.* 20 Jan. 2001; Accessed 2 May. 2020. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000013548.

Roche, Jerome, and Henry Roche. "Moscheles, Ignaz." *Grove Music Online.* 2001; Accessed 2 May. 2020. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000019185.

Rushton, Julian. "Don Giovanni (ii)." *Grove Music Online.* 2002; Accessed 2 May. 2020. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-5000901351.

Rushton, Julian. "Entführung aus dem Serail, Die." *Grove Music Online.* 2002; Accessed 2 May. 2020. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-5000006411.

Rushton, Julian. "Nozze di Figaro, Le." *Grove Music Online.* 2002; Accessed 2 May. 2020. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-5000003136.

Walker, Paul M. "Fugue." *Grove Music Online.* 2001; Accessed 2 May. 2020. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000051678.