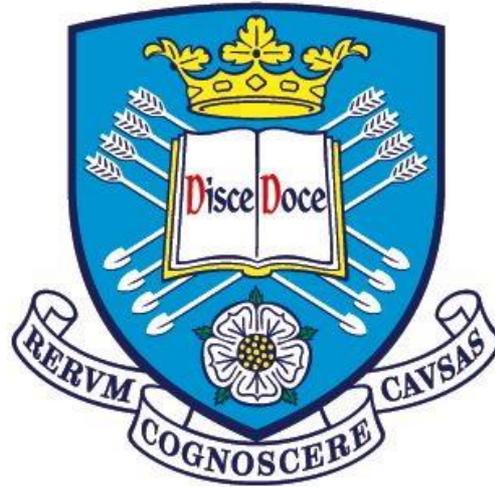


# The University of Sheffield



## **Stravinsky's piano works from three distinct periods: aspects of performance and latitude of interpretation**

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## Abstract

This research project focuses on the piano works of Igor Stravinsky. This performance-orientated approach and analysis aims to offer useful insights into how to interpret and make informed decisions regarding his piano music. The focus is on three piano works: *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* (1904), *Serenade in A* (1925), *Movements for Piano and Orchestra* (1958–59). It identifies the key factors which influenced his works and his compositional process. The aims are to provide an informed approach to his piano works, which are generally considered difficult and challenging pieces to perform convincingly. In this way, it is possible to offer insights which could help performers fully understand his works and apply this knowledge to performance. The study also explores aspects of latitude in interpreting his works and how to approach the notated scores. The methods used in the study include document analysis, analysis of music score, recording and interview data. The interview participants were carefully selected professional pianists who are considered experts in their field and, therefore, authorities on Stravinsky's piano works. The findings of the results reveal the complex and multi-faceted nature of Stravinsky's piano music. The research highlights both the intrinsic differences in the stylistic features of the three pieces, as well as similarities and differences regarding Stravinsky's compositional approach. These are considered important factors which could influence the interpretation of performers, and their decision making in regard to these three piano works.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>7</b>
1.1 Motivation and personal interest .....	7
1.2 Background .....	9
1.3 Research aims .....	10
1.4 Definition of latitude of interpretation .....	11
1.5 Overview of thesis structure .....	12
<b>Chapter 2 Literature Review</b> .....	<b>13</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	13
2.2 Critical appraisal of key sources.....	14
2.2.1 <i>Stravinsky's own writings</i> .....	19
2.2.2 <i>Walsh biographies of Stravinsky: the role of Robert Craft</i> .....	22
2.2.3 <i>Andriessen and Schönberger's Apollonian Clockwork: On Stravinsky</i> .....	27
2.2.4 <i>Unifying elements in Stravinsky's music</i> .....	33
2.2.5 <i>Stravinsky's piano works: Griffiths (2013) Joseph (1983)</i> .....	35
2.3 Historically informed performance .....	38
2.3.1 <i>Tempo rubato</i> .....	40
2.3.2 <i>Criteria of 'good' performance</i> .....	42
2.3.3 <i>Summary</i> .....	43
2.4 Romanticism.....	44
2.4.1 <i>Different perspectives on romanticism</i> .....	45
2.5 Objectivity .....	47
2.5.1 <i>Different perspectives on objectivity</i> .....	48
2.5.2 <i>Stravinsky's concept of 'pure music'</i> .....	49
2.5.3 <i>Chronometry</i> .....	51
2.6 Early recordings .....	53
2.6.1 <i>Style changes in recordings</i> .....	55
2.6.2 <i>Recordings and the original score</i> .....	56
2.7 Summary of Chapter 2.....	58
2.7.1 <i>Identifying gaps in the literature</i> .....	60
<b>Chapter 3 Methodology</b> .....	<b>62</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	62
3.2 Research approach.....	63
3.2.1 <i>Inductive reasoning</i> .....	63
3.2.2 <i>Qualitative research</i> .....	64
3.2.3 <i>Case studies</i> .....	64
3.3 Data-collection methods .....	66
3.3.1 <i>Semi-structured interviews</i> .....	67
3.3.2 <i>Sampling of participants</i> .....	68
3.3.3 <i>Interview procedure</i> .....	69
3.3.4 <i>Recital</i> .....	70
3.4 Data analysis.....	71
3.5 Research ethics .....	71
3.6 Summary .....	71
<b>Chapter 4 Overview of Stravinsky's Compositional Career</b> .....	<b>73</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	73
4.2 Russian period .....	73
4.2.1 <i>Russian pedagogy</i> .....	73
4.2.2 <i>The Belyayev Circle</i> .....	75
4.2.3 <i>Glazunov and Stravinsky</i> .....	77
4.2.4 <i>The piano as a percussion instrument</i> .....	78
4.2.5 <i>Development of the piano</i> .....	79

4.2.6 Influence of folk music .....	81
4.2.7 The age of machines and technology .....	83
4.2.8 Piano tone .....	84
4.2.9 Influence of jazz and ragtime .....	86
4.3 Neoclassical period.....	89
4.3.1 Stravinsky's approach to Bach.....	91
4.3.2 Bach's works in historical context .....	92
4.3.3 Beyond the contrapuntal tradition .....	95
4.3.4 Dumbarton Oaks .....	96
4.3.5 The Symphony of Psalms.....	97
4.3.6 Concerto for Two Pianos .....	99
4.4 Serial period .....	101
4.4.1 Use of the piano in Stravinsky's later orchestra works .....	103
4.4.2 Agon .....	109
4.4.3 Threni.....	112
4.4.4 Requiem Canticles.....	115
4.4.5 Summary.....	117
4.5 Evaluating musical influences .....	123
<b>Chapter 5. Musicological Analysis of Stravinsky's Piano Works: Case Studies of the Music Scores .....</b>	<b>127</b>
5.1 Introduction to Results Chapters .....	127
5.2 Analysis of the original score .....	128
5.3 Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor .....	130
5.4 Serenade in A.....	139
5.5 Movements for Piano and Orchestra .....	153
<b>Chapter 6 Performance Analysis of Stravinsky's Piano Works: Recordings of Stravinsky's Own, and Interviewees', Interpretations.....</b>	<b>164</b>
6.1 Introduction .....	164
6.2 Stravinsky's own recordings .....	164
6.2.1 Stravinsky's recording of Piano-Rag-Music.....	167
6.2.2 Stravinsky's recording of Piano Sonata (1924).....	172
6.2.3 Stravinsky's recording of Serenade in A.....	178
6.3 Summary of Stravinsky's own recordings.....	184
6.4 Interviewee interpretations .....	186
6.4.1 Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor.....	187
6.4.2 Serenade in A .....	189
6.4.3 Movements for Piano and Orchestra.....	192
6.5 Summary of interviewee interpretations.....	194
<b>Chapter 7 Results and Interviews with Professional Pianists .....</b>	<b>197</b>
7.1 Introduction .....	197
7.2 Interviewee profiles .....	197
7.3 Comments on the interviewing process and data .....	199
7.4 Analysis of the interview data: themes and sub-themes.....	202
7.5 Interviewee comments on the Russian period and Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor .....	203
7.6 Interviewee comments on the neoclassical period and Serenade in A .....	209
7.7 Interviewee comments on the serial period and Movements for Piano and Orchestra... ..	218
7.8 Interviewees' references to other composers.....	223
7.9 Latitude of interpretation.....	227
7.10 Important factors affecting interpretation.....	233
7.10.1 Influence of other performers.....	234
7.10.2 Composer's intention and emotion .....	235
7.10.3 Considering orchestral sound.....	237

7.10.4 Stylistic influence .....	239
7.10.5 Personal choice.....	240
7.10.6 Pedalling.....	241
7.10.7 Development of the piano.....	242
7.11 Summary of Results Chapters 5, 6, and 7.....	242
<b>Chapter 8 Discussion.....</b>	<b>245</b>
8.1 Introduction .....	245
8.2 Structure of Chapter 8 .....	246
8.3 Addressing the research questions.....	246
8.3.1 Social and historical context.....	247
8.3.2 Understanding Stravinsky's mentality as a composer .....	250
8.3.3 Considering orchestral sound: Stravinsky's use of the piano.....	251
8.3.4 Stravinsky's use of past works: sources of influence .....	253
8.3.5 Defining notions of 'freedom' as 'latitude'.....	256
8.3.6 Stravinsky's music and its importance when considering latitude.....	257
8.3.7 Latitude and the three piano works.....	257
8.3.8 Notions of latitude and the role of the pianist.....	259
8.3.9 Approaching the score .....	259
8.3.10 Latitude and aspects of performing.....	260
8.3.11 Composers and their works.....	261
8.3.12 Aspects of deciding making .....	262
8.4 This researcher's approach to the three case studies .....	265
8.4.1 Russian period: Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor .....	266
8.4.2 Neoclassical period: Serenade in A .....	269
8.4.3 Serial period: Movements for piano and orchestra .....	272
8.5 Relating findings to performance theory .....	274
8.6 Problems in formulating theory .....	276
8.7 Summary of Chapter 8.....	278
<b>Chapter 9 Conclusion.....</b>	<b>280</b>
9.1 Research problem and research questions.....	280
9.2 Research design.....	281
9.3 Contribution of the study.....	282
9.3.1 Gaps in the literature .....	282
9.3.2. Focus on the three piano works from distinct periods.....	282
9.3.3 Methodology: a combined approach .....	283
9.3.4 Drawing attention to Stravinsky's piano music .....	283
9.4. Practical implications of the study .....	284
9.5. Limitations.....	284
9.6 Recommendations for further research.....	285
9.7 Final comments: present status of Stravinsky's piano repertoire .....	286
<b>References .....</b>	<b>287</b>
<b>Appendix I: Interview Questions.....</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>Appendix II: Interview Transcripts .....</b>	<b>295</b>

## **Chapter 1 Introduction**

### 1.1 Motivation and personal interest

The motivation for this research project was stimulated by this researcher's initial introduction to Stravinsky's piano music almost four years ago. Since then, the interest has continued and been heightened by my focused research into this composer and his works, from the 1900s to the 1950s. His piano works appeared quite different from those of other composers and, in many ways, they looked to be far more challenging. Moreover, my interest was further generated by the marked differences in style reflected in his piano works. This research focuses on the performance of three of Stravinsky's piano works. The reason for this is that the works are particularly challenging, as they exhibit considerable differences in stylistic features.

It is argued that this performance-orientated approach and analysis of music can offer useful insight into how to interpret Stravinsky's piano music. Therefore, the central thesis of this research is that, by becoming more aware of the various factors influencing the composer's piano works, performers may be in a better position to interpret and become more aware of Stravinsky's musical language. By close analysis of these works, it is argued that the pianist can arrive at a better understanding of how the various musical elements serve to produce his unique sound.

It was difficult to find sources which could adequately explain how to approach, interpret, and convincingly perform his piano works. This was especially the case when

confronted with aspects of latitude in regard to interpreting his piano scores. There are a considerable number of scholarly studies detailing analyses of his musical life and his many other works, and an interesting aspect which emerges from this literature is that of how central the piano was to Stravinsky's creative process as a composer. The piano served as a catalyst which enabled the composer to try out his musical ideas. Nevertheless, his actual solo piano works are relatively small in number and as a result they have tended to have become neglected over the years.

One reason for this is that they have tended to be overshadowed by his other famous orchestral works, such as *The Rite of Spring*, *Firebird* and *Petrushka*, as well as by the piano works of other late-nineteenth and/or twentieth-century composers such as Rachmaninov, Prokofiev and Debussy. Furthermore, Stravinsky's piano works have a reputation as being difficult works to perform due to their unusual gestures and diversity of styles; these features have tended to discourage performers. Indeed, Joseph (1983: 239) in his seminal *Stravinsky and the Piano* claimed that: 'It is unlikely that history will ever commemorate Stravinsky on the memory of his piano music. Crassly put, it lacks appeal.'

This study may be seen as a direct challenge to these assumptions. It is argued throughout this thesis that Stravinsky's piano works deserve a fresh appraisal and a critical re-evaluation. It will be maintained that the works are indeed appealing for many reasons overlooked by the above authors, and that they are exciting and beautiful works which are worthy of greater exposure and attention. Moreover, they may be also seen as works which require particular foci and considerations which differ from the

piano works of other composers. These ideas are revealed and elaborated on in the following Chapters.

## 1.2 Background

The initial research for this study concentrated on Stravinsky's writings (as mentioned in his autobiography), as well as his personal correspondence, conversations and lectures. Other sources include works by various writers and academics, concerning his life and music, the majority of which are concerned with his biography, and large-scale music works such as orchestral and ballet pieces. Sources which directly examine his piano compositions, however, are relatively few in number.

As noted above, this study explores the extent to which it is possible to interpret different aspects of the performance instructions which Stravinsky wrote in his piano music. This includes examining his three main composition periods, along with issues relating to latitude of interpretation in performance. It is hoped that there are two initial outcomes deriving from this study. First, as stated above, it should enable the researcher to interpret Stravinsky's piano music with more careful and thoughtful consideration, in order to present informed interpretations of his works. Second, it may serve to assist other pianists to understand the importance of examining the differences in his musical language in order to enhance the quality of their performances. It is therefore possible that future performers can become more aware of these subtle variations in Stravinsky's musical language when interpreting his piano music.

The thesis is an inductive, data-generated study, and as such, it aims to offer an appropriate theoretical, and practical, framework of analysis. It therefore does not focus

on detailed analyses of musicology theory or the philosophical aspects of music. Rather, the emphasis is on direct reference to the music and it analyses how a proficient pianist would approach the three examples of Stravinsky's piano works. In this study, it is important to keep in mind that both theory and practice are often closely connected. It is also necessary to emphasise their mutual dependence. In that they can both complement each other. Therefore, separating them would result in rather artificial distinction. Nevertheless, it is argued that this more practical, hands-on, approach can provide a better understanding of these complex compositions.

Stravinsky's musical creations went through three different compositional stages. From post-romanticism and the 'Russian' period, he underwent a transition to a neoclassical period, which subsequently developed into a 'modern' style referred to as serialism. This progression encompassed a wide range of musical styles and performance interpretations. Stravinsky's piano music, and the manner in which it subsequently developed, can be identified by careful and detailed analysis of his music scores and thought processes.

### 1.3 Research aims

To date, there have been few comprehensive studies of Stravinsky's piano works with specific focus on how the performer's perspectives and interpretations of his music can be changed. Thus, the main concern of this research is to explore aspects of latitude when interpreting Stravinsky's piano works. The analyses may provide a valuable pedagogical resource, which can enhance pianists' understanding and performance. It is hoped that the study can also create a greater awareness of Stravinsky's piano repertoire and identify factors which may contribute to good performance practice,

while allowing us to gain a more informed insight into his work. The main aims are, therefore, to provide a systematic theoretical direction for pianists and to enhance their level of, and capacity for, analysis and interpretation of Stravinsky's piano works. Furthermore, the research attempts to offer an effective and useful reference for music students, educators and researchers, enabling them to create informed interpretations. In this way, it may be possible to maximise the musical value of Stravinsky's piano works for the future. Two main research questions will be used to address the above issues:

1. How may knowledge and understanding related to Stravinsky's life, context, musical development and values inform the performance of his music regarding his three stylistic periods; what are the most significant factors involved in this process?
2. How much latitude of interpretation is required for the pianist when performing Stravinsky's piano music from his three different periods?

#### 1.4 Definition of latitude of interpretation

The term 'freedom of interpretation' is often used in the literature (see Rosen 2017), but it tends to lack precise definition. First, it is important to clearly define the concept of 'latitude' in regard to degrees of 'freedom' when interpreting Stravinsky's piano works. Instead of freedom, the term 'latitude' is used throughout the thesis. Specifically, it refers to the scope, restrictions or the possible interpretations regarding the music score. It is thus similar to the term 'leeway' whereby there is potential room for changes in emphasis. The term may thus allude to a restricted and boundary-determined model (see Discussion section 8.3.5 below).

The term 'freedom' is largely avoided as it may suggest an absence of restraint. This implication is therefore considered inappropriate for this study. It is also maintained

that in the context of Stravinsky, this latitude of interpretation differs from other composers in that it is necessary to allow for Stravinsky's three distinct periods. Moreover, in his writings, Stravinsky was often very strict in regard to following his notations.

### 1.5 Overview of thesis structure

The thesis consists of nine Chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Overview of Stravinsky's Compositional Career, Musical Analysis, Recording Analysis, Interview Analysis, and Discussion and Conclusion. Chapter One constructs the basic background of the research project and discusses the gaps in the current literature. It also outlines the aims and objectives of the study. Chapter Two considers performance traditions, Stravinsky's own musical concepts, early recordings, and also evaluates existing relevant literature on Stravinsky's piano music. Chapter Three presents the methodology of this study. It aims to justify the method used in the data analysis, namely: case study, thematic analysis of the interview data and document analysis. Chapter Four traces the evolution and development of Stravinsky's musical language and accounts for his changes in style. Chapters Five, Six and Seven focus on the results generated by the musicians, various recordings and interview analyses. Chapter Eight discusses and interprets the results from the previous Chapters and addresses the research questions. It also describes this researcher's own approach to the three case studies in light of the findings of the three Results Chapters. Chapter Nine brings the thesis to a conclusion. It addresses a number of aspects: the extent to which the research questions have been answered; the contribution of the research in regard to performance practice; how it related to other research paradigms; along with a discussion of the limitations of this study, and areas for further research.

## **Chapter 2 Literature Review**

### 2.1 Introduction

In order to address the above research questions, the literature review focuses on presenting a structured background to the study. The review aims to consider a broad range of literature and to carry out a critical evaluation of the most pertinent sources. The literature thus adopts a broadly conceived approach rather than a narrower focused perspective. It is crucial to trace through time and space the development and changes of Stravinsky's musical language throughout his long career. In this way, it is possible to track and identify the various influences both musical and cultural which change his ideas and approach to musical composition. Moreover, it is possible to pinpoint the definitive periods in his life where his approach to music changed. Accordingly, a broader approach helps us better understand subsequent sections on performance traditions, changes in recordings, and critical evaluation of key sources.

It is important to identify the issue of latitude of interpretation for pianists when performing Stravinsky's piano works, especially in regard to the respective historical periods, as cited in the literature. Therefore, the research questions can serve as a framework which can determine the scope, synthesis, and critical evaluation of the literature, as it relates to musical performance studies.

The structure and organisation of the literature review are also based on the framework and elements recommended by Randolph (2009). The purposes and functions of the review are informed by the findings of Borg, Gall (1996) and Hart (1998). The literature review utilises Boote and Beile's (2005) five category evaluation matrix which includes

coverage (i.e. scope), synthesis of sources, aspects of methodology, significance of included sources, and rhetoric and coherency (cited in Randolph 2009: 2 &12).

The literature review is structured as follows:

The first section provides critical evaluation of key sources pertinent to this study. The following three sections focus on performance interpretation, and include considerations of historically informed performance, romantically influenced performance, and objective performance. These concepts have direct relevance to the interpretation of Stravinsky's piano works as well as providing insights into the development of his compositions. The fifth section examines the area of chronometry and provides definitions of two important concepts in Stravinsky's work: ontological, and psychological time. These are important theories which can offer a framework within which music performance can be analysed. It will be argued that the former is particularly pertinent to Stravinsky's piano works. The sixth section discusses early recordings and their impact on performance analyses. It also focuses on the subtle and marked differences between the recordings and their original scores.

## 2.2 Critical appraisal of key sources

In this section, there is a critical evaluation of a number of selected sources relevant to this study. It would be safe to say that any researcher on Stravinsky has the task of integrating a wide spectrum of historical and cultural information. This would include autobiographical and biographical sources, archive documents, genre-specific musical data, analytical details of his music and his unique approach to composition. The aim of this section is to offer a critique which focuses on the strengths and weakness of the key selected sources. These tend to differ in both scope and emphasis, but taken

together they can form a detailed mosaic impression of Stravinsky as a composer, conductor, and his personality as a creative artist. Many of these works have been cited in relation to the various themes described above but I considered that it was important to provide critiques of these key sources.

There is a large body of literature on Stravinsky and most research has focused on Stravinsky's life experience and his large-scale works. Both White (1966), and Taruskin (1996) comprehensively addressed the whole of the composer's life experiences and compositions. (*cf.* Lang 1963; Siohan 1965; Toorn 1983; Griffiths 1992). The piano may be seen as having played a pivotal role in the way he composed his works: it was thus an important catalyst which stimulated his creativity as a composer (Griffiths, 2013)

As noted in the introduction, Stravinsky's piano output is not very large: there are about twenty piano pieces spanning his three distinct periods, including piano solo works, duos, a concerto and a concertino. Most of them are available in *The Stravinsky Piano Collection* published by Boosey and Hawkes in 2007. Their significance lies in the fact that they bear witness to the various stages of creativity experienced by the composer. To date, in their exploration of Stravinsky's life and works, a number of scholars have referred to these piano works to various degrees (White 1930:1966; Asaf'yev 1982; Druskin 1983; Joseph 1983; Toorn 1983; Boucourechliev 1987; Andriessen & Schönberger 1989; Walsh 1988; 2006; Griffiths 1992; Taruskin 1996; Cross 2003).

In the literature, a common approach is to relate episodes in Stravinsky's life to his development as a composer. A case in point is (Druskin 1983:176), who applies an

overview of the composer's life and music based on the three stages of his compositional development. He summarises the process thus:

Sometimes he [Stravinsky] got the upper hand of these contradictions, and then his music has an indestructible integrity. At other times he was tormented by them, like the Furies of Greek mythology, and then he tried to conceal his suffering by adopting an aesthetic pose. (Druskin 1983:176)

There is little reference to piano music in many of these studies: Druskin focused on *Petrushka* (from the 'Russian' period) and discussed the background factors which could have influenced the ballet version. Griffiths (1992), made connections between Stravinsky's life events when making his analyses of the large-scale works; however, the only reference to the piano works is a brief mention of the compositional background of the *Serenade in A*. Similarly, Sioban (1965), related the development of his musical works to contemporary events in Stravinsky's life. Again, Stravinsky's piano works are not described; however, in the discussion of *The Rite of Spring*, he looks at the work from an aesthetic point of view:

...this polytonal procedure, when handled by a master produces an effect of tremendous power; but the resultant sonorities were so novel that they were bound at a first hearing to disconcert an unprepared audience. (Sioban, 1965:43)

Although in many respects not relevant, these sources can still offer useful insights into analyses of the piano works. Moreover, they can provide frameworks of analysis which can be adapted for Stravinsky's piano repertoire.

Other researchers have also focused their attention on Stravinsky's large-scale works. Boucourechliev (1987) studied his early compositions, and does briefly introduce the compositional background to a number of Stravinsky's piano works: *Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*, *Piano Sonata*, *Serenade in A*, *Tango and Concerto for Piano and Wind*, and *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*, but without any musical analyses. Vlad (1978) and Toorn (1983) also discussed the compositional background for the above pieces, as well as *Four Etudes*, *Piano-Rag-Music* and *Petrushka*, with some critical evaluation. In *Stravinsky Retrospectives* (1987), Straus examined Stravinsky's use of sonata form in the *Sonata for Two Pianos*, especially in regard to pitch class.

The influence of other Russian composers on Stravinsky's music has also been discussed. Walsh (1988), points out similarities of patterns in Stravinsky's piano works such as, *Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*, *Piano Sonata*, and *Piano-Rag-Music* with other large-scale works composed at the same time. In contrast to the above researchers, White (1966) and Taruskin (1996), provided a more systematic study of the background for Stravinsky's piano works. The rationale of Stravinsky's compositions is comprehensively discussed and each piece is analysed, with useful background information on the works provided. Another work worthy of note is that of White (1930), who focused on Stravinsky's *Piano Concerto* and the *Serenade in A*, from the neoclassical period. After analysing the music scores, and studying the changes in Stravinsky's melodic lines between the Russian and neoclassical periods, White (1930:107) concluded that:

The contrapuntal passages and horizontal texture of Stravinsky's neoclassical compositions affected his melodic line as well as his harmony. Good use can be made in the simplest counterpoint of figures and patterns (as, for instance, the bass of the Rondoletto in

the Serenade), but there must be at least one more or less continuous melodic line. Now, whatever may have been the virtues of Stravinsky's earlier compositions, they were certainly not remarkable for their melodic invention... Even where it is probable that a melodic line is his, it will usually be found to be very short, or repetitive in his dynamic, syncopated manner.

To be relevant and useful to this study's aims, it would have been more helpful if the above researchers had paid less attention to the details of Stravinsky's life experience and compositional processes, but had had more discussion detailing how to actually go about performing Stravinsky's piano works, based on different traditions of performance interpretation, and Stravinsky's own concept in interpreting his works.

The literature provides a wide range of critical analysis relating to Stravinsky's piano works. It can be seen that, in many aspects, his work was considered highly controversial, innovative and revolutionary in nature. Overall, much of the literature attempts to provide a clear, developmental account of Stravinsky's life, and his critical responses and various influences; but they tend to focus on varying degrees of emphasis in regard to the above elements. These various elements did, however, help to create his unique career trajectory, and involved a process of artistic and stylistic change through synthesis and transformation.

A more detailed appraisal of key seminal works on Stravinsky's piano works, in particular Joseph (1983) and Griffiths (2013), is provided in Section 2.2.5. The following sections also includes a critical evaluation of Walsh (2006), Andriessen and Schönberger (1989), and Stravinsky and Craft's published work with reference to his own piano and other works.

### 2.2.1 Stravinsky's own writings

Researchers and scholars focusing on Stravinsky invariably have to refer to his own writings. His *Poetics of Music* (i.e., *Poétique musicale*) (1998 edition) for instance, is based on six lectures given between 1939 and 1940 at Harvard University, and delivered entirely in French. They were given while his advocacy of neoclassicism was at its height. Stravinsky attempts to outline his musical philosophy and opinions on musical taste regarding both past and 'modern' paradigms. They therefore cover a wide range of topics: the nature of music, the performance of music, and his opinions of other composers, along with the role of the interpreter and so forth.

*Poetics of Music* is very much in the style of the French polemicists but the content of these writings seems to stem from a desire to hit back at his critics (Andriessen & Schönberger 1989; Walsh 2006). At best, it offers interesting personal insights regarding the way he approaches composition; for example, there is a key phrase: 'The more art is controlled, limited, worked over, the more it is free.' (Stravinsky 1998:63). The work reflects a constant theme in that Stravinsky emphasises the need for 'order', 'method', 'discipline', and 'laws' (Andriessen & Schönberger 1989:85).

However, at its worst, it appears cantankerous and, therefore, a missed opportunity to reveal deeper insights into his creative processes. The chapter on the performance of music is particularly disappointing. According to Andriessen and Schönberger (1989:83) the lectures come across as dogmatic, pretentious and rancorous which are valid criticisms in my view. They add: 'Of all the cloaks, both borrowed and stolen, ever worn by Stravinsky, this academic robe fitted the worst.' Perhaps unsurprisingly,

his section on Russian music, as well as his aversion to any kind of ‘revolution’, provoked much criticism from musicians and musicologists in Soviet Russia (Andriessen & Schönberger 1989; Walsh 2006).

His *Chroniques de ma vie* (Chronicles of my Life) (1935-36) is similar in tone to *Poetique* but its main function was to resolve misunderstandings about himself and his works. In fact, as Andriessen and Schönberger (1989) and Walsh (2006) point out, in the 1920s, Stravinsky often gave radio talks, lectures, interviews, or wrote newspaper articles before performing new works. His autobiography *Chroniques de ma vie* (1934) may be a reliable factual account but according to Craft (1979:167), the tone ‘consistently contradicts what Stravinsky thought, felt and said at the early periods of his life.’ Moreover, the autobiography’s similarity to *Poetique* is evident in his growing hostility towards critics as noted above. The interesting aspect regarding Stravinsky’s attitude toward criticism is how it changes over time. In the early years, especially in the *Chronicle de ma vie* autobiography, he tends to refer to his contemporaries with a degree of politeness and respect, without much condescension regarding artistic merit. In his conversations with Craft, however, the tone is much more personal: his opinions have become more subjective and more reflective of his individuality, as pointed out by Walsh (2006); Druskin (1983:163) and Locanto (2017).

This shift in critical evaluation has been a focus of scholarly research in its own right. For example, two works are particularly informative: Campbell (2003) focuses on the reception that Stravinsky’s music received at different times in his career, whereas Walsh (1998) draws attention to the cultural and psychological motivations behind the

composer's relationship with critics. The topic is examined in more detail in the Discussion Chapter below.

The motivations behind this hostility towards critics therefore tended to change in response to how his music was received and perceived by other composers, 'elite' critics and members of the *avant-garde* (see Locanto 2017). Nevertheless, in *Chroniques de ma vie*, it is interesting to note his comments regarding 'modernism' and the mistake that 'modern' composers make of: 'judging all new works by the scale of their modernity, that is to say by a non-existent scale of values.' (Stravinsky 1934:132).

It worth pointing out, however, that he maintains a degree of consistency here. In his conversations with Craft (1960: 124, 125) twenty years later, for example, he states that: 'What is most new in new music dies the quickest' (*ibid*: 124), is scornful of music which: '...often gives the impression of a statistical extract' (*ibid*: 125). Indeed, over time, he became increasingly scornful of *avant-garde* music and considered Stockhausen's work as 'unnecessary, boring, useless and uninteresting'. Nevertheless, he expressed his admiration for *Gruppen* and *Zeimasse. Craft* (*ibid*: 120–125). He often criticised young composers who showed a disdainful attitude to the music of the past (Druskin 1983:171) and comments:

Some composers have proclaimed their repudiation of all music before their own. They probably do this because they are well aware that any comparison of their own works with those of the past would be a major disaster for them (cited in Druskin 1983:171 translated from *Sovietskaya Muzyka* 1968:141).

Moreover, he expressed the view that musical experimentation for the sake of it was pointless without a strong creative imagination (Druskin 1983: 171).

### 2.2.2 Walsh biographies of Stravinsky: the role of Robert Craft

The role of collaborators in the writing of Stravinsky's publications has raised awkward questions regarding the reliability, accuracy and inconsistencies expressed in many of Stravinsky's writings, which any critical evaluation must take into account. The following section therefore focuses on the work of Walsh (2006), in particular his second volume and the role and influence of Robert Craft on Stravinsky's writings and music.

In this researcher's view, the Stravinsky biographies and commentaries on his music by Walsh (1988:1999:2006) are, by many accounts, work of particular merit. Compared with other works pertaining to Stravinsky's life, they provide a more detailed, precise and sensitive account of this subject. The author's underlying aim is to establish the true facts about Stravinsky which others works had often failed to achieve. In this wide ranging, comprehensive and detailed work, Walsh traces the often complex path of Stravinsky's musical career. It offers insight into his status as a musical celebrity, the complexities of his family life, financial issues, problems with copyright and publications, conflict with publishers, the opinions of other composers, his relationships with other composers, artists and intellectuals, and his often exhausting travels and performances as a conductor.

My own criticism would be that Walsh could have explored the musical side in more depth. Admittedly, Walsh's account is fundamentally biographical. The work, however,

could have been enhanced if the author had, for instance, analysed and evaluated more closely and directly, the changes in the state of music during Stravinsky's time. In this way, it would have been possible to establish a more convincing backdrop of the creative and musical environment. Another problem is that Walsh occasionally repeats Stravinsky's comments without critical evaluation. A case in point would be the composer's comments on jazz (Stravinsky & Craft [*Conversations*] 1959:134): 'The point of interest is instrumental virtuosity, instrumental personality, not melody, not harmony, and certainly not rhythm (my emphasis).' Walsh merely repeats this comment. It appears to this researcher that neither of them were able to appreciate the full complexity of jazz rhythm, and that Stravinsky's notion of jazz was somewhat incomplete, as pointed out by Andriessen and Schönberger (1989), and Gordon (2006).

There is another interesting fact which Walsh fails to elaborate on and discuss at length. During his time in America, and before meeting Craft, Stravinsky conducted his works with various orchestras but it was a relatively non-productive period for writing music; he seems to have lost direction as an innovative and creative composer. The conducting tours, however, were certainly lucrative for Stravinsky. Regarding these activities, Sandow (2006:4) draws attention to an interesting tendency in that, unless Stravinsky was conducting, 'orchestras almost never played this music'. Unfortunately, the reasons for this lack of engagement by other conductors and orchestras are not fully explained or speculated upon.

What is especially revealing in the biographies, however, concerns the role of Robert Craft and his forty-four-year relationship with Stravinsky. Craft's role has been described in a number of ways at various points in their relationship. The literature

provides a number of descriptors of Craft's role: as Stravinsky's companion, confidant, travel companion and driver, editor, protégé, recording supervisor, mentor, advisor, steward, factotum, favoured conductor of Stravinsky's works, and even surrogate son (cf. Fox 2015; Schiff 2016; Walsh 2006; Druskin 1983; Andriessen & Schönberger 1989).

It should be noted that Walsh (2006:572) strongly defends this personal relationship and friendship. Moreover, he acknowledges Craft's positive influence on, and assistance to, the composer: 'Without Craft there might have been no *Agon*, no *Canticum Sacrum*, no *Requiem Canticles*.' (2006:572). This sentiment finds support from other sources (Druskin 1983; Griffiths 2013). The above works by Stravinsky are considered by many critics as outstanding examples of his late compositions. Craft is also given credit for drawing Stravinsky's attention to Schoenberg's 12-tone system which he tended to ignore and had considered to be the polar opposite to his own, neoclassical, style. Once engaged with the 12-tone system, however, Stravinsky seems to have relished this new organisational system. It is generally acknowledged by Walsh and others that, without Craft's crucial assistance, the composer's later works may never have been written.

For many critics, this rather sudden and dramatic change in Stravinsky's style from neoclassical to compositions in the serialist style not only highlighted Stravinsky's unpredictability and inconsistency, but also provided evidence of Craft's influence as a 'mentor'. This last assertion, however, has been challenged by a number of commentators including Craft himself (see also Druskin 1983; Locanto 2017; White 1966). As noted above, it has been convincingly argued (*ibid*) that Stravinsky found,

within this new system, an interesting way of solving musical problems with a restricted framework or paradigm; and this could be seen as a sign of Stravinsky's consistency rather than lack of it. It could be argued that he approached the 12-tone technique in the same way that he tackled the restricted structural architecture of counterpoint and fugal composition.

Craft's writing on Stravinsky comprises of six collections of the composer's writings and discussions on various topics. These are complemented by four volumes of commentaries, dialogues and reminiscences which include *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* (1959); *Memories and Commentaries* (1960), and *Retrospective and Conclusion* (1969) *Chronicle of a Friendship* (1972). Craft also edited volumes of Stravinsky's letters and personal documents, such as: *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence* (1984) and *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* (1978). There is, therefore, a substantial amount of documentary evidence covering the many aspects of Stravinsky's life as a composer, conductor and pianist; however, the accuracy of these accounts have been consistently challenged by a number of commentators.

In reviewing Walsh's two volumes, it is possible to identify a change in the tone of his comments regarding Craft. At the outset the criticism is somewhat restrained and even courteous. Nevertheless, he stresses the point that the editing and reminiscences are consistently unreliable. By Volume Two, however, the tone has become much more scathing, and it becomes increasingly obvious that the deeper Walsh goes into his research, the greater his sense of frustration and outrage. For example, concerning a particular event: 'Craft's accounts of these transactions is characteristically self-assured, but like most of his work it is riddled with bias, error, supposition and falsehood.'

(Walsh 2006:536). Moreover, according to Walsh (2006:545) Craft's criticism of one of Stravinsky's children is: "...so monstrous, so damaging and selective, at times so fallacious, and withal so private, that it seems astonishing today that it was ever dignified with publication.'

In an interview with Walsh, Craft admits to having written a letter to a journal in response to another author's criticisms of Stravinsky's work, pretending it had come from the composer himself. Although many of Stravinsky's writings may have been accurate and genuine at the beginning of their relationship, their tone changes considerably. The criticisms of Craft's role and his relationship with Stravinsky involve a number of issues, especially in the later years, when he was acting as a gatekeeper to Stravinsky by regulating access to the composer, and: putting words into Stravinsky's mouth regarding a wide range of topics; acquiring a monopoly on the composer's documents, correspondence and archives; and suppressing Stravinsky's letters expressing anti-Semitic sentiments which could potentially have ruined his career in the United States (Walsh, 2006). Despite Craft's responses to these criticisms, the fact remains that his credibility as a biographer has been largely undermined.

Methodologically, much of the writing about Stravinsky is clearly not verbatim evidence expressed by the composer. Moreover, it is unfortunate that Craft's involvement or manipulation of these written works results in a form of hagiography, rather than a balanced and critical account of Stravinsky's life and works. Indeed, Walsh reports that many musicologists have uncritically accepted many of Stravinsky's comments at face value without confirming their accuracy. This lack of authenticity

may also count for the many inconsistencies manifest in Stravinsky's writings. As reported above, many of his writings could be considered as challenges in themselves.

To conclude this section, the comments of Elder (2008:2) seem particularly appropriate: 'Numerous aspects of Stravinsky's life and music remain enigmatic for decades and scholars have tried to make sense of his oeuvre with its chameleon-like transformations of gender, language, medium and style. Even more riddles stem from the composer's voluminous statements and misstatements concerning his biography, music and that of other composers. His words have frequently proved contradictory, self-serving and even obfuscating.' Many of these sources do not address in detail the specific characteristics of his piano music and the interpretation of his notation.

### 2.2.3 Andriessen and Schönberger's *Apollonian Clockwork: On Stravinsky*

This work was first published in English almost thirty years ago, but it deserves a fresh examination in relation to the central aims of this research. Often described as 'idiosyncratic' by critics, it has already been cited on numerous occasions so far in this literature review and, as such, may be considered a seminal work on Stravinsky. A critical appraisal of the work may also serve as an interesting contrast and comparison with Walsh's biographies, cited above. In many respects, this book reflects the views of two modern composers, critics and musicologists, who admire Stravinsky's work; and their eclectic approach offers a number of useful comments and informative insights.

*Apollonian Clockwork* is not a conventional biography of Stravinsky; rather it serves as a monograph that focuses on a number of themes relating to musical form and style

which underpin the composer's outlook and approach to composition. The rhetorical style varies through the work: several sections appear as journalistic accounts of events; there are personal musings and travel diary entries, while other Chapters revert to more formal and in-depth musical analysis. It often seems like a portfolio of various themes and scenarios selected by the authors.

It is important to note that the authors are modern composers, critics and performers in their own right who have great respect for Stravinsky's works. They therefore offer a somewhat different, but professionally informed, perspective in that they look at Stravinsky's work as a whole, while also selecting several specific elements for comment. Louis Andriessen, for example, is considered one of the leading modern composers whose work mirrors a number of traits which are typical signatures of Stravinsky's works. Both, for instance, may be considered pianistic composers with an interest in the percussive qualities of orchestra and piano. They also use rhythm as a structural framework in their works along with precise timbral elements. Andriessen, for instance, is known for his minimalist musical language which often features driving rhythms and contrasting dissonances. He is also interested in ritual aspects of operatic performance. Another resemblance is that Andriessen and Schönberger take a fundamentally eclectic approach to musical and stylistic form, often using a wide range of instrumentation, which parallels Stravinsky's approach. The authors' attempt to fulfil Stravinsky's wish that: 'my music deserves to be considered as a whole.' One of the strengths of this work is that it brings together a number of themes and draws attention to their commonality. A case in point would be the assertion that there is no real difference between 'early' and 'late' Stravinsky, maintaining that categories such as Russian, neoclassical and serial are misleading. Their main argument is that we

should focus more on Stravinsky's 'mentality' as a composer. In other words, it is important to examine his consistency of attitude, *modus operandi* and approach to composition, rather than the surface stylistic differences of these periods. To a large extent, this researcher would agree with these observations. The authors thus draw attention to the significance of '*montage*' which often acts as a system of organisation in Stravinsky's music. Indeed, a number of studies have investigated the cell-like, almost modular logic of his music. (cf. Walsh 2006; White 1966; Griffiths 2013). Andriessen and Schönberger (1989:146) highlight this approach to composition in that, in a rather illogical way, the sum is *less* than the parts, explaining that: 'The contrast between the structurally related elements causes one to seek the identity of the separate elements' (p.146). A good example of this concept can be seen in the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* in which every chordal element expresses its separate individuality but at the same time enables close contact with other items. According to the authors, this approach is the result of: 'the coolness of the cutting table and the cunning of the scissors', as well as the frequent use of the eraser during the compositional process (Craft 1972).

Another quality is that the authors highlight a number of Stravinsky's works and draw attention to particular influences which impacted on his evolution as a composer. Accordingly, there are informative sections focusing on the influence of Bach, Pergolesi and Beethoven (as noted above), along with comparisons with excerpts of Stravinsky's works and those of other composers such as those of Scriabin, Ravel and Chopin (p.227-241); the seventh chord which closes the first act of *Orpheus* and the role of pandiatonicism in Stravinsky's music.

They also point out defining signatures of typical Stravinsky harmonies as seen in the chords found in *Octet*, *Jeu de cartes* (1936), *Symphony of Psalms*, *Persphone* (1933-34), and the piano section of *Symphony in Three Movements* (1942-45). The work also includes an interesting table of comparison between Stravinsky and Schoenberg (p. 206), highlighting the differences between the two composers in regard to their reactions for and against a number of issues: the virtues of German romanticism; the role of the piano in composing; ballet as a musical form; diatonicism vs chromaticism; the use of rubato, and so forth. The chapter *On Influence* is particularly insightful. They note that other composers' works may resemble Stravinsky in style, but make the valid point that:

A genuine Stravinsky school cannot, by definition exist, since Stravinsky's music has not yielded a musical system that other composers can use...Stravinsky's influence can be seen rather in pacific attitude towards already existing musical material (p.100).

The chapter on performing Stravinsky's music from memory is particularly relevant to this study. It is pointed out that:

Whoever plays Stravinsky can hardly do without a score. In general, sight-reading a piece is easier when one has already heard it a few times. One then only partly reads the music: the memory fills in the rest. Doing this with Stravinsky will generally lead to disaster; especially when playing four hands where coordination is critical (p.40).

They suggest that, due to the characteristics of the composer's music, memorising the music is often very difficult because there are few intervals and many haphazard

melodies which lack harmonic tension. Technically, these elements can make it difficult for performers to memorise and predict how the music develops.

The important point that this research emphasises, is that the works illustrate the legacy, influence and sense of continuity of Stravinsky's works. This influence still seems to resonate on different levels. Andriessen, for instance, make his point that *The Rite of Spring* should be considered a revolutionary piece, even in the 21st century. The enthusiasm and admiration for the composer's music is clearly expressed by the authors. They offer a fresh perspective on Stravinsky's works, for instance, they emphasise the merits of *Agon*, and the significance of *The Rake's Progress*, Stravinsky's last neoclassical work which he spent three years composing. It could be argued that much of the descriptive and critical content of Andriessen and Schönberger's book tells us just as much about these composers themselves, and their approach to music making and composing, as much as about Stravinsky. As noted above, there are a number of interesting parallels.

Despite these merits, the work, in my view, suffers from a number of drawbacks. It lacks consistency in style and tone and seems to reflect little editorial control. It is often opinionated without much balanced discussion; besides, a number of Stravinsky's quotations are included without any critical comment. Yet, the change in Stravinsky's writing style in 1962, 1963 and 1968 hints at Craft's ghost writing e.g. 'hindsight reduces to convenient unities' and '...the detritus that a betoken wreck' (p.208). In the book, the style and tone of writing continually fluctuates with very little explanation for the shifts in topic. The impression is that it attempts to be consciously 'experimental' or 'unconventional' in style, following 'Stravinsky's path...its detours and side tracks.'

(Preface xiii). The themes and topics therefore often digress and include whole paragraphs, and numerous comments, in parenthesis. There are also frequent digressive allusions to literary works (e.g. Lewis Carroll, Borges, Sebastian Knight, Nabokov), and a search for Stravinsky's '*Aleph*' alluding to Borge's tale.

In the chapter *New York: Robert Craft and Vera Stravinsky* (p.123-132) there is an account of a visit to their apartment in 1979 narrated in the first person (it appears to be Andriessen but it is unclear who the narrator is). Describing his interview with Craft (p.125) it is stated that: 'The combination of involvement and detachment which characterised his statements...could only strengthen one's faith in his quality as a biographer.' This assertion is in stark contrast to Walsh's (2006) view regarding Craft as cited above. Their assertion that there is: 'no essential difference between early and late Stravinsky' (xiii) is clearly open to question as any analysis of the musical scores would confirm, and as evidenced in the three piano pieces selected for this study.

This seminal work on Stravinsky often suffers from a lack of clarity due to the writing style and use of rhetorical devices which, in certain sections, impair the clarity of ideas. It is important to keep in mind that the book is translated from Dutch and German into English, and the translator makes an interesting comment regarding the work and the opaqueness of their writing style: 'The problems that arose were not only questions of style but catching the authors mentality...and what the authors wanted to say in precisely the same elusive manner that they have in the original.' (Translator's note xi, my emphasis.) It is argued that, despite the excellent insightful comments and analysis of Stravinsky music, there is, unfortunately, a general lack of clarity in many passages in the authors' book. Another aspect is that it does not include any detailed analysis of

actual performance practice nor of the decision-making process performers may go through when engaging with Stravinsky's piano pieces.

#### 2.2.4 Unifying elements in Stravinsky's music

In the 1980s, an increasing number of researchers began to perceive that there were unifying elements in Stravinsky's works. Similar in thinking to Andriessen and Schönberger, scholars identified a number of consistencies and recurring elements in Stravinsky's piano music. Both Druskin (1983) and Van den Toorn (1983) focus on the quality and persistence of movement in his works but offer different derivations. The former refers to the visual impressions of movement from dance or film which inspired the tempi, rhythm and dynamic intensity of Stravinsky's work as a whole. The latter emphasises the more physical attributes, which may be due to Stravinsky's use of the piano when composing, as noted by Griffiths (2013).

Asaf'yev (1982: 32) claims to identify underlying signatures which originate from Stravinsky's Russian roots. He also considers Stravinsky's interest in music from the past as a natural process, and stresses that the formal and technical relationships are typically Russian, tracing the origins of this formalism to *The Rite of Spring* and other early works. However, he fails to show how these elements are manifest in Stravinsky's neoclassical style.

The literature shows that Stravinsky's switch to neoclassicism baffled a number of critics. Both Asaf'yev (ibid) and Druskin (1983) considered this change to have been linked with other cultural movements, both literary and musical, during that epoch. This

change has also been linked to paradigm shifts in art such as the advent of cubism and other *avant-garde* movements.

Van den Toorn's (1983) explanation of Stravinsky's neoclassism includes a more precise definition compared to those of other scholars as a consequence of his technical analysis. It is argued that Stravinsky lost interest in tetrachordial pieces originating from octatonic scale, and the author offers more precise detail regarding Stravinsky's use of the octatonic. The latter was typical of his 'Russian' compositions. This shift in interest saw a greater focus on 'triatonic', 'tetrachordial' and major-minor partitionings as well as more marked interaction between octatonic and diatonic C-scale material.

According to Van den Toorn (1983), it is important to understand Stravinsky's creative use of rhythm by focusing on the interplay between metre and rhythm. Both Druskin and Van den Toorn attempt to account for the formal structure of Stravinsky's music by referring to his utilisation of four main elements: 1. *Repetition* (frequent use of repeated elements); 2. *Juxtaposition* (an abrupt change or musical contrast; changes in musical procedure and sudden discontinuities); 3. *Superimpositions* the placing or layering of one musical feature over another so that both are still evident. These studies also underline the significance of *intervals* in regard to the composer's organisation of pitch. Druskin (1983) draws attention to Stravinsky's fascination with trying out different intervallic structures; however, he fails to show how it relates to his piano works.

In regard to juxtapositions, Druskin refers to different planes and volumes of sonority and the special character of the composer's work, and both authors stress the

significance of intervals in Stravinsky's pitch collections as seen in *The Rite of Spring*, and *Firebird*. Van den Toorn's central argument is that it is necessary to consider the re-occurring of octatonic patterns in his music in order to identify the structural unity of many of Stravinsky's works. A criticism of Van den Toorn's (*ibid*) work is that he tends to rely heavily on the Craft-Stravinsky dialogues which have since come under close critical scrutiny in regards to their accuracy (Walsh 2006).

#### 2.2.5 Stravinsky's piano works: Griffiths (2013) Joseph (1983)

The two seminal works: Griffiths (2013) *Stravinsky's Piano: Genesis of a Musical Language*, and Joseph (1983) *Stravinsky and the piano* have also been frequently cited in this literature review. They are two works which focus primarily on the composer's relationship with the piano and his compositional development. This section thus provides a brief critical evaluation of these sources beginning with the most recent. Griffiths' study fills a much needed gap in Stravinskyan studies in that it focuses on the pivotal role of the piano in his works, and in many ways complements the work of Joseph (1983).

In contrast to Joseph's work (1983), however, he reconsiders Stravinsky's piano output from various angles, especially in regard to theoretical aspects and the role of pedagogy. He has carefully studied Stravinsky's early teachers (Rimsky-Korsakov and Leokadiya Kashperova), whose influence on Stravinsky's compositions can be clearly identified. In addition, Griffiths has conducted a detailed analysis of the fingering process in Stravinsky's *Sonata* (1924), based on the composer's manuscript notes. Griffiths underscores, in particular, the role of the piano in creating his neoclassical and other later works. The author echoes Taruskin's (1993) and Joseph's view that the piano was

an intrinsic driver of the composer's creative process. He also alludes to Stravinsky's belief that the pianist's fingers can help stimulate cognitive processes and that their conscious movements can trigger creativity and new ideas. The description of the fingerings Stravinsky put into his sketch during the composition process provides new insights on how to play the piece more accurately, in accordance with the composer's instructions. Overall, the research identifies a clear direction in Stravinsky's compositional progress. It is important to point out the above sources, in keeping with their original goals and aims, do not engage in aspects of interpretation in performance. They keep strictly within their boundaries of investigation and do not include practical analysis which would be particularly useful for the pianist.

Griffiths also highlights the importance of the influence of the pedagogic approach and the exercises of Czerny and Isidor Phillip. It is argued that these technical exercises also became the inspiration for several of his compositions. For example, according to Joseph (2001), it is possible to identify Phillip's fingering patterns in Stravinsky's *Sonata* (1924). Griffiths (*ibid*: 5) draws attention to this synthesis of pedagogic exercises and contrapuntal compositional writing, commenting that:

It is intriguing to compare the anti-romantic flavour of Stravinsky's 'objective', often contrapuntal piano writing with the 'mechanistic' non-expressive elements of piano methodologies whose didactic focus...of studies, exercises and drills is generally considered to be a dry subject useful for only pedagogical purposes (p.5).

Through his detailed and meticulous analysis of the composer's manuscripts and scores, Griffiths underscores Stravinsky's lifelong interest in counterpoint and contrapuntal procedures, especially those of J.S. Bach. Griffiths' analyses identify consistent

patterns in Stravinsky's approach to composition regardless of stylistic features, idiom or specific genre. Accordingly, he supports Andriessen and Schönberger's argument that Stravinsky's underlying thinking and approach to composition did not change too dramatically throughout his career as a composer. One aspect Griffith's fails to address is whether his constant exercising actually improved Stravinsky's piano technique. Moreover, he does not question whether the Czerny and Phillip exercises were the most appropriate vehicles for enhancing his technique.

As noted above, a seminal study on Stravinsky's piano works is Joseph's *Stravinsky and the Piano* (1983). He may be considered the first researcher who systematically explored Stravinsky's association with the piano, and he investigates each piano work chronologically throughout the composer's life. It is a comprehensive and thoughtful work, and a useful and constructive reference for any pianist who aims to gain an overall view of his piano music. Nevertheless, there are a number of limitations to the study: it only gives general information on Stravinsky's piano works and there is often a lack of detailed, comprehensive discussion. When referring to *Tango*, for instance, there is only one page of text and the information is entirely related to the compositional environment, and the manuscripts. Therefore, it does not provide an in-depth analysis of the piece. For *Serenade in A*, the analysis is restricted to the pitch and structure; unfortunately, any study of the other musical elements such as phrase, articulation and character which could be more revealing, is absent.

A further problem with this research is that Joseph (1983) does not discuss Stravinsky's concept of performance to any extent, and therefore does not provide information on how to actually interpret Stravinsky's piano music. From the performer's perspective,

it would have been more helpful in regard to their interpretation if his analysis had included considerations of performance interpretations, rather than being simply based on the musical elements in the score.

The analysis, however, often returns to primary sources, such as: *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence* (Three volumes: 1982:1984:1985), and also to records of Craft's conversations with Stravinsky during the 1960s and 1970s. As detailed above, these and other uncritical accounts have been challenged by a number of researchers, in particular Walsh (2006). It would have been more valuable and useful to the aims of this study if the above researchers had generated more discussion about the *performance* of Stravinsky's piano works. There is also a lack of information on Stravinsky's own concepts germane to interpreting his works. The detailed analyses of archive material, manuscripts, music scores, sketchbooks, and Stravinsky's association with the piano as exemplified by Griffiths, White and Joseph (cited above), are admirable and fascinating exercises in musicological scholarship. However, it could be argued that pure analysis should not be an end in itself. The main thrust of this thesis is that the crucial stage involves how these detailed elements can be interpreted, carefully considered by performers, and used to create convincing performances of the composer's work. The following text will be focusing on sections of performance tradition, Stravinsky's musical concepts and early recordings.

### 2.3 Historically informed performance

Historically informed performance is generally regarded as essential in Western music. It is considered important to adhere to an authentic performance, reflecting the composer's era. In other words, performing musical works from earlier historical

times, such as the Renaissance or baroque periods, often involves using instruments similar those of the respective eras. Another consideration is to adhere as closely as possible to the style of the performances from a specific time period. This view often requires the use of original instruments in order to reproduce authentically accurate sounds (Levinson 1990). Accordingly, the performance should reflect a sound knowledge of the period in which the work was originally written. It has been argued that it is: ‘the highest praise one can bestow nowadays on a musical performance.’ (Kivy 1995:24). A performance of a musical work may therefore be assumed to be ‘authentic’ if it follows the aims, desires and instructions of the composer (Kivy, 1995).

There is much evidence to suggest that musical commentators in the past had very definite views on how music should be performed. Baroque and classical composers such as Quantz, C.P.E Bach and Mozart, wrote detailed accounts and instructions regarding how the music of that era should be performed. In many instances, composers stipulated in detail the correct and appropriate style in which their own music should be played. These descriptions are nowadays considered invaluable sources, which can enhance our understanding of performance and interpretation, as well as providing information about the different types of instruments available to composers and performers at that time.

Interestingly, this approach to interpretation has resulted in a renewed emphasis on ideas of flexibility, especially in regard to music notation. The notion of latitude of interpretation, and expression in performance can be traced over several historical periods. It appears to have been an ongoing topic of discussion which is directly relevant to how we can approach Stravinsky’s music.

Notions of latitude and flexibility in interpreting musical scores, as recorded in music literature, were examined by Hudson (1997), who revealed a number of salient approaches and attitudes. The main view appears to be that notation can only approximately suggest how an actual performance should be played.

Another interesting point to note, is that alterations were often made as a result of performance practice, but significantly, they often did not appear on the musical score. In other words, this approach to playing becomes a type of accepted practice. The process is described accordingly:

After a period of time, the practice is described by writers and eventually the concept receives a name. Sometimes later, composers actually indicate the device in score by the term *rubato* or other words. At times, composers attempt to write out the effect in notes, either with or without verbal instructions (Hudson 1997:2).

### 2.3.1 Tempo rubato

In regard to rubato, Hudson identifies two main types: ‘early’ and ‘late’. Both are featured in Stravinsky’s works. For example, the ‘early rubato’, typified by an accompaniment with a steady tempo and a melody with an expressive emphasis, can be found in Stravinsky’s *Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* for piano which is present in the interviewees’ performance (see Chapter 6). The ‘late rubato’ style is characterised by all the voices applying a flexible interpretation of tempo, which tends to exceed the marked *ritardando* and *accelerando* features in the score. This can be also seen clearly in *Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* in its late-romantic style, where interpretation often goes well beyond those marks notated in the score.

Composers and performers have expressed a variety of views in regard to tempo rubato and the differences between the two types. In 1777, for example, Mozart stated:

What...people cannot grasp is that in tempo rubato in an Adagio, the left hand should go on playing in strict time. With them the right hand always follows suit (Mozart, quoted in Hudson 1997:113).

Indeed, Mozart took pride in his ability to always keep strict time (*ibid*: 156). Similarly, referring to the classical and romantic periods and the two types of rubato, Brown (1999) draws attention to the comments of Herz, a pianist and contemporary of Schumann and Chopin; his description is worth quoting in full:

...A phrase of melody may require (sic) to be slower than the brilliant passage which follows it; sometimes even the double character of the accompaniment and the melody requires a different rhythmic effect from each hand. Thus while the right hand seems to lose itself in frivolous variations, the left, accenting the off beats in the bass, follows it in heavy steps and with syncopated notes. This case, like all those where the expression is complex, requires not only hands which are perfectly independent from one another, but also, if I may say so, a different soul in each of them (Herz, quoted in Brown 1999:413).

There are a number of fascinating accounts of Beethoven's playing in regard to latitude of interpretation. According to one of his students, Ries, Beethoven often played in an almost impulsive, whimsical way (Ries uses the term 'capricious'); but at the same time, this capriciousness was tempered by strict and accurate timing. Moreover, Beethoven, well known for his delicate nuances of tempo, very rarely accelerated the tempi. In his orchestral works, he made precise and effective use of tempo rubato, and expression,

which allowed for a considerable degree of latitude. One commentator, Seyfried remarked on Beethoven's relationship with the orchestra in the 1800s:

...he demanded great exactitude in the matter of expression, minute nuances, the balance between light and shade, as well as an effective tempo rubato (Seyfried 1832, quoted in Hudson 1997:158).

### 2.3.2 Criteria of 'good' performance

A constant theme in many musical historical writings and commentaries, concerns the notion and definition of a 'good' performance. C.P.E Bach (1753:1762), for instance, argued that it was important to identify the true content of a piece and the potential emotional '*Affekt*' (i.e. the passionate or emotional element) of a composition. At the same time, any passage could be fundamentally changed so that its performance could become almost unrecognisable. He stressed that a 'good' performance is not just about technical skill, but rather the fact that 'these details of beauty often depend on extraneous factors.

In 1752, Quantz wrote a detailed list of instructions on how to perform music at the highest technical and emotion level. He also included a list of elements which could result in 'poor execution'; in other words, what to avoid when performing a piece. This useful list includes the following instructions: do not slur all the notes; always observe the tempo; do not play all dynamics at the same level; do not play notes with imprecise and sluggish articulation. Another interesting observation was that performers, after careful scrutiny of the score, were expected to have an emotional response to the piece. Alternations between *piano* and *forte* were expected, in order to express feeling and

passion. It was considered that lack of dynamic variety would result in a low-quality performance, regardless of the technical skill exhibited by the performer.

Leopold Mozart (1756) also emphasises the need for careful study of the music and consideration of the specific tempi, character, and movements required for the piece. It was considered crucial to identify passages which would require a special style of expression and execution; even though, at first glance the passage might appear unimportant. Moreover, it was expected that considerable thought should be put into how to communicate the composer's intended emotional or passionate feelings. In the same vein as Quantz's comment above, Mozart says that the music should be played with an emotional intensity, so that the performer himself becomes moved by his own performance.

### 2.3.3 Summary

Considering the comments from the above musicians, it is evident that much thought went into analysing the important factors which could result in what was considered a 'good' performance at that time. It is noted that there were a number of interconnected factors which could achieve the goal of rendering a performance. This could be achieved by bringing out and emphasising the intrinsic character of a piece of music. It is also evident that tempo rubato, flexibility of interpretation, and hence, latitude of interpretation, were considered vital elements in piano performance. It could thus be argued that it is almost impossible to play music in strict rhythm without any nuances or variations in tempo. It is therefore essential to determine the most effective way to play and utilise tempo rubato, especially in classical and romantic music style.

The above comments also stress the importance of emotional expression in music. For many composers and musicians, the aim has been to create an emotional response from both the performer and the audience. Indeed, it was considered the performer's responsibility to carefully scrutinise the work, interpret the composer's intentions, and then produce the most emotionally 'effective' performance. It is argued that these considerations have a direct relevance in relation to the interpretation of Stravinsky's piano music and they address performance-related issues. These are examined in more detail below.

#### 2.4 Romanticism

The romantic style of performance interpretation developed significantly during the second half of the nineteenth-century. Cross (1998:12) points out that a subjective sense of latitude must always play a key and central role in romanticism. Accordingly, it was felt that the 'beauty' of music was largely created through performance. Indeed, Taruskin (1995:166) emphasises the point:

The romantic interpreter... was thought to interpose the striving for personal expression or theatrical effect between composer and listener. Secure within a living tradition of performance, interpreters scorned mere fidelity to the text and instead stressed an imagined communion with the composer, refusing to reduce the scope of creative intention to material issues of 'pure' sound.

A successful performance transmitted not only the notes, but what was 'between and behind' (*ibid*), in order to express a sense of vitality and conscious sensitivity towards the work. It was claimed that a vital component of performance vitality was tempo fluctuation. Moreover, it was argued that more informed and sensitive performers could

exploit both local and long-range tempo shifts to mimic changes in both dynamics and character. Stravinsky later referred to these fluctuations as ‘psychological time’ (Schonberg 1987; Costa 2012).

#### 2.4.1 Different perspectives on romanticism

Latitude of interpretation was undoubtedly common during the romantic period, and Chopin was, as both composer and pianist, famous for his subtle interpretative nuances. Berlioz describes his playing in 1833 accordingly:

...his interpretation is shot through with thousands of nuances of movement of which he alone holds the secret, and which are impossible to convey by instructions. (Berlioz, quoted in Hudson 1997:176)

When studying the piano music of Schumann, little is known of how much latitude of interpretation he expected from performers when playing his own compositions. However, one of Schumann’s favourite pianists Reinecke was still playing and recording up until the 1900, and his rather conservative style can offer clues as to how performers tended to express and interpret work played in Schumann’s time. It appears that there was an emphasis on a declamatory style with more latitude compared to what would be have been considered appropriate to twentieth-century performers. Indeed, modern audiences would perhaps have considered the style too bombastic and found the expression rather over-accentuated (Dubal 1989; Laor 2017).

As a highly influential composer and pianist, Liszt developed and further extended the concept of rubato and flexibility of notation. By all accounts (Schonberg 1987; Eigeldinger 1988; Todd 2013), it appears that he was influenced by Chopin, and his

approach to performance is similar to that of Chopin. They actually performed together in the 1830s. Berlioz witnessed their performances and was able to compare two concerts (in 1829, and again in 1837) in which Liszt played Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, Op. 27, No. 2. In 1829, according to Berlioz: 'he added trills and tremolo, [and] rushed and slowed the pace.' The 1837 performance, however, was a rather less declamatory version: 'the same work that he had previously disfigured so curiously, stood out in its sublime simplicity' (Berlioz, quoted in Hudson 1997:258).

In 1837, Liszt published a revealing statement admitting his somewhat extravagant and unrestrained interpretations of other composers' works, and even went as far as to totally repudiate such liberties:

I confess to my shame (that) in order to extract bravos from a public ever slow to perceive things of beauty, I had no scruples about changing the tempo and the composer's intentions. I even arrogantly went so far as to add a lot of brilliant passages and cadenzas... You will never know how much I deplore those concessions to bad taste... (Liszt, quoted in Hudson 1997:258)

The above comment could be interpreted as a warning to performers not to take matters of latitude to extremes, and to be wary of adding one's own unscripted passages and expressive devices. It appears, however, that Liszt was generally not interested in adhering strictly to music scores. According to Schoenberg (1967:160), for instance, Liszt's general approach to music often reflected the way in which he played his own piano works:

...Liszt brought to the podium many of the effects of his piano playing. He was far less interested in strict beat and literal

interpretation than in colour, flexibility, drama, effect”. Liszt himself stated that: “when playing music...let the emotions radiate and shine in their own character without presuming to display them as real or imaginary representations (cited in Friedheim, 2012:265).

In Stravinsky’s early piano compositions, it is possible to identify many features typical of the romantic and post-romantic periods. These piano compositions from his first period exhibit a strong tendency towards a more heightened sense of latitude.

## 2.5 Objectivity

Objectivity in performance emerged after the early 1920s. It is often seen as a reaction against romanticism (Dahlhaus 1987; Jarvis 1988; Bonds 2003). The principal feature of objectivity was that the music performance must adhere strictly to the original score, following the markings precisely. This new performance style had a relatively strong focus on simplicity, nature, and a temperate sense of proportion (Cross 1998; 2003). Many modern composers, therefore, required their work to be performed according to this objective approach. For instance, Messiaen’s comments on music performance, appear to confirm an affinity with the modernist, stating:

But once one performs them very exactly, one is then in no way prevented from making an “interpretation” which embraces freedom, love, passion, emotion and all such things. No one should be allowed to make music as if he were made of wood. One must reproduce the musical text exactly, but not play like a stone. (cited in Wright 2014:35)

### 2.5.1 Different perspectives on objectivity

Researchers, such as Wright (2014:46), highlight the fact that Stravinsky would have witnessed performers making radical alterations to what was written in the score. In fact, even re-writing the music was not uncommon: whether correcting perceived errors by composers or simply out of a desire to improve the music or the spectacle. In this context, Stravinsky thought that performers should not re-write or alter the music but rather, that they should take the score as the basis of the interpretation. Fortunately, Stravinsky's precise, 'geometric' performance practice is well documented both in print and in recordings (Taruskin, 1995). His early romantic-style music is now being performed with a certain degree of latitude, but for a large part of his music the geometric, more rigid, performance has become the norm. According to Taruskin (*ibid*: 45), the performer should make music: 'brisk, geometric, and faithful to the letter of the score: that is, do exactly what the composer explicitly demanded.'

In Hanslick's (1986:64) seminal work, *On the Musically Beautiful*, he conceived a philosophic and musical system. The first two Chapters attack the notion that the goal of music was to express or embody emotions. For Hanslick, the beautiful element in music was not a matter of emotion at all, but instead, a contemplative, rational faculty. He described the nature of musical beauty: 'The essence of music is sound and motion.' (Hanslick 1986:64), in which a completely realised musical idea '...is already self-subsistent beauty; it is an end in itself and is in no way primarily a medium or material for the representation of feelings or conceptions.'" (Hanslick 1986:28). It was argued that the expression or representation of distinct feelings could not be considered the content of music. A number of researchers have asserted that this type of interpretation

is related to an evaluation of music which consists of ‘tonally moving forms’ (Hanslick 1986; Katz & Dahlhaus 1990; Shockley 2009; Knyt 2010).

As a result, Stravinsky’s compositions underwent a considerable transformation and subsequently evolved into a neoclassical style. For many commentators, this change had a profound influence on his understanding of the nature of music, and his entire concept of musical philosophy (Vlad 1978; Walsh 1988; Druskin 1983).

### 2.5.2 Stravinsky’s concept of ‘pure music’

The idea of objective performance is closely related to Stravinsky’s neoclassical and serial music. As objectivity becomes more important, the expression of subjectivity and feelings is denied, (Lippman 1990; Adorno 2007; Taruskin (1995:129). Stravinsky propounded a philosophy of ‘pure music’, and was concerned with the ‘objective’ manner of performance required in order to realise this purity. Stravinsky (1939 1998:121), refers to this objective approach as ‘execution’. He distinguished two performance principles: ‘execution’ and ‘interpretation’.

The ‘executant’ follows the music score precisely, in strict accordance with the directions from the composer. The performance of ‘interpreters’, on the other hand, tends to be concerned with an inner expression that goes beyond the explicit markings on the score. Stravinsky comments further:

Conductors, singers, pianists, all virtuosos should know or recall that the first condition that must be fulfilled by anyone who aspires to the imposing title of interpreter, is that he be first of all a flawless executant (Stravinsky 1939; 1998:127).

According to Wilkinson (1984), this change in emphasis aimed to avoid unnecessary interpretive gestures. Performers were expected to keep to the notated score and thus avoid the usual period performance practices. In brief, the difference is between the performer as an ‘interpreter’ and the performer as a ‘transmitter’ (Wilkinson 1984:14).

Music, of its essence, may be considered to be the expression of particular human emotions through performance. On this point, however, Stravinsky was largely in accord with Hanslick and the philosophers. In his autobiography, Stravinsky (1936:53) expressed his own oft-quoted theoretical position, which is worth quoting in full:

For I consider that music is, by its very nature, essentially powerless to express anything at all, whether feelings, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature...expression has never been an inherent property of music. That is by no means the purpose of its existence. If, as is nearly always the case, music appears to express something, this is only an illusion and not a reality.

Three years later, in *Poetics of Music* (1939), Stravinsky outlined his philosophy on musical composition, typology and performance. Here, his view does not seem to be as extreme as in the quotation above, and he states that he does not deny the role of inspiration in the process of musical creation. He concedes that music such as that of Wagner, which he strongly disliked, could be considered a good example of emotional performance. However, his basic position did not change: he did not think that music should be solely based on emotional expression.

In his piano compositions, Stravinsky claimed that when a composer creates music, the only relevant factor ‘is his apprehension of the contour of the form, for the form is

everything. He can say nothing whatever about meanings.’ (Stravinsky 1962:115). Accordingly, the music does not actually express anything, even emotion. For Stravinsky, it seems, music is not a subjective performance: it only exists objectively. In his pursuit of beautiful musical forms and his motivation to explore irregularity and unity in the form of compositional techniques, in many respects, Stravinsky was exerting a form of rational control by using the sound of his musical works as his main creative medium.

### 2.5.3 Chrononomy

The notion of ‘chrononomy’ (time philosophy), was originally derived from the French philosopher Bergson, and is often referred to as ‘ontological’ or ‘clock’ time (Taruskin 1995; Fink 1999; Cross 2003). Stravinsky’s philosopher friend Souvchinski seems to have exerted a profound influence on Stravinsky’s concept of music composition and structure, especially in regard to rhythm. Stravinsky (1939 1998:31) embraced Souvchinsky’s basic concept of time in music and explains:

Mr. Souvtchinsky presents us with two kinds of music: one which evolves parallel to the process of ontological time, embracing and penetrating it, inducing in the mind of the listener a feeling of euphoria and, so to speak, of ‘dynamic calm.’ The other kind runs a head of, or counter to, this process. It is not self-contained in each momentary tonal unit. It dislocates the centres of attraction and gravity and sets itself up in the unstable; and this fact makes it particularly adaptable to the translation of the composer’s emotive impulses. All music in which the will to expression is dominant belongs to the second type.

Stravinsky thus maintains that there are two types of time: ontological and psychological, which can result in two different types of music paradigm. In essence, music is given the form of sound and time through the activity of human creative consciousness. Stravinsky (1939; 1998:27), explains his theory accordingly:

For the phenomenon of music is nothing other than a phenomenon of speculation. There is nothing in this expression that should frighten you. It simply presupposes that the basis of musical creation is a preliminary feeling out, a will moving first in an abstract realm with the object of giving shape to something concrete. The elements at which this speculation necessarily aims are those of sound and time. Music is inconceivable apart from those two elements.

However, this raises a question concerning the way in which a composer can construct and combine forms in time and sound. Stravinsky uses two important concepts, which are ‘organisation’ and ‘order’. In other words, it is necessary to ‘organise’ time and sound in a specific way and incorporate them into a particular musical ‘order’ (Stravinsky 1939:1998; Taruskin 1995). Regarding this concept, Stockhausen (1989) argued that the inner essence or meaning of sound can become a conceivable rhythm by slowing it down. For Stravinsky, time is a unique element in music: its presence can play a key role in defining music, in that the existence of music itself is based on the premise of time organisation. Accordingly, his concept of music is inseparable from his philosophical understanding of time (Stravinsky 1939:1998; Taruskin 1995).

Further to the above, Taruskin makes this interesting point: Stravinsky maintains that geometric performing practice (i.e. that which is highly structured, unlike romanticism) should involve an awareness of ‘objective stylistic ideology’. According to Taruskin

(1995:116), this style of music tends to be based on metronomic, unyielding tempi and ‘a horror of expressive rubato’. Most importantly, in regard to structure, it is maintained that musicians should adhere strictly to the score. This is especially the case where tempo is precisely notated. It is claimed that this temporal rigidity can offer a more structured impression of a musical ideal. Stravinsky, clearly impressed by this approach, refers to this element as ‘ontological time’. Based on this model, it is assumed that musicians should apply a more scientific, impersonal, and objective performance technique to modern music (Stravinsky 1939:1998; Taruskin, 1995).

Stravinsky’s piano compositions from his ‘Russian’ period were influenced by romanticism and appear closer to ‘psychological’ rather than ‘clock’ time, (Cross 1998; Taruskin 2000). However, when his compositions developed into the neoclassical style, they appear to be more a product of reason, intellect, and speculation (Walsh 2008). These works clearly show the influence of ‘ontological’ time or ‘clock’ time. In addition, according to *Poetics of Music* (1939:1998), Stravinsky leans towards objective ‘ontological’ time from his neoclassical period onwards, and appears to exhibit a negative attitude towards the more subjective ‘psychological’ time.

## 2.6 Early recordings

In the past, before recording music was possible, performances were single, time-bound, events that could not be repeated. As a result, performance details tended only to exist in the mind of the audience. The development of recording technology had a considerable impact on music performance, in that it saw considerable change in performance style, especially over the past century. This could well be due to the opportunity to analyse music through repeated listening of recordings. Bowen (1999),

for instance, draws attention to the development of more objective styles of interpretation in recent years. He claims that there has been a general avoidance of excessive flexibility in interpretation, with a tendency towards stricter adherence to the score.

The analyses of twentieth-century recordings conducted by Philip (1992:2004) and Day (2000), support Bowen's argument. Moreover, it has been claimed that the plethora of available recordings has resulted in a relative lack of spontaneity on the part of performers: in other words, there seem to be a greater degree of uniformity and standardisation regarding performer interpretation. Whether this is a conscious or unconscious process, is a moot point (*cf.* Bowen 1999; Philip 1992:2004; Day 2000).

It is possible to analyse recordings in different ways. Philip (1992:2004), conducted research into selected works, both for solo instruments, and for orchestra, and found a wide range of interpretation. Overall, it has become apparent that there are marked performance differences in recordings made in the past, when compared with contemporary examples. Stravinsky recorded his own music, as did as other composers, such as Rachmaninov, Debussy, and Grieg. It can therefore be assumed that these recordings are accurate representations of these composers' intentions at that time, and therefore offer valuable insights into their thinking. At the same time, however, they also highlight the limitations of written sources, in that these performances often reveal details which do not feature in the written score. This point is emphasised by Philip:

But the importance of early-twentieth-century recordings extends far beyond composers' own performances. The recordings have preserved the general performance practice of the period in great detail, and the detail include habits which are scarcely mentioned, if

at all in written documents. The recordings therefore shed light on the limitations of documentary evidence in any period, not just in the twentieth-century (Philip 1992:1-2).

### 2.6.1 Style changes in recordings

It is interesting to see how style and thoughts about performance gradually changed during Stravinsky's compositional periods. With the introduction of recording, it has become possible to analyse how musicians actually performed from the 1900s onwards, and it also allows us to witness how modern playing has developed, (Taruskin 1995; Rowland 1998). According to Rowland's analysis (*ibid*), performers in the early years of the century tended to play with a lightness of rhythm. They often played notes quicker, such as semiquavers in a fast movement; the tendency was to play faster and with a lighter touch than later pianists. Indeed, this general approach to rhythm is also evident in piano recordings of performers such as: Rachmaninov, Bartok, Schnabel, and Cortot (Rowland 1998).

Following the 1920s, it has been possible to identify a general shift away from this lightness of rhythm, as it was considered by many to be too casual or imprecise. Consequently, there was move towards clarity, and a more precise definition of detail. Other changes of emphasis involved the setting and controlling of the tempo which allowed the latter to be effectively achieved. Many of these early recordings emphasise the fact that the styles of rubato varied considerably between early-twentieth-century pianists. Another tendency, noted by Rowland (1998), was to rhythmically separate the bass and treble parts; this was usually achieved, either by playing notes late in the melody, or by spreading the chords. Interestingly, this rhythmic technique appears to have fallen out of favour during the 1930s and 1940s. As a result, from the 1950s

onwards, very few professional pianists used this device it and it now only appears as a rare and very subtle effect (Rowland 1998:94).

### 2.6.2 Recordings and the original score

The notion that all details and instructions are to be found in the score has to be challenged, despite Stravinsky's comments regarding strict adherence to his music scores. Admittedly, some performers and 'literal' conductors do stress the fact that the score has to be precisely followed with no additional or omitted elements. Nevertheless, it has been argued that even the most literal practitioners are influenced by their preferences, musical backgrounds, and tastes; and as a result, they often make alterations not cited in the score. The score therefore may not be considered a complete representation of the music.

When composers such as Stravinsky interpret their own works, certain discrepancies can be found between the performance and the score. A case in point would be a comparison of various *Firebird* recordings (1928:1947:1959) conducted by Stravinsky. There are considerable differences between the music score and the actual recordings which will be discussed in the Results and Discussion Chapters. The important point to consider here, therefore, is how pianists can execute a convincing and impressive performance.

In my view, there are five, closely related main issues to be considered in reference to works by Stravinsky:

1. To what extent should the performer adhere strictly to the original score?
2. Which elements in the music are more significant or important than others?

3. How much latitude should be exercised when playing the music?
4. To what extent can the performer ignore or modify details in order to convey the composer's original intention?
5. To what extent does the different period or style of music influence the performer's interpretation? (Schuller 1977; Cook 1995; Taruskin 1995).

For many composers, the process of writing music might evolve through a number of stages, which may require various considerations of interpretation by the performer, such as suggesting revisions to the score after it has been performed or adjustments made in collaboration with a performer before the piece has been finished. The accuracy of the notation can vary considerably; for example, the composer may expect performers to play improvisations and embellishments. On the other hand, there may be very detailed notation, with complex indications of dynamics, articulation, phrasing, and so forth. Nevertheless, in many cases even the most detailed scores provide approximate instruction without absolute indications of nuance, subtlety, or intensity. Consequently, the performer can be free to interpret the music in various ways.

It has also been pointed out that composers tend to be more liberal and less pedantic than many musicologists, critics, and scholars: the latter often expressing rather dogmatic attitudes towards performance issues. Supporting evidence can be found in Day's (2000) account of various comments by several famous composers. For example, the response of Brahms to a performer who enquired about a particular interpretation was: 'Do it as you like, but make it beautiful.' Grieg said of a Grainger performance: 'You don't play the folksongs according to my intentions! But don't alter a thing. I love individuality.' Bartok stressed the point that the composer should never perform the

same piece in the same way: ‘...because he lives...because variability is a trait of a living creature’s character.’ Vaughan Williams revealed to the conductor Adrian Boult, two essential elements for outstanding conducting: ‘faithfulness to the composer [and] the power of the conductor to express himself to the full at the moment’ (Day 2000:187-189).

As the above comments suggest, many interpretive details can become the responsibility of the performer. Ideally, there should be a balance between creating the music as notated in the score, and how the performer can reproduce the score. It is important for performers to serve as a form of mediator between the composer’s intentions and their own expressive interpretation in performance. It is thus crucial to identify the various variables and details involved in this process.

We have observed that there is a strong element of tradition, performance, and interpretation in Western music. Although many composers have stipulated how their music should be performed, it is clear that there are often subtle variations and differences in the way the music has actually been played, as revealed in many recordings.

## 2.7 Summary of Chapter 2

This chapter has focused on a range of elements regarding Stravinsky’s musical career and approach to composition and performance. In order to address the research questions noted in the Introduction, it was considered important to identify the various developments and shifts in style and approaches concerning Stravinsky’s creativity as a composer. A number of pianistic elements and compositional techniques were also

identified. It was seen that the piano played a crucial role in Stravinsky's compositional process and that it underpinned his neoclassical achievement.

Another important consideration concerned Stravinsky's notion of latitude in interpreting his works, and his attitude to performers and approaches to performing. There was also a focus on the way Stravinsky approached composition and in particular the way he was fascinated by solving problems through careful and detailed analysis. What emerges from this literature review is that Stravinsky was not a musicologist, a philosopher of music, or an academic. Rather, he considered himself as a skilled craftsman. It was noted that there appear to be considerable differences in his compositional style and music during his life time. Many commentators, as cited above, consider these shifts on a superficial level. They now tend to emphasise his consistent approach to music and creativity: in short, it remained essentially the same. As a number of sources have confirmed, it seems that Stravinsky needed order, restraints and rules, within which he could discover new aspects and patterns of music. Moreover, it is this sense of serendipity and curiosity which lends a childlike quality to his approach to music, which has also been noted in the literature. It is argued here that by using this framework, in relation to his personality, mentality, and the development of his music language, it is possible to offer performers an informed assessment of his piano works and the underlying concepts which inspired them.

Finally, to conclude this literature review summary, it is worth noting the factual data presented in Heintze's (2001) *Igor Stravinsky: An International Bibliography of Thesis and Dissertations*. It describes and catalogues six hundred academic works concerning Stravinsky's life and music sourced from eighteen countries, with the majority from the

United States and Europe. It offers an insight into the changing trends of Stravinsky-related scholarship from 1925 to 2001. For example, it records that out of the six hundred theses and dissertations, only sixty (10%) focus on Stravinsky late works, with less than twenty studies focusing on serialist-style analysis. Significantly, there are no identifiable works devoted to aspects of in-depth interpretation or performance relating to issues regarding his piano works.

### 2.7.1 Identifying gaps in the literature

Despite the often extremely detailed and meticulous analyses of Stravinsky's works, the fact remains that very few researchers have satisfactorily addressed in any detail issues of interpretation and performance of Stravinsky's piano works. These largely descriptive and high quality analyses tend to focus on emphasising the way Stravinsky composed his piano works. A point worth stressing is that the majority of musicologists who are first-rate experts on Stravinsky are not professionally engaged performers of his piano works. There is, therefore, a lack of research on how to effectively and convincingly perform Stravinsky's piano music and address the often complex musical language.

Moreover, there is also a lack of informed analyses relating to interpreting and understanding his musical scores. For this researcher, there are a number of important considerations; for example, what kind of decisions should performers consider when approaching Stravinsky's works? In what way can the logic and structure of his musical ideas inform the performer? And, how can performers most accurately reflect the composer's initial intentions? Related to these factors is the equally crucial issue of how performers may interpret notions of freedom or areas of latitude in regard to his

piano works. To my mind, this is an important consideration given that Stravinsky was notorious for being very strict in not allowing any deviation from his piano scores, as noted above. Yet, in a number of his scores the markings are relatively sparse compared with other composers; therefore, it is important to evaluate his piano works and identify the various detailed musical elements which can breathe new life into these often beautiful and exciting piano works. These issues are addressed in the following Chapters of this study.

## **Chapter 3 Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In essence, research methodology attempts to account for processes in which the research design, the selection of specific methods and their relationship to the research questions, are clarified and defined (King and Horrocks 2010:6). The research methods employed in this study are addressed in this Chapter which outlines the overall adopted approach, the data-collection methods, data analysis and research ethics.

This researcher would justify the descriptions of the research methods for two reasons: first, it demonstrates an understanding of the background and rationale of the different approaches; second, it is considered important to evaluate the possible strengths and weakness of the various approaches, namely, the use of case study, documentary analysis and the interview data. It is proposed that these methods can create an effective and analytical framework.

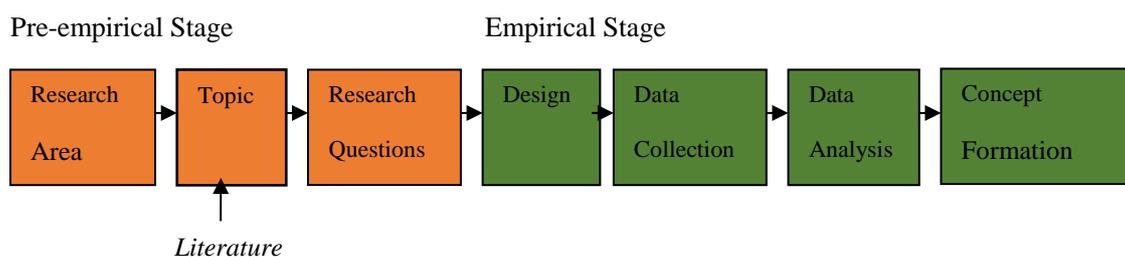
A survey of previous methodological approaches of ten performance thesis from two UK university departments, reveals that the most frequently used methods are: musical analysis, recording analysis and interview. However, they are rarely all combined. The evidence shows they have employed either music and recording analysis, or music and interview analysis. The use of method in this research differs from these works, as it is argued that in order to adequately address the research questions, a synthesis of approaches is required which involves musical analysis, recording analysis and interview analysis. The justification for the use these methods is that, by combining these analyses, more meaningful and convincing insights can be achieved; in particular, a more detailed appreciation of the complexities, multilayered nature, and structure of the three piano works can be reached.

Another aim of the research is to explore the idea of latitude of interpretation in performing Stravinsky’s piano works, based on the study of various traditions of performance interpretation, and Stravinsky’s own concept of performance (Section 2.3-2.5). The hypothesis is, that by understanding performance interpretation of Stravinsky’s music in greater depth, and understanding the rationale behind the piano score, pianists can produce enhanced performances of his works. The choice of methods is thus driven by the need to answer the research questions posed by this study (see Section 1.3).

### 3.2 Research approach

#### 3.2.1 Inductive reasoning

Inductive reasoning was considered the most appropriate methodological model for this type of study as it offers a valid approach. For example, Neuman (2000:49) outlines the necessary process, noting that in essence, it is: ‘an inductive approach...begins with detailed observations of the world and moves toward more abstract generalisations and ideas.’ This research design serves to address its two main research questions. It then focuses on the factual data generated by the interviewees and the analysis of musical scores and recordings. In this way, a number of generalisations can be formulated through observations and analyses. A simplified inductive model may be represented as follows:



Source: adapted from Punch (2005:40)

### 3.2.2 Qualitative research

As a methodological approach, the concept has the ability to carefully focus on questions relating to interpretation of social phenomena, interpretation of meaning and alternative realities (Maxwell 1996; Miles and Huberman 1994). It is, in essence, a theory-driven model well suited to inductive research. Researchers have identified a cluster of approaches which include aspects of interpretivism, analysis of social interaction, and other inter-disciplinary social research. The interpretive approach, which often focuses on the experiences of individuals, aims to understand the detail and character of participant's behaviours, thoughts and actions (Cohen et al., 2007).

This research involved conducting an in-depth investigation of relevant literature, as well as communicating with advanced and professional pianists as research participants. As data on understanding tends to be more subjective in nature, the qualitative approach is considered more appropriate than the quantitative for this research.

### 3.2.3 Case studies

As noted in the literature review, there is a lack of research regarding the performance tradition, and interpretation of, Stravinsky's piano works. The musical analyses of the piano compositions in this research are based on musical elements such as, structure, pattern and texture. This approach can facilitate the identification of compositional styles relating to the three periods of Stravinsky's piano works. It is also possible to compare the similarities and differences with the piano music of other composers. This approach combines various performance traditions in order to determine how pianists should treat the strict and detailed notation in Stravinsky's music scores. The primary sources will be the piano scores as detailed below.

The case studies mainly focus on three of Stravinsky's piano works using the following editions: *Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*; Faber (1996), and *The Stravinsky Piano Collection*; Boosey and Hawkes (2017). The researcher decided to selected these editions as they are most commonly used in the literature and they are also the most easily available and accessible editions. Boosey and Hawkes are considered a reliable source, having signed Stravinsky and controlled the copyright of his manuscripts since the 1920s. Furthermore, these editions are recommended by a number of music institutions as well as the professional pianist featured in the interview. Also used in this study is the edition of Faber. Griffiths (2016), for instance, in his analyses uses the same editions as in this study.

These three works span the three distinct periods of Stravinsky's compositional style, and they have been studied in order to identify their underlying differences in relation to previous compositions. They are: *Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*, *Serenade in A* and *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*. They are considered the most interesting and insightful works which are also representative of the different periods of his compositions.

Analysis of these three piano works was carried out by six interviewees. They were asked to examine the approaches involved in interpreting Stravinsky's piano music in regard to: tempo, dynamics, articulation, character, phrasing, and pedalling. These comparative analyses will serve to identify a number of both subtle, and marked, differences in the way the performers approach the works.

To address the research questions, interview analyses can be used to ascertain how pianists have approached the pieces. It is assumed that when pianists interpret works differently, it is because they have varying perspectives and perceptions regarding the score. It was therefore predicted that the interviewees would interpret the notation in the music scores differently, according to the three periods of Stravinsky's compositional style, especially in their approach to rubato.

For the second research question, another method was used. This involved an analysis of recordings of Stravinsky conducting *The Firebird* from three different time periods: the 1920s, 1940s and 1960s. It was assumed that these performances reflected the development of Stravinsky's thinking during these decades. Thus, by studying Stravinsky's own performances, it should be possible to help pianists understand how latitude of interpretation in his music can be considered in a more informed way. The analysis mainly focuses on the interpretation of tempo, dynamics, phrasing, character, and articulation. A digitally enhanced version of *The Firebird* conducted by Stravinsky with the Walther Straram Concerts Orchestra (1928), along with the New York Philharmonic (1947) and the New Philharmonic Orchestra (1959), were used for the analysis.

### 3.3 Data-collection methods

The fundamental aim of data gathering is to systematically address the research data and analyse the evidence. It is important to obtain a sufficient body of evidence in order to confirm or reject hypotheses, to fully answer the research questions, or refine any possible anomalies existing in the data (Harley 2004). By utilising various sources of research data it is possible to emphasise each model of data-collection tool. Moreover,

it is possible to enhance the limitations of any single approach (Patton 2002:307). It is therefore argued that by utilising a grounded qualitative approach, the researcher can gain a much more detailed and comprehensive evaluation of the evidence generated for the research study.

### 3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

The aim is that the semi-structured interview will be the prime source of data collection. The reasoning behind this decision is that this type of interview will result in carrying out the most comprehensive investigation into the varying approaches of pianists in interpreting Stravinsky's piano works. The semi-structured interview provides richer data; it is possible to achieve greater insights into more abstract phenomena such as social beliefs, attitudes, behavioural tendencies and aspects of causality or correlations manifest in a given topic (Robson 1993; Smith 1995).

It was decided to conduct interviews with pianists in order to determine approaches to performance of Stravinsky's music in addition to analysing recordings by other performers. I would justify this choice for two main reasons. First, if the analysis focused only on CDs, we would be unable to determine the rationale behind the performers interpretations of the music. Second, in contrast, by directly engaging the pianist directly it is possible to find out the rationale behind the interpretation and performance. The strengths of this approach is that it is possible to access performance relating data which we cannot acquire through CD recording analysis alone. It is therefore argued that the two approaches are complimentary; but interviews can generate a greater amount of in-depth insights.

### 3.3.2 Sampling of participants

The participants in this study were chosen using purposive sampling (Patton 2002; Silverman 2005; Creswell 2007). An advanced level of musical understanding and knowledge was required, as the interviewees would be expected to engage with performance practice issues. The participants were eventually selected as follows:

- Group 1: Two advanced pianists who are currently undertaking, or have completed PhDs in performance practice, and have also previously studied piano performance as a major at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.
- Group 2: Four professional pianists who have previously released commercial recordings of Stravinsky's piano music.

The participants were aged between twenty-seven and seventy-seven, and had diverse performing backgrounds – some have had both ensemble and solo careers, while others are purely involved in researching their own performance projects. The rationale for selection focused on the level of expertise of the pianists, as it was deemed important that they should have a solid foundation in piano playing and musical training. Such participants are more likely to exhibit varied and informed approaches to Stravinsky's piano works. Further details are provided in Chapters 5 and 7.

The participants were given selected excerpts from *Sonata F-Sharp Minor*, *Serenade in A*, and *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*. The interviews were conducted over a number of weeks after the pianists had received their scores, with the scheduling of meetings dependent on their rate of progress in learning the pieces. The aim was to analyse their different approaches. The intention was to study their interpretations of the three pieces, as well as their ideas in regard to performance. The focus was on the

learning process; their understanding of latitude of interpretation; as well as their opinions and thoughts about the Stravinsky recordings.

### 3.3.3 Interview procedure

The semi-structured interview process consisted of two main parts in order to gain participants' general understanding of performing Stravinsky's piano works, and their interpretation of selected excerpts. The role of performance was an important element, in order to enable a comparison of each participant's approach in interpreting Stravinsky's piano works from the three periods. The aim was to document their responses and attitudes to the music score and how these influenced their performance. Three recordings were selected from each of the six interviewees in order to analyse the different ways of interpreting Stravinsky's piano music. The interviews were approximately two to four hours in duration.

Pilot studies were conducted on 12 April 2017 with two advanced pianists, in order to refine procedures for the formal interviews. The two pilot studies went smoothly but took longer than planned. It was clear that more time was required for the interviews in order to collect the most comprehensive data. The interviewees were therefore informed in advance about the interview duration.

Two pilot studies and six semi-structured interviews were carried out in April 2017 and April 2018. It was ascertained from these studies, that some answers from two of the pilot studies were not satisfactory as they contained factual errors and/or revealed a lack of knowledge about the topic area. The participants should ideally be expert musicians who are experienced enough to have their own rationale for interpreting features of

modern piano works. Therefore, the criteria for selecting the participants was enhanced from masters to doctorate level. Both the pilot studies and semi-structured interviews proved to be very useful experiences. They provided a learning experience about how to conduct face-to-face research, and there was a realisation that improvements were needed in developing interview skills. As a result, it became necessary to refine and modify the interview questions in order to elicit the appropriate data.

Following the use of revised interview questions, the semi-structured interviews flowed and progressed very well (Appendix I). The importance of coding and indexing the raw data and the need to construct a consistent thematic framework also became apparent, in order to enhance the quality of the data.

#### 3.3.4 Recital

At the end of this research, a recital was given by the researcher to demonstrate their own approach in interpreting Stravinsky's piano works from different periods. This live performance demonstrated the researcher's own ideas about latitude of interpretation. Specifically, the objective is to emphasise or bring out the subtle details of Stravinsky's piano music in order to enhance the overall performance. This requires a close analysis of possible areas of latitude in regard to interpretation, for example, in regard to such elements as tempo, dynamics, phrasing, pedalling and character. Accordingly, it may be possible to provide convincing and persuasive answers for the second research question. Examples of latitude of interpretation the music were identified, and the evidence generated was used to support the research conclusion in the thesis.

### 3.4 Data analysis

A thematic analysis of key documents (i.e. semi-structured interview transcripts) was carried out with a focus on the interviewees' understanding and interpretation of Stravinsky's piano music. Thematic analysis is an approach which focuses on identifying, close analysis, and recording of thematic patterns of information which may reside in the data. This approach is thus widely used in qualitative data analysis (Bryman 2012). This analysis aimed to generate a detailed, rich dataset by highlighting common elements, as well as differences, among the interviewees. It was expected that the methods would generate common themes which could then be categorised and used to interpret the data (Mason 2002). This research used the procedural guidelines of *template analysis* in order to create a discursive framework of analysis. This involves the formulation of highly relevant themes pertaining to the topic and how they can be organised and categorised in a meaningful way. Furthermore, the advantage of this approach is its inherent flexibility and how researchers can use it for their own analytical requirements (Cassell & Symon 2004).

### 3.5 Research ethics

Prior to the commencement of the semi-structured interview, an ethics application was approved by the University of Sheffield Music Department Ethics Committee. Prior to the study, the interviewees were clearly informed of the aims and objectives of the study, why they were being interviewed, and what would happen to their responses. The potential risks and procedures were outlined. Following this, the participants' written consent was obtained and recorded. The data collection of the research project took place in the participant's home, workplace, or the university, with the researcher.

### 3.6 Summary

The cited methods were considered the most appropriate approaches for this type of qualitative research. By adapting these approaches, case study, document analysis, triangulation and subtext, context and intertextuality, the researcher can effectively analyse the raw data and draw valid conclusions. As proven systems of analysis, it is thus possible to fulfil the aims of the research. This study employs several methods to explain phenomena and they may compensate for the weakness of one method against the strength of another. It has been maintained by many researchers that no single method can adequately fulfil the aims of any single research project. For this particular study, it is thus necessary to synthesise a cluster of methods in order to generate the answers and outcomes required by the research aims (Yin, 1994; Johnston and Reynolds, 2005; Van Evera, 1997, Patton 2002).

## Chapter 4 Overview of Stravinsky's Compositional Career

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides some insight into the cultural and musical environments which influenced the composer's creative development. It features the three periods of Stravinsky's piano compositions and relates them to other works; for example, *The Rite of Spring*, *Firebird*, *Petrushka*, *Ragtime*, *Dumbarton Oaks*, *Symphony of Psalms* and other key compositions. Many of these have been mentioned in the literature review as well as having been cited by interviewees. The aim is to position Stravinsky's work within a linear timeframe which indicates other creative influences.

### 4.2 Russian period

#### 4.2.1 Russian pedagogy

Stravinsky's status as a composer, conductor and pianist, cannot be reviewed in isolation. It is important to locate him within the Russian tradition and to look at his relationship with other major Russian pianists, who exercised varying degrees of influence on him at different times. This section reviews a number of influential figures such as famous teachers, composers and performers. The aim is to examine the link between different musical traditions and identify those which can serve as a bridge between European and Russian performance tradition. To achieve this, it is necessary to trace the background, teaching styles and the prominent elements of performance during the late-nineteenth-century.

According to Liszt, in his time everything new in music tended to come from Russia (cited in Siloti 1986: 367), especially in regard to innovative piano works. The Russian piano tradition had been carried on by Rubinstein's two major successors: Vasily Safonov and Pavel Pabst. Safonov, in turn, nurtured a number of seminal figures

including Alexander Scriabin and Nikolai Medtner. Pabst possessed an outstanding sense of virtuosity and lyrical pianism, and these features were continued by his remarkable protégés who included two major figures of the Soviet school of piano playing: Alexander Goldenweiser and Konstantin Igumnov (Barnes 2007). The former performed, composed, and taught a number of famous pianists over a period of sixty years.

As Goldenweiser was an important influence on Russian pianism, it is therefore worth examining his pedagogical principles. He often maintained that performers should never add anything unless they could improve on what was written: ‘The author actually wrote much more than that the performer realises...most playing is against composers’ wishes.’ However, he also argued that strict performance indicates a sense of laziness, and that playing with more latitude requires greater understanding of a work. Although he applied this principle to his own performance, he expected his students to follow composers’ instructions as precisely and carefully as possible (Barnes 2007:54).

In Goldenweiser’s opinion, complete latitude could be achieved only by playing from memory, but this approach had its critics. Feinburg, for instance, noted that students tended to play badly when they memorised scores ‘by heart’ and further commented: ‘The more thoroughly a pianist wants to familiarise himself with a work, the more intently he should study the printed text.’ (Barnes 2007:22). Indeed, many other Russian pianists agreed with this point; they believed that the performer should keep closely to the score. Goldenweiser stated:

We should treat the great composers with reverence, we should treasure every word that comes down to us from that distant age when their creative genius was alive, and we should closely examine the meaning of their personal instructions (cited in Barnes 2007: 23).

Nevertheless, many pianists still considered the score as only an approximately guide to performing, and played accordingly. Nazarova listed the main characteristics of Russian pianism, which were informed by the views: the aim of technique was to realise a deeper level of interpretation and that the most appropriate tone would be produced by a natural movement of the hands; an engagement with high-art repertoire was important; there should be a constant concentration on quality of tone; performers should also have a deep knowledge of music and its historical background. This tradition of piano playing and teaching has been preserved, and that legacy has been passed onto the next generation of Russian pianists.

#### 4.2.2 The Belyayev Circle

It is important to position Stravinsky in both historical and social contexts in order to identify the intellectual and musical motivations which formed his own personal development over different periods of time. In this section, a brief outline of the musical environment experienced by Stravinsky is described with a particular focus on the influence of Glazunov and the Belyayev Circle (1885-1908) on Stravinsky's earlier works. As a group of Russian musicians and composers at the turn of the twentieth-century, the Belyayev Circle, similar to The Five, was a nationalist and conservative circle. Its most notable members included Glazunov, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Stasov, Maliszewski, Lyadov, Ossovsky, Sokolov, and Winkler among others. It was founded by a rich philanthropist, Mitrofan Belyayev. It aimed to create a nationalist and realist style of classical music which was distinctly Russian in character and thus different from Western European classical music. The Belyayev Circle differed from The Five in that there was less emphasis on folkloric themes and motifs as well as a lack of tolerance. The Circle exerted a powerful influence on many musicians and

composers at that time. Its aim was to promote a national style of music based on notions of 'Russian-ness'. The style often featured exotic harmonies, rhythms and melodies (Taruskin 1996; Volkov 1995).

The negative aspect of the Circle was that it created considerable social pressure to conform to this national style. Indeed, there was considerable peer pressure placed on musicians to adhere to these norms, as exemplified by the works of Glazunov, Tchaikovsky, Lyadov and Rimsky-Korsakov. Failure to do so would result in a lack of patronage and limited career options for musicians. In brief, musicians had to follow the Circle's rules on what constituted acceptable music at that time. Moreover, there was a basic distrust of composers who did not conform to the Circle's norms. Given this environment, alternative styles and outside influences were considered with suspicion if they did not conform to the agreed Russian style. In brief, composers who failed to comply with the Circle's aesthetic and stylistic norms were rarely tolerated (Volkov, 1995).

It may be inferred that this prescriptive approach to musical style was frustrating for many younger Russian musicians and composers, Stravinsky included, and that they felt the prevailing attitude stifled originality, innovation and experimentation (Stravinsky, 1936). This romantic style was often considered old fashioned and insular in its approach to musical innovation. Indeed, it could be argued that the musical conservatism of the Belyayev Circle resulted in a radical break from its norms and thus created styles and ideas typical of modernism. Maes, (2002), for instance, argues that the Circle served as an important link between classical romanticism and modernism in that it stimulated the development of composers such as Prokofiev and Stravinsky.

However, it is stressed that the process should not be considered a slow and gradual development. Rather, Russian modernistic music can be seen as a much more radical break from the Circle. Nevertheless, changes in composition did occur: Maes (*ibid*), for instance, cites Rimsky-Korsakov's use of the octatonic scale and experimental harmonics as catalyst for further experimentation and development (Maes, 2002).

#### 4.2.3 Glazunov and Stravinsky

It has been noted by musicologists and critics that Stravinsky's earlier orchestral works often exhibit musical forms very similar to that of Glazunov (Taruskin, 1996; Maes, 2002). As a composer and conductor, Glazunov was a typical exponent of the Belyayev aesthetic during this Russian romantic period, but one difference was that he effectively fused both nationalism and internationalism in Russian music. In his works, he tended towards epic grandeur and was admired for his musical form, use of counterpoint and compositional expertise. These qualities were much admired by the young Stravinsky. In his later *Symphony in E-flat*, Op. 1, he used Glazunov's symphonies as a model and introduced other compositional practices found in Glazunov's work. For example, Stravinsky used the same key, E-flat, as in Glazunov's Eighth Symphony Op. 8 in his own Symphony Op. 1, and also used this piece as a structure on which he based his own version of the symphony. Nevertheless, Stravinsky gradually changed his view of Glazunov's approach to music and embraced a radical, more modernistic approach to music. He thus rejected many of the conservative features of orchestration and composition typical of Glazunov and the Belyayev Circle. Unsurprisingly, Glazunov, like Rimsky-Korsakov, showed little enthusiasm for Stravinsky's modern approach, as typified in his much quoted remark: '*Petrushka* is not music, but it is excellently and skillfully orchestrated' (cited in Walsh 1999).

When considering the influence of The Five, the Belyayev Circle and Glazunov on Russian music during this period, it is possible to trace a logical evolutionary process between the romantic and modern eras. Regarding this paradigm shift, Bartok (1976) emphasises the point saying:

At the beginning of the twentieth-century, there was a turning point in the history of modern music. The excesses of the romanticists began to be unbearable for many. There were composers who felt that ‘this road does not lead us anywhere’; there is no other solution but a complete break with the nineteenth-century.

#### 4.2.4 The piano as a percussion instrument

Leading on from the above, this section examines the literature concerning aspects of the work of Stravinsky and other modern composers which are directly linked to this break with the past. The focus turns to a number of related elements: the influence of, and renewed interest in, folk elements; the rhythms of peasant music and a fascination with mechanistic rhythms and ostinatos as reflected in many modern compositions. These elements are often manifest in Stravinsky’s orchestral and piano works. It is therefore necessary to examine the use of the piano as a percussion instrument in modern music. Justification for this section regarding the percussive qualities of the piano, lies in the fact that Stravinsky often considered the piano as fundamentally a percussion instrument, especially during the second half of his Russian compositional period, when he exploited this powerful attribute in his piano music.

Historically, the function of percussion instruments was to emphasise physical movement in dance and they were used in conjunction with hand clapping and foot

stamping. There was also an association with ritual and magic. In Stravinsky's so called 'primitive' works such as *Firebird*; for example, the piano is mainly employed to reinforce the percussion section in the orchestra. Since the beginning of the twentieth-century, there has been an expansion of the percussion sections in many orchestras. Composers appeared to have become more interested in the percussive qualities of different types of instruments and have incorporated them into their works (Bartok 1950; Blink 1991). A good example of this trend can be seen in Mahler's sixth and seventh symphonies of 1906, where a variety of instruments such as xylophone, triangle, tam-tam, bells and various drums, were utilised for effect (Brink 1990).

According to many commentators, Stravinsky was considered a past master at creating orchestral colour by emphasising the attributes of the percussion section (White 1966; Amsermet 1921; Taruskin 1996). In *Les Noces*, for instance, the piano is used as a tuned percussion instrument in a section which also includes cymbals, tambourine, triangle, guero, celeste, bass drum and five timpani. These instruments were used by twentieth-century composers to emphasise orchestral colour.

#### 4.2.5 Development of the piano

The development and improvements in piano design was another important factor. Stravinsky and other composers such as Bartok and Prokofiev often employed the contemporary hammer action with short accented percussive sounds. With the introduction of enhanced piano construction techniques and design, it was possible to achieve a more rapid note repetition. This development resulted in a reinforced relationship between the piano and the use of percussion which was exploited by many modern composers, especially in their virtuoso works (Gerig 1974). Composers could

also control the volume of sound by using a slow and fast key descent. Stravinsky, for example, considered this quality, as well as the use of register when writing for the piano. He also accented the upper register of orchestral colour by featuring passages for the piano in high register as seen in example 4.1:

Example 4.1: *Shrove-Tide Fair* from *Petrushka* (bb. 9–11 from section 15)

The image displays a page of a musical score for the piece 'Shrove-Tide Fair' from 'Petrushka'. The score is arranged in a system with ten staves. From top to bottom, the staves are labeled: Fl. Picc. I., Fl. I. II., Cl. I. II., Cl. III., Cl. basso, Trgl., Camp., Celesta à 4 mains, and Piano. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. The piano part is particularly prominent, featuring rapid, high-register passages that are marked with '8' and 'pizz.' (pizzicato). The other instruments provide a rhythmic and harmonic accompaniment, with some woodwinds playing sixteenth-note patterns.

It can be seen that the piano doubles the bells, flutes and oboes, and achieves a metallic, tinsel-like colour to the synthesis. Another quality is that when contrasted with the slower articulation of bass notes produced by the bass trombone, tuba, bassoons or lower strings, the piano is able to achieve a keen sharpness: it appears to create a sense of incisiveness. Stravinsky uses this in the flowing example:

Example 4.2: *Danse Russe* from *Petrushka* (bb. 1–7 from section 39)

The image shows a short excerpt of a musical score for the piano part of 'Danse Russe' from 'Petrushka'. The staff is labeled 'Piano.' and shows a sequence of chords and single notes. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. The piano part is characterized by a slow, deliberate articulation of bass notes, which contrasts with the sharper, more active upper register notes. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'ff' (fortissimo) and 'pizz.' (pizzicato).

It is generally accepted that the piano can give the illusion of imitating other instruments and that it possesses a unique, abstract quality. Nevertheless, it could be argued that its intrinsic mechanism remains percussive. As noted above, the improvements in piano design and the production of virtuoso works eventually led to a more percussive sound. Virtuoso works as exemplified by Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz* (1860) clearly influenced the works of Stravinsky, Prokofiev and Bartok (White 1966; Taruskin 1996; Blink 1991). The above work used mechanistic rhythms, percussive imitation and passages marked 'martellato', indicating an accented, detached touch. It features motor rhythm and appears to imitate percussive elements (see example 4.3):

Example 4.3: Liszt, *Mephisto Waltz* (bb. 9–24)



The piano thus evolved from an imitator of percussion instruments into a fully functioning component of the percussion section. In Stravinsky's *Les Noces* (1914), for example, the work is scored for four pianos, thirteen percussion instruments and voices, and thus emphasises his predominantly percussive style of composing.

#### 4.2.6 Influence of folk music

As noted in the above sections, Russian and other Eastern European schools of composition turned to folk dances, rhythms and melodies, in order to emphasise their nationalistic sentiments. Composers often exhibited a widespread interest in folk

melodies during the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries. Bartok and Stravinsky, for instance, were particularly interested in ostinato rhythms which formed the underlying basis of relatively simple folk tunes. Interestingly, Stravinsky did not include lengthy sections of folk music. Rather, he employed a technique which involved the use of fragments or small components of folk melodies. Bartok's research into Eastern European folk music resulted in the accessing of new melodic and rhythmic material. He showed that composers could use folk material in three ways: 1) by using a melody unchanged or only slightly varied; 2) by inventing their own imitations of folk melodies, and 3) by absorbing the overall atmosphere of folk music in their work.

In Stravinsky's case, he appears to use the second approach involving degrees of imitation. Bartok (cited in Suchoff 1976:20-22) offers an insightful comment regarding Stravinsky and his interpretation and use of folk elements. It is worth quoting at length:

The right type of peasant music is most varied and perfect in its forms. Its expressive power is amazing, and at the same time it is void of all sentimentality and superfluous ornaments. It is simple, sometimes primitive, but never silly. It is the ideal starting point for a musical renaissance, and a composer in search of new ways cannot be led by a better master...It may be that the Russian Stravinsky and the Spaniard, Falla, did not go on their journeys of collection, and mainly drew their material from the collections of others. But they too, I feel sure, must have studied not only books and museums but the living music of their countries. Bartok (1950) (cited in Suchoff 1976; Blink 1990:38).

The works of both composers, Bartok and Stravinsky, show a sense of the spirit of folk music. The folk elements often exhibit physical energy in dance and non-symmetrical

metres. Accordingly, the piano as a percussion instrument is able to play a significant and active role as it can reflect this sense of physical energy and the pulsing rhythms.

#### 4.2.7 The age of machines and technology

It has been noted that the social environment at the turn of the twentieth-century was not as bourgeois a setting as it had been for their predecessors. Revolutionary activity and technological development created a rapidly changing social and political environment. New technology transformed many aspects of life, resulting in a gradual shift from subjectivity to objectivity in many areas of the arts. This change can be seen in almost all sectors: painting, sculpture, literature and music. Coupled with folk elements, there was a fascination with the mechanistic, motor-like properties of sound which could be effectively used for effect in new music compositions. As the aesthetic of the mechanical appears to have been a decisive element in musical ideas during that period, composers wrote pieces mimicking the rhythmic movement of machines such as the watch, a well-oiled machine, a sewing machine or a tractor.

This use of mechanical motifs also resulted in a greater sense of de-automatisation as seen in Stravinsky's music for the ballet *Les Noces* (*Russian: Svadebka, the Weddings*). In this ritual-focused work, it is possible to perceive Stravinsky's thinking on the conceptual and structural concepts derived from folk wedding rituals. The score features frequent ostinato and polymorphic forms and textures. The ritual is treated in a mechanical way but it is not 'motoric. It is more like clockwork'. (Andriessen & Schönberger 1989:154) The conductor was led by the pianola which used Stravinsky's personally perforated roll. There were, however, problems in synchronising the

mechanical and non-mechanical musical sounds and Stravinsky did not complete the 1919 version (*ibid*: 154 footnote).

Significantly, due to this sense of mechanistically inspired objectivity, the role of the performer and his approach to interpretation was also being challenged, as Stravinsky (1936:75) explains:

Music should be transmitted and not interpreted, because interpretation reveals the personality of the interpreter, and who can guarantee that such an executant will reflect the author's visions without distortion...An executant's talent lies precisely in his faculty for seeing what is actually in the score, and certainly not in a determination to find there what he would like to find.

#### 4.2.8 Piano tone

As noted above, Stravinsky was interested in the use of unpitched percussion with less attention paid to the melodic content, and harmony. He thus sought to create a more objective and impersonal aesthetic. During this period, there was also a general re-evaluation of the role of piano tone. Bartok (1976:12), for example, underscores the point that the 'neutral' aspect of the piano had been largely accepted:

Its inherent nature becomes really expressive only by means of the present tendency to use the piano as a percussion instrument. Indeed, the piano always plays the part of the universal instrument. It has not lost its importance for concert performance.

Not all musicians agreed: in Kullak's (1972:3) work on the aesthetics of piano performance, he refers to the piano's 'inherent defect of its production by percussion'

and believed that the percussive quality of the piano should be avoided as a ‘deterrent’. It may be inferred that he was arguing that the use of the piano by both composers and performers as a percussion instrument should be discouraged.

In contrast, Bartok, like Stravinsky, argued that this intrinsic quality could be exploited to achieve a sonority by creating greater expressiveness. Stravinsky, for instance, developed a compositional style with a drier, crisper, non-legato sonority, arguing that since the piano uses hammers, there is no need change its basic nature. In order to achieve a crisper and more powerful effect, as stated in his *Poetics of Music*, (1945), Stravinsky opted to emphasise the natural decrescendo or the decay element (Stravinsky 1945). In his writings on Stravinsky’s piano compositions, Evenson (1982:118) makes the point that many romantic and impressionistic composers conceived their piano compositions in largely orchestral and vocal terms. The illusion could be achieved by skillful use of the damper pedal which could prolong the decay element. In regard to Stravinsky’s unique approach to timbre and sonority, he argues that this may have been due to the ‘strange pedagogical approach of his piano teacher who forbade him to use the damper pedal at all, requiring all legato playing to be done with the fingers exclusively’ (Evenson, 1982:118).

Unsurprisingly, Stravinsky often stressed the mechanical aspect of the piano in his writings, especially after incorporating many peasant or folk elements in his music as noted above. Interestingly, the younger Prokofiev’s compositions often avoided folk influence and focused more on the use of ostinatos, repetitive rhythms and percussion. For him, the motor element in his music was more important in order to create an effect. This toccata-like character using percussive or motor rhythms could be traced back to

Schumann's *Toccata* and were used in a number of Prokofiev's works such as *Etudes* Op. 2, *Toccata*, Op. 11 and *Scherzo* Op. 12 (Seroff 1968). In their writings, Stravinsky and Prokofiev, although friends, tended to praise and criticise each other's works throughout their careers. Their works from 1918 to 1932 have more similarities than differences in style. Both were influenced by music of the past and their music often reflected a sense of nostalgia; they composed innovative ballet music as well as the using dissonance in their compositions (Cazden 1954; Taruskin 1995; Nice 2003).

#### 4.2.9 Influence of jazz and ragtime

At the beginning of the twentieth-century through to the 1920s, there was a growing interest in, and a general trend towards, examining the mechanical aspect of sounds in music as well as mechanistic themes in art. Parallel with these trends, was a growing interest in the new forms of popular jazz and ragtime music. This section therefore focuses on how these new forms of musical expression influenced Stravinsky's ideas in composing his piano works.

A detailed and thorough analysis of the influences which may have affected Stravinsky's piano works is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, it is important to include this theme as it illustrates how Stravinsky absorbed, re-formed and used the themes and motifs of this style of music. The focus of this section is restricted to the new forms of popular music which emerged from America, in the 1910s and 1920s. Several short excerpts from Stravinsky's works have been selected: *Piano-Rag-Music* (1919): *Ragtime for 11 instruments*; and *Ragtime movement*, the dance movement from *L'Histoire du Soldat* (1918), in order to illustrate how Stravinsky used jazz and ragtime motifs in his works over these timeframes. The critical analyses, comments and

interpretations are drawn from a number of authoritative and pertinent sources: Andriessen & Schönberger 1989; Berlin 1980; Stravinsky and Craft 1959; Stravinsky 1962; White 1966; Gordon 2006; Rattman 2010.

Like many of his contemporaries, Stravinsky was fascinated by these new forms which eventually inspired some of his most virtuosic and serious works. Ragtime, by the 1920s, had evolved into the more improvisatory and ensemble-orientated jazz idiom and often drew upon European dance and march rhythms.

Stravinsky's early writing often shows the influence of jazz but he did not produce an authentic jazz style. Rather, he tended to create an impression or portrait of the genre, claiming (1959:123) that: 'Jazz patterns and especially jazz instrumental combinations did influence me forty years ago, but not the idea of jazz.'

Another point worth considering is that his exposure to the new forms of music could have been of a limited nature. Rattman (2010) makes the point that Stravinsky may not have actually heard much authentic ragtime or jazz music. Indeed, himself asserts in his *Dialogues* (Stravinsky and Craft 1982) that he first heard live jazz as late as 1919 which may account for his rather unusual interpretation of the style as manifest in *Ragtime* and the *Ragtime* movement of *L'Histoire du Soldat* (Rattman, 2010).

The initial attempt by Stravinsky to compose in a ragtime style was in 1918, in the ragtime section from the *Three Dances* movement of *L'Histoire du Soldat*. The basic features show similarities to ragtime style; for example, a number of individual phrases have a tonic-dominant structure, as seen in the violin melody. The rhythm of the

violinist's melody closely resembles ragtime style. The high frequency of notated dotted rhythms in this work are also typical features of ragtime (Berlin 1980). Another common feature concerns the prolonged displacement of accents, as seen in the way Stravinsky uses frequent metre changes.

It is evident that Stravinsky was attracted to certain distinctive features of jazz and ragtime as this quotation from the *Poetics of Music* shows:

On hearing jazz music [who] has not felt an amusing sensation approaching giddiness when a dancer or solo musician, trying persistently to stress irregular accents, cannot succeed in turning our ear away from the regular pulsation of the metre drummed out by the percussion (Stravinsky 1942:29).

It is particularly interesting to see how Stravinsky uses jazz and ragtime characteristics in his *Ragtime*. The work maintains 4/4 throughout but it is far from a typical ragtime style of composition. Again, it is possible to see how Stravinsky 'steals' certain ragtime traits and transforms them to an atypical form. Indeed, he explains that he aimed to create:

...a composite portrait of this new dance music, giving the creation the importance of a concert piece, as in the past, the composers of their periods had done for the minuet, the waltz, the mazurka, etc. (Stravinsky 1936:131).

In a revealing quotation from his *Dialogues* (Stravinsky and Craft, 1982:54), Stravinsky later conceded that the works *Ragtime* and *L'Histoire*, for instance, do not represent jazz or ragtime authentic styles; rather, they should be considered to be 'snapshots' or

'portraits' of the genre, which his American jazz contemporaries may have found strange or unusual (*ibid* 1982 p.10):

The snapshot has faded, I fear, and it must always have seemed to Americans like alien corn. If my subsequent essays in jazz portraiture were more successful, that is because they showed awareness of the idea of improvisation, for by 1919 I had heard live bands and discovered that jazz performance is more interesting than jazz composition. I am referring to my non-metrical pieces for piano solo and clarinet solo, which are not real improvisation, of course, but written-out portraits of improvisation (*ibid*: p10).

In Stravinsky's *Piano-Rag-Music*, it is possible to appreciate how the composer adopted a number of ragtime characteristics and styles and then recreated them into quite different and new forms. The music is consequently quite different in character from jazz or ragtime styles as noted above, it may be considered an improvised version of the genre. The piece is marked by virtuoso pianism and rhythmic energy. Arguably, the result could be considered a form of pure music which has moved away from its jazz and ragtime origins. Accordingly, it is possible to identify Stravinsky's working methods (Joseph 1983; Griffiths 2013).

#### 4.3 Neoclassical period

In Stravinsky's neoclassical period, he emphasised that he was looking back to Bach's time, referring to past models of composition. The first 'back to Bach' was the Octet for wind instruments written in 1923 (Cross 2003). Both the *Piano Sonata* and *Serenade in A* are also classical in their form, structure, and notation. Based on these models, he did indeed create a kind of musical innovation. This evolved into his own, unique musical language which differs markedly from many other earlier types of classical

music. However, it is possible to identify a number of salient characteristics in both genres. They can be seen in the structure and notational forms in his compositions.

According to Taruskin (1995), Stravinsky's preoccupation with past classical works was his response to the upheavals and chaos following the Great War and the Russian Revolution. It appears that he had a need to focus on the relatively secure and stable times of the past, which included a re-examination of musicians such as Bach and Beethoven. This retrospective and nostalgic tendency is also apparent in other composers and artists of that time. Taruskin (1995:166) comments that:

I would go so far as to suggest that all truly modern musical performance essentially treats the music performed as if it were composed – or at least performed – by Stravinsky... he presents us not with an irrevocable authenticity – destroying split between Past and Present, but with a contrast between two equally authentic performing traditions, the nineteenth-century vitalism and the modern geometric, each with its own distinct idea of how to manage musical time.

Taruskin makes a valid and consistent point underscored by other scholars: that Stravinsky could link music from both the past and the present and create new musical sounds through de-construction, analysis and synthesis. Taruskin also rightly emphasises the underlying 'Russian-ness' of Stravinsky's ideas.

He also states that the essence of historically informed performance defines itself as modern performance which is perceived as programmatically detached and objective. Historically informed performance is characterised by this approach as much as a modern geometrical performance style. A sense of emotional detachment is highly

desired by certain performers and may be easy to achieve. Nevertheless, it may be difficult to justify on historical grounds. For example, when an earlier piece is performed in a geometric way, it could be: ‘concomitantly devalued, de-canonised, and not quite taken seriously.’ (Taruskin 1995:191). It is removed from its traditional or usual context and played in an entirely different way. The real distinction is to be drawn between an objective performance, which is considered more ‘geometrical’, and a performance reflecting nineteenth-century romanticism, which Taruskin calls ‘vitalist’.

#### 4.3.1 Stravinsky’s approach to Bach

As result of this interest, it is possible to identify a number of characteristics attributable to Bach’s influence in Stravinsky’s works throughout his career as a composer. Indeed, he recalled in his autobiography his fascination with Bach’s works in his early student days at the Conservatoire in St. Petersburg. Just before his illness, in 1969, and his death in 1971, he was engaged in arranging four minor-key preludes and fugues from *Das wohltemperieriete Klavier*. At the age of almost eighty-seven, these would prove to be his final creative endeavours (Griffiths, 2013; Craft, 1994). These provisional arrangements for wind and string instruments, were according to Walsh (2006: 256) more ‘in the nature of occupational therapy than practical work’ and were not considered finished and performable works (Craft, *ibid*).

Stravinsky was clearly intrigued and even amused by the challenges of counterpoint, and in many ways he expressed his deep respect, curiosity and admiration for the concept of ‘pure’ counterpoint (Griffiths, 2013). Stravinsky had a lifelong interest in counterpoint and his seeming dependence on the technique, especially in his keyboard works, continued up to his serialist period. In his *Poetics of Music* (1942:76), he refers

to the ‘pure’ form of the fugue and states: ‘We find freedom in strict submission to the object...the music has no meaning outside of its own structure.’ The fugue is thus an insightful paradigm for Stravinsky: in its pure form the fugue implies the composer’s submission to the rules. The influence of Bach, therefore, has a far deeper resonance and longer time period than that of jazz and ragtime as described above. The aim of this section therefore is to identify selected examples of these aspects and account for the reasons why Stravinsky repeatedly referred to Bach’s works, and in particular his fascination with the character of fugues and the art of contrapuntal writing.

#### 4.3.2 Bach’s works in historical context

Before examining these themes, however, it is important to briefly consider the context and background to Bach’s works and their impact on numerous composers and performers over several hundred years. The Bach fugues were considered unfashionable and outdated after his death, especially by his sons, who successfully developed the fashionable *galant* style of music. Bach's style is often characterised by a use of counterpoint. For example, Bach did not invent the fugue as a contrapuntal compositional technique involving two or more voices; other composers such as Pachelbel (1653-1706), Buxtehude (1637–1707) and Frescobaldi (1583-1643) also developed their own works using this style. Bach’s initial biographer, Forkel (cited in Terry 1920:67) provides a succinct and definitive description. He compares ‘homophony’, that is, melodic lines with simple sequences of musical notes, with Bach’s musical technique:

It is a very different thing when two melodies are so interwoven that they converse together like two persons...In the first case, the accompaniment is subordinate, and serves merely to support the first or principle part. In the second case, the two parts are not similarly

related. New melodic combinations spring from their interweaving out of which new forms of musical expression emerge. If more parts are interwoven in the same free and independent manner, the apparatus of language is correspondingly enlarged, and becomes practically inexhaustible, if in addition, varieties of form and rhythm are introduced.

It can thus be seen that, within a fugal structure, it is possible to interweave endless creative permutations on a thematic motif. In this way counterpoint can offer a structured framework within which composers can create unique compositions. It is evident that Stravinsky retained a lifelong fascination with this structured paradigm.

It is worth noting that later composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, Shostakovich and Stravinsky continued to carefully study and analyse fugues. Furthermore, there have been a number of well-known Bach transcribers including Elgar, Respighi, Liszt, Tausig, Rummel and Busoni. Most of these focused on his organ and violin works, while others, such as Saint-Saëns, transcribed his vocal works. Composers and transcribers appear to have been attracted to the clarity and complex structure of Bach's fugues. Rummel's view on transcribing and performing Bach's work for piano may well have been similar to Stravinsky's approach, in that an in-depth analysis of any musical text is an essential step for the musician-interpreter, whose basic role is as an investigator of the rhythms, dynamics, structure and the interplay of musical sounds which are characteristic of Bach's works. His task is: 'to release the music from the prison of five lines and free the music.' (Rummel 1929:2). As a musical form, the fugue and its accompanying devices thus appeared to offer both climactic gesture and unity in musical compositions. For many, Stravinsky included, a detailed study of Bach's contrapuntal works was considered good compositional practice and they were seen as

representing an idealised standard (Griffiths 2013). Stravinsky was also attracted to the notion of musical laws and limitations through which a composer could engage in the creative process. Concerning this approach, Griffiths (2013:122) emphasises the point that:

Musical work cannot emerge from the rule book alone. For Stravinsky, the fugue also functions as the tap which regulates his creative flow. In addition, (and crucially) it is a pure form: i.e. by signifying ‘nothing outside itself’ the fugue is a symbol of emotional neutrality. It is precisely through his own invention-like pianism that Stravinsky reciprocated Bach’s didactic spirit.

It can be seen therefore that the aesthetic of the dominance of structure over content and the expressive neutrality of counterpoint appealed to Stravinsky’s sensitivities. Moreover, he was attracted to the didactic and pedagogical aspect of Bach’s piano works such as the *Well-Tempered Clavier* books. These were specifically written for Bach’s children, as teaching materials to enhance the learning and acquisition of skills needed for keyboard music.

It has also been suggested that Stravinsky considered himself as a latter-day Bach-like figure (Griffiths 2013). He was, like Bach, deeply religious; he considered himself to be a guardian and protector of the ‘principles of music’; he was a strong believer in the pedagogical role of music and of the composer; he was also an advocate of stressing the importance of the technically demanding aspects of counterpoint composition and structure. For Stravinsky, these elements often served as the yard stick of a composer’s excellence. In fact, he tended to judge other composers by their skills, or lack of them, in structuring contrapuntal compositions (Griffiths 2013:124-125). As ever, he had his

critics: Schoenberg even wrote a canon in which he ridiculed Stravinsky as ‘Herr Modernsky’ who should ‘wear a wig to look like Papa Bach’ (quoted in Andriessen & Schönberger 1989:98).

According to both the current literature and his own writings, Stravinsky also appeared to have carefully studied and analysed many works by Bach (Griffiths 2013, Craft, 1994, Joseph 1983). He also recognised the pedagogic value of Bach’s music and was interested in historically informed performance practices of his works (Griffiths 2013:119; Andriessen & Schönberger 1989:174).

#### 4.3.3 Beyond the contrapuntal tradition

Nevertheless, it is important to note that Stravinsky eventually broke with the contrapuntal tradition. For example, Rogers’ (1995: 476) analysis of Stravinsky’s *Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra* (1931) highlights the composer’s use of dissonance. This contrapuntal structure serves as: ‘an organisational device through which texture can be set within harmonically and distinctively independent musical layers.’ The analysis also points out that although dissonance may be considered a form of counterpoint, it can differ significantly from traditional and tonal counterpoint, further elaborating that: ‘...dissonance refers to the superimposition of distinctive harmonious independent layers of musical material with a layer consisting of one or more lines’ (Rogers *ibid*: 477). There is much evidence to show that Stravinsky used dissonance in his neoclassical works and the above analysis shows how this creative compositional technique was utilised in *Dumbarton Oaks* (as described below). Stravinsky appeared to follow a purposeful compositional procedure and employed structural devices of his own choosing which involved strong dissonance. It may be

inferred that he considered the latter as a creative alternative to traditional counterpoint which, in turn, influenced his later development and subsequent interest in serialism (Rogers 1995:507).

Two works in particular serve as informative neoclassical examples of how Stravinsky used Bach-inspired devices in regard to counterpoint and other motifs, namely: the second movement of the *Symphony of Psalms* (1930) and the *Dumbarton Oaks Concerto* (*Concerto in E-flat for Chamber Orchestra*). They offer insights into how Stravinsky was able to create modern pieces of music while also paying homage to the features exhibited in the music of the past.

#### 4.3.4 *Dumbarton Oaks*

Named after the estate of the patrons who commissioned the work, this composition was first performed in 1938. It is generally considered a neo-baroque work and was performed in Europe under the title of *Concerto in E-flat for sixteen instruments*. It should be noted that for his neoclassical works, Stravinsky began to indicate the key in his titles (e.g. *Symphony in C* (1938); *Concerto in D for String Orchestra*). This fifteen-minute work was described by the composer as ‘a little concerto in the style of the Brandenburg concertos’ (Stravinsky 1939:1998).

In a typical Stravinskian style of working, he appears to have absorbed and deconstructed certain elements of Bach’s score which interested him, and then re-created them in a different form. Admittedly, there may be a superficial resemblance to Bach’s work, but Stravinsky’s score is underpinned by a deeper artistic and more modern creative structure, informed by his own unique interpretation (Griffiths 2013; Rogers

1995; Andriessen & Schönberger 1989). Huscher (2010:2) makes the point that in *Dumbarton Oaks*: ‘It is Bach’s vocabulary interpreted by someone who spoke the modern language of *The Rite of Spring*.’ Stravinsky’s final offering is a de-constructed, inspired work which Bach and his contemporaries would have been hard pressed to recognise, as Huscher (*ibid*) comments: ‘Stravinsky reinvented the baroque concerto from the ground up.’

#### 4.3.5 The *Symphony of Psalms*

The *Symphony of Psalms* (1930) is a setting of verses from Psalms 39, 40 and 150. Stravinsky places the work in the context of his *Sonata for Piano* which served as a point of reference for the symphony. The concept and motivation behind the work are described thus:

As in the case of the Sonata, I wanted to create an organic whole without conforming to the various models adopted by custom...My idea was that my symphony should be a work of great contrapuntal development...I finally decided on a choral and instrumental ensemble in which the two elements should be on an equal footing.  
(Stravinsky 1936: pp161-2)

The work consists of three movements, each featuring contrapuntal writing. A particularly interesting section is the second movement which is highly contrapuntal and known as the ‘Double Fugue’. This movement has attracted the attention of a number of scholars and critics such as White (1966), Walsh (1993), Griffiths (2013) and Boucourechliev (1987). Walsh, for instance, draws attention to the similarities between the opening phrases of Stravinsky’s movement and the opening theme of J.S. Bach’s *Musical Offerings*. Stravinsky, however, fails to make any reference to the Bach

subject in his writings. In contrast, White (1966) argues that the opening subject is derived from Stravinsky's *Three Pieces for String Quartet* (1914). Boucourechliev (*ibid*: 187) considers how this movement differs from any conventional form, pointing out that the whole passage is constructed in a polyphonic form which does not belong to any existing category.

According to Stravinsky (1982:44) his 'Double Fugue' resembles an up-side-down pyramid in three layers. The first two of these levels are fugues with entries of the subjects in four voices. The third and final level acts as a synthesis of the two preceding fugues and is used to conclude the movement (Stravinsky *ibid*; Taylor 1995:17). In addition to the compositional and fugal aspects of the piece, Griffiths (2013) examines the role of the two pianos in its instrumentation and emphasises the pianistic attitude underlying the work. Stravinsky clearly composed at the piano and through his sketches, it is possible to appreciate the vertical construction of the work. Griffith's (2013) insightful analysis of the first movement identifies a set of interrelated elements from a pianistic perspective: rhetorical gesture and fingering, varied articulation, dynamics and textual character, and the use of pedalling.

Stravinsky approached contrapuntal work in a craftsman-like way, showing meticulous attention to structure and detail. In addition to representing the composer's devoutness, the *Symphony* also exhibits the progressive development towards Stravinsky's unique neoclassical style. The way in which he dealt with simultaneous contrapuntal elements and he forged them into a unified whole is especially revealing. According to Griffiths (*ibid*: 203), the work may be judged as the composer's 'finest work of musical craft in regard to compositional unity'.

To conclude this section, it has been emphasised that Stravinsky had a lifelong fascination with Bach's fugues as these two examples have illustrated, and it has been demonstrated that counterpoint could be used to construct a new musical language. These constructive processes can shed light on the way he approached composition in the neoclassical genre. It was evident that Stravinsky, like many other composers, looked to the past for his models, particularly in the 1920s. This tendency suggests a possible reaction against the volatile nature of modernism during this eventful decade.

#### 4.3.6 *Concerto for Two Pianos*

Stravinsky's *Concerto for Two Pianos* (1931/1935) is particularly noted for its contrapuntal writing in the fourth-movement fugue. In this work, Stravinsky sought to explore the capabilities of the piano as a solo instrument; in other words, with no orchestra. The piece explores devices in a completely individual way, and in many ways typified Stravinsky's neoclassical approach to composition. The stylistic features are largely subordinate to the main musical concept. There are elements of classicism but these are restricted to: 'general concepts of form, the rigorous treatment of thematic material, and an overall severity of manner.' (Walsh 2006:28). As the work is written for two pianos, the natural medium is essentially counterpoint which involves the close interweaving of themes without any romantic stylistic features. It is evident that counterpoint serves as: 'an integrative, rather than a confrontational procedure with fugue providing the ultimate expression of contrapuntal thinking which is rarely found in classical or romantic concertos.' (Walsh 2006:28).

There was a break in his composition of this work, which was written over four years, hence the two dates. The work offers a good example of Stravinsky's interpretation of contrapuntal principles in the fugue of the last movement. Analysis of this virtuoso piano music shows how Stravinsky balances the fugue or subject by using the two solo pianos. The fourth movement exhibits a four voice fugue. The four voices are accompanied by an additional voice and this repeats the notes in sextuplets. Contrapuntal organisation is also clearly seen in this *Preludio e Fuga*. Griffiths (2013:217) points out that:

The Fuga a 4 voci is based on tremolo which elevates the dynamics and owing to the elevated dynamics of this section, it significantly reinforces the twin effects of virtuosity and energy.

It is argued that Stravinsky aimed to present an act of homage to Bach's *The Art of Fugue* when composing this work (*cf.* Carr 2014; Griffiths 2013; Walsh 2006). In the *Concerto*, as noted above, Stravinsky developed his neoclassical interests by using a complex, interwoven synthesis of contrapuntal devices. Analysis of the above *SketchBook IX* suggests, however, that there are close comparisons between this fugue and the fourth movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 110 rather than a close interpretation of a Bach fugue (Carr 2014). According to Carr (*ibid*), the parallel with Beethoven can be seen in the way each framework of movements resembles the other (Carr 2014:1). Ockleford's (2005) analysis of fugues in Beethoven's late piano sonatas is relevant to Stravinsky's neoclassicism in regard to the relationship between fugue or counterpoint, and objectivity. Another intriguing aspect is the extent to which Beethoven was himself influenced by Bach's contrapuntal works, and how he assimilated these into his own fugue compositions.

#### 4.4 Serial period

Stravinsky's later works differ considerably from his Russian and neoclassical compositions. His sudden change and the adaptation of serialism has been much debated and criticised in the literature. It is often seen as an example of his inconsistency as a composer as it involves the rejection of the neoclassical approach, which features tonality as a key component of its musical language (Joseph, 1974, 1983, Craft, 1972, Taruskin, 1996). On the other hand, many of Stravinsky's later works based on aspects of serialism should be considered as some of his finest works (*cf.* Toorn 1983, Straus, 1999; Walsh 2006, Griffiths 2013; Concise Classical Music Guide, n.a. 2016).

Much has been written regarding the supposed rivalry between Stravinsky's Paris-centred neoclassical approach to composition and the Viennese School, as well as the key roles of Webern and Berg in spreading this break away from traditional tonality. The two opposing schools of Vienna and Paris, and their differences, are no longer considered as highly significant compared to the heated debates in the 1920s (Campbell 2003). Nevertheless, as noted above, Stravinsky's conversion to serialism in the mid-1950s generated much speculation and controversy (see Craft 1973; Griffiths 2013; Walsh 2006; White 1966).

Stravinsky's serial works are usually considered to be those written between 1954 and 1968, although it is possible to identify transitional phases in his later compositions. In many cases, he does not adhere strictly to a twelve-tone system. It has been pointed out by a number of scholars that Stravinsky's later sacred music exhibits a sense of austerity

which lacks emotional vibrancy (Griffiths 2013; Walsh 2006). Their comments, in my view, are in many ways justified as the music conveys a sense of starkness and a lack of emotional content. Indeed, it is informative to review the comments of music critics at that time; for example, Weismann (1959) argues that his later works tend to lack the vibrant, rhythmic energy of his earlier works. Similarly, Walsh (2001:553) refers to Stravinsky's 'self-defeating severity'. Music critic Eyer (1957:31) describes his serial works as having: 'prune-like aridity...with too much head, too little heart.'

This label of austerity may be symptomatic of Stravinsky's own attitude to sacred work which differed radically from the traditional music of both the Catholic and Russian Orthodox churches. The later sacred serial works thus reflect Stravinsky's growing interest in austere expression, and this style of music could well be considered devoid of humane passion or sentimental content. A consistent feature of Stravinsky's later sacred works was his tendency to fuse archaic features of musical style and with modern systems of composition. In this way, this could be considered Stravinsky's way of re-discovering the past in order to fuse the musical style with more modern techniques. These archaic features refer to early Renaissance choral music by composers such as Lasso (1532–1594) and Palestrina (1525–1594), as well as dance music of the period.

Of particular interest to this study is the way Stravinsky used the piano as an important component of the orchestra. As pointed out by Joseph (1983:231), it is a relatively unexplored area in many of Stravinsky's scores, and therefore should not be overlooked. Combined with other instruments, the piano can contribute to creating individual colours. These can effectively contribute to the composer's sensitive use of textual and timbre elements. In many of his new works at that time, the piano played a central role

in ensemble scoring, and the keyboard became an increasingly important in a number of orchestra works. This can be seen in *Agon* (1957), *Threni* (1958), *The Flood* (1962), *Variations* (1964), and even *Requiem Canticles* (1966). In these orchestral compositions, the piano is skillfully used in a concentrated and fully focused manner. These attributes are discussed below.

#### 4.4.1 Use of the piano in Stravinsky's later orchestra works

Before examining the treatment of the piano in his late orchestral works, a brief overview would be useful in order to trace the development of composition style. Accordingly, it is possible to identify how the role of the instrument changed during his three distinct periods and the main techniques used for effect. Considered one of the first composers to utilise the piano as a pivotal component in the symphonic orchestra, Stravinsky's treatment of the piano extends from his *Firebird* (1909) to *Requiem Canticles* (1966). Within this timeframe, the composer wrote twenty-two discrete works for piano and orchestra. During this period, it is possible to distinguish the changes in approach regarding how he used the instrument as an integral entity within the orchestra. The use of the piano largely reflects the development and innovative nature of his maturing compositional style (Joseph 1983; Griffiths 2013).

In Stravinsky's early works (1909-1920), the use of the piano within the orchestra reflected the Russian compositional traditions in parallel with the composer own training as a composer and pianist. For Stravinsky, the most attractive quality of the piano was its impersonal rather mechanistic, attributes coupled with its potential strength as an effective percussion instrument. This approach was at odds with the treatment of the piano by many nineteenth-century composers. Indeed, the traditional

use of the instrument held little attraction for the composer (Stravinsky 1926 cited in Joseph 1983:158).

Stravinsky's initial use of the piano in this early period saw it being used mainly as a solo or doubling instrument in a large orchestra. His middle period works (1920-1955) subsequently witnessed a shift to a less thick, much thinner and more contrapuntal style often based on principles typical of *concertino*. In many of these works, the piano exerted a more prominent role as it utilised more fully its unique polyphonic and percussive qualities in accordance with the composer's aesthetic goals during this period.

In his late works (1957-1966), Stravinsky's fascination with the techniques of serialism resulted in the piano being used as a single line instrument emphasising his increasingly pointillistic approach to composition. In addition, there was greater emphasis on exploiting the instrument's tone colour. This tendency was matched by a marked reduction in its percussive attributes. The piano's tone became more significant in response to creating distinct tonal and textual ranges. These distinct colour effects typify his later works. This was achieved in a similar way as he would treat other instruments in the orchestra (Joseph 1983; Rauscher 1991; Griffiths, 2013).

In regard to achieving his desired orchestral texture, Stravinsky's treatment of the piano involved a number of musical elements. These included pianistic effects such as arpeggiated figures, trills, glissandi, tremolos and a tendency to alternate hand passages. The composer also manipulated other elements, in particular, both solo passages and doubling with various instruments; pedal and octave usage; utilising the piano for

percussive and rhythmic effects. It is worth noting that when composing his late works from 1957 onwards, the piano had not featured in music scores since his *Symphony for Three Movements* (1945).

Stravinsky's renewed interest in piano usage was clearly stimulated by his focus on serialism. In his late works, it is possible to identify shifts towards different functions of the piano within the orchestra. It tends to focus on six main areas which demonstrate how the composer used the piano in his later works and how they contrast with his earlier periods. As noted above, these include other instrument doubling, octave usage, various pianistic and percussive effects, the use of pedal and the usage of piano solo within the orchestra (*cf.* Craft & Stravinsky 1969:1982; Joseph 1983; Rauscher 1991; Griffiths 2013). Based on these sources, the six areas are detailed as follows:

1. Piano doubling with other instruments is evident, to varying degrees, in Stravinsky's orchestral works. As mentioned above, they were significant differences between his early and late works. In the former, the tendency was for the piano to double in large tutti sections frequently in together with groups of low string and high wind instruments or with orchestra or harp. However, doubling with individual instruments was comparatively rare. In his middle period, piano doubling or partial doubling occurred in much smaller groups of instruments. This partial doubling is especially marked in his *Allegro* in Concerto for Piano and Winds. Another feature was that the piano often played all the notes of a particular musical phrase, while the other instruments took alternate turns at various intervals in the phrase. In Stravinsky's later serial works, however, the piano commonly doubled and partially with only one or two instruments and often with small rhythmic and pitch variations. By

frequently changing groups of instruments with the piano, the composer was able to create much wider spectrum of tone colour as exemplified in *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*.

Stravinsky had clear preferences in regard to doubling. In his later works, the piano was often doubled with the flute and/or piccolo. Woodwinds such as oboe and clarinet were often combined with the piano. Its lower registers were also effectively using double pitches with bassoon and bass clarinet. Regarding the brass instruments, the horn was more frequently used than the trumpet, trombone and tuba. The first was often placed at a lower octave register than the piano.

The piano in low register was also doubled with percussion instruments. The most common combination in the later works featured the timpani. It was often combined with the harp as seen in *Agon* and *Threni*. The xylophone was less frequently doubled in the later works appearing only in two measures in *The Flood*. For rhythmic effect, the piano was also doubled with snare and bass drums as featured in *Symphony in Three Movements* and the *Scherzo à la Russe*.

One area which Stravinsky considered especially problematic was the doubling of the piano with stringed instruments. According to Stravinsky, the different string sounds generated by the percussive piano and those vibrated by other stringed instruments created both acoustic and instrumental difficulties. The combination of the two did not seem to work together (Stravinsky cited in Vlad 1961:116; Joseph 1983). As a result, the composer often combined the piano

with string instrument pizzicato. However, when combined with strings, the piano played in all registers with the whole section but doubled in lower registers with double bass and violoncello. The piano was rarely doubled with violins alone in his later works (Rauscher 1991; Griffiths 2013).

2. Octave usage. Considered by Stravinsky as especially pianistic, he was intrigued by the way the piano could generate them so well compared with other instruments, stating ‘I saw what richness. I could extract from them’ (Craft 1972:343). Their usage in the early orchestra works reveal a wide diversity with over eight variations (Craft 1972; Joseph 1983; Griffiths 2013). In his later works, however, octaves are employed much less or not at all as seen in, for instance, *Movements* and *Requiem Canticles*. This change in usage may be largely attributed to his fascination with serial style compositions.
  
3. Pianistic effects such as *arpeggios*, *tremolos* and *glissandi* were extensively used, particularly in his earlier works. The effects are used in passages which are played on black or white keys and alternate between hands. *Arpeggios* were common in the early works such as *Petrushka* and *Firebird Suite*. It was used infrequently in his middle period as seen in *Oedipus Rex*. Stravinsky, however, stopped using the effect in his late works. *Tremolos*, on the other hand, are present in a number of his late works in addition to the previous periods. In the middle works, such as *Capriccio*, there are frequent passages requiring rapid alternating hands which emphasise the percussiveness of the works. In the later orchestral works, tremolos were used sparingly as passages requiring alternate hands did not seem to be required nor fully appropriate for his serial style of

composition. Nevertheless, the effect was used in several passages in *Requiem Canticles* and *A Sermon, a Narrative and a Prayer* (Griffiths 2013). *Glissandi* often occur in the early piano and orchestra works, but their middle period usage was later restricted to works such as *Quatre études* and *Suite No.2*. The use of *glissandi*, of which the composer often expressed a liking, then re-merged in his 1930's works in particular, *Perséphone*, *Symphony of Psalms* and *Scherzo a la Russe*. This pianistic effect was, however, not used in any of the composer's later works. The last occurrence was in his 1945 *Three Movements*.

4. Percussive effects of the piano. As described in Section 4.2.8, and emphasised throughout this study, a salient feature of Stravinsky's piano works involved its use as a percussive instrument. He became interested in exploiting its percussive qualities early in his compositional career and according to the scholars cited above, reached full maturity in the *Concerto*. Stravinsky utilised for effect a varied range of sforzandos and accents which served to point out three different Movements.
5. Pedal usage. As noted in 4.2.8 above, Stravinsky rarely used the damper pedal as he felt uneasy regarding its use. He attributed this avoidance to his strict piano teacher in his youth (cited in Evenson 1982:118). The main reason, however, may be more pertinent to his desired aesthetic in that by avoiding the damper pedal, it is possible to achieve a sharper, more pristine and more robust percussive tone. Accordingly, in his later orchestral works, there were different degrees of stress in the score. His goal was to use the piano to create a more detached, drier and non-lyrical way. These effects were also evident in his later

orchestral works but there was a gradual reduction of the percussive usage of the piano. There was instead a greater emphasis on exploiting its unique tone colour in ways similar to that of using other instruments.

6. Solo piano within the orchestra. In Stravinsky's earlier works, such as *Petrushka*, the piano passages reflected a distinctive pianistic approach and its usage as a *concertante* instrument. In the middle period works for solo and orchestra, he stressed its virtuosity as manifest in *Symphony in Three Movements*, *Concerto* and the *Capriccio*. In works such as *Symphony of Psalms* and *Perséphone*, the piano's role as a solo instrument became less prominent clear preference for the *una corda* pedal, especially in the many *forte* passages. For example, in order to emphasise the percussive tone of the piano, the performer must play each note with sharp precision with pedal engaged in order to achieve the desired loud tone. This pedal effect is evident, for instance, in *Symphony in Three Movements*, *Agon* and *Threni*. In the later serial works, the polyphonic attributes of the piano were superseded by its capacity to provide distinct tone colour and orchestral texture. In the late works, Stravinsky thus used the piano in a more single line, pointillistic manner, focusing more on piano's tonal qualities and greater orchestral integration.

#### 4.4.2 *Agon*

The ballet, *Agon*, for twelve dancers, choreographed by Balanchine, had a four-year development gestation period. The work is scored for a large orchestra and has parallels with Stravinsky's earlier ballet scores. The main difference, however, is that it is grouped into small *concertante* units. It is possible to identify the clear pointillistic

scoring which is typical of Webern's serial style. In *Agon*, the piano is used in one hundred of six-hundred-and-twenty bars, and Stravinsky demonstrates clever orchestration by skilfully synthesising the piano with various other orchestra instruments. It is used in both contrapuntal and doubled sections (Raucher 1991).

There are occasional orchestral passages such as '*Prelude*' and '*Interlude*', but for each specific group of instruments, the majority of the movements do not change. An example of how the piano is used in conjunction with other orchestral instruments can be seen in Example 4.4.2.1. It is possible to identify one of Stravinsky's preferences here, which first featured in *Petrushka* and was then subsequently used in other works. For example, the piano part is indicated '*sempre una corda f*'. It may be that the composer considered this particular sound to be apt and effective in conjunction with the abrupt staccatos of the trombones. There are few actual notes, but the single note line and the piano are separated by the other instruments. It has been noted that the features of this passage illustrate Stravinsky's typical use of the piano in his later works (Joseph 1983; Walsh 2006; Griffith 2013).

Example 4.4.2.1: *Agon* (bb. 190–203)

The image displays a musical score for the piece *Agon*, covering measures 190 to 203. The score is arranged in three systems, each with multiple staves for different instruments. The first system includes Tr. I II, Tr. I, Tr. II, Piano, and VI. Solo. The second system includes Fl. I, Fl. II, Tr. I, Piano, and VI. Solo. The third system includes Fl. I, Fl. II, Tr. I, Piano, Meas., and VI. Solo. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *poco sf*, *sempre una corda*, *marc.*, *allegro and f*, and *marc.*. Measure numbers 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, and 203 are clearly marked. The VI. Solo part shows a complex rhythmic pattern with alternating hands.

In other sections of *Agon* (see Example 4.4.2.2), the piano mainly uses single notes, except in bar 514, where two pitches played simultaneously. Another salient feature which can be found in many of his other works is the way the notes in some passages require alternating hands. The final section of the above Coda, it can be seen that the piano serves to unify the rest of the instruments as it can play each pitch with the orchestra.

Example 4.4.2.2: *Agon* (bb. 512–519)

The image displays a page of a musical score for the piece *Agon*, specifically measures 512 through 519. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves. At the top, the tempo is marked "Quasi stretto, J. 128". The instruments listed on the left include Cor I II (Corns), Tr. I II (Trumpets), Trp. I (Trumpet), Trp. II (Trumpet), Tom-Tom or High Timpani, Timpani, Piano, Violin I II, Viola, Violoncello (Cello), and Contrabass. The score features various musical notations such as dynamics (p, pp, f, mf, meno f ma marc.), articulation (acc, pizz., non arpeggiato), and performance instructions (poco ritard., affacca). Measure numbers 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, and 519 are clearly marked above the Piano staff. The score concludes with the instruction "affacca" at the bottom right.

4.4.3 *Threni*

Stravinsky's cantata *Threni: id est Lamentationes Jeremiae Prophetae* (1958) is a musical setting of biblical verses. It is often considered an important work from both a spiritual, and a stylistic, perspective. In this work, Stravinsky effectively combines the intrinsic qualities of the piano with other instruments in order to create unique and unusual combinations of sound. It thus highlights his genius for innovation and orchestration within the confines of the twelve-tone system (Joseph 1983). It is considered the most structurally complex of his religious compositions, the work being

scored for a relatively large orchestra which includes sections for flugelhorn and sarrusophone; trumpets and bassoons are not used. It is also scored for a chorus and six solo voices.

Compared to *Agon*, in which the piano is used in one hundred out of six-hundred-and-twenty bars, in *Threni*, the piano features in just forty-three of the total four-hundred and nineteen bars. There are almost no solo passages; instead, it serves as a doubling instrument and is often combined with the sarrusophone. As seen in Example 4.4.3.1, it features in sections at the beginning of the section with a series of repeated low F-sharps. Here, the piano fulfils a complementary role: it is used to emphasis the sounds of the sarrusophone, also helping to clarify and emphasise its sound. This combination of the two tone colours generates an unusual sound effect. In a further section, timpani and the lowest notes of solo Basso II are doubled with the piano.

Example 4.4.3.1: *Threni* (bb. 33–36)

The musical score for Example 4.4.3.1, *Threni* (bb. 33–36), is presented in a standard orchestral layout. The vocal part (CORO) is at the top, marked *parlando sotto voce* and singing the text "do-mi-na gen-ti-um:". Below the vocal part are the woodwind and string sections. The woodwinds include Clarinet I and II (Cl. I, II), Clarinet Bass (Cl. basso), Basses (Basses), and Flute (Fiaso). The strings include Violin I (VI. I), Violin II (VI. II), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), and Cello (Cb.). The score features various dynamics and articulations, such as *sf*, *staccatissimo*, *una corda*, *pizz.*, and *div.*. The tempo is marked *And. 100*. The score is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat.

In Example 4.4.3.2, a unique use of the piano can be seen at the beginning of bar 310. Stravinsky uses the term '*all' estinzione*'; the instruction here is to sustain the notes until, eventually, they are no longer heard. The piano can achieve this when doubled with the notes created by the harp. Neither the wind, nor other stringed instruments, could generate the specific sound desired by Stravinsky.

Example 4.4.3.2: *Threni* (bb. 310–312)

4.4.4 *Requiem Canticles*

*Requiem Canticles* (1966), a commissioned work, was his final work to include both orchestra and piano. It may be inferred that Stravinsky was considering his own mortality when composing this *Requiem*. The piano features in only sixteen of the work's three-hundred-and-fifty bars, specifically in the *Dies Irae* and *Postlude* sections. There are close parallels with his other serialist works. An example of the score below, Example 4.4.4, illustrates the way in which a recurring phrase is structured in regard to the doubling of the piano with other instrument of the orchestra. In this section, it is used with the whole string section and the timpani, and shows close similarities with certain phrases in both *Agon* (Example 4.4.2.2) and in *Variations*. In rhythm and pitch

however, there is an intriguing lack of precision in the doubling. The overall effect is a complex but interesting fusion of the string instruments creating an unusual musical effect.

Example 4.4.4: *Requiem Canticles* (bb. 85–87)

The image shows a page of a musical score for 'Requiem Canticles' (measures 85-87). At the top, there are staves for Tr. I. II and Trbn. I. II. Below them is a vocal line for S. A. CORO with the lyrics 'di ee u - la.' and a bass line for T. I. The main part of the score consists of several staves: Temp. (Tympani), Piano, Violin I and II, Viola, Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabasso (Cb.). The Piano part is particularly complex, featuring a dense texture of chords and triplets. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (ff), articulation (accents), and time signatures (3/8, 4/8).

In final bars of *Requiem Canticles*, the chords are used to create six pitches which are doubled on the pitches played by the other orchestral instruments. It is clear that he wanted the piano to sound the complete range of the tones as instructed in the score. This is despite the fact that the rhythmic character of the bar would change. A number of analysts have pointed out that an additional pianist would have solved this problem (Joseph 1974:1983, Walsh 2006).

#### 4.4.5 Summary

To summarise this section, it can be seen in the three examples of the piano and orchestral works of his late serial period, that Stravinsky focused on a number of elements in his later piano and orchestra works. This included octave usage, pianistic effects, pedal usage, doublings with other instruments, solo passagework and percussive effects. All of these elements, to varying degrees, reflected changes in his compositional style. It has been also pointed out that the treatment of the piano changed from his earlier to later serial works. The most important shift and emphasis, however, was the way in which he artfully used the piano to double with other orchestral instruments (often just one or two) in his serial works.

In order to appreciate the way in which Stravinsky uses the piano to double with various instrument in the three serial pieces: *Agon*, *Threni* and *Requiem Canticles*, the following tables offer a detailed analysis of each of the works. They are adapted from several sources which have analysed Stravinsky's works: Mason (1960), Rauscher (1991), Straus (1999), and Andriessen and Schönberger (1989). The bar numbers are indicated in the first column; the column headings show instruments and other elements. The number of bars which use the piano, and total number of bars in the work are provided at the end of each table.

Table 4.1: Use of piano with orchestra in *Requiem Canticles* (source Copyright 1967 by Boosey & Hawkes Music Publisher)

Bars	Doubling	Octave usage	Pianistic effects	Percussive effects	Pedal usage	Solo passagework
81-82, 85-86, 87	Timpani/Strings (partial)					
88-90			Alternate hands			
94, 96-97	Timpani/Strings (partial)					
289, 294, 299, 304-305	Piccolo/flute/ horn		Sustained chords			
Total bars in work: 350 Total bars of piano: 16						

Table 4.2: Use of piano with orchestra in *Threni* (source Copyright 1958 by Boosey & Co., Publisher)

Bars	Doubling	Octave usage	Pianistic effects	Percussive effects	Pedal usage	Solo passagework
35, 37-41	Sarrusophone				<i>Una corda</i> Left pedal, <i>f</i>	
69, 71						Yes
73-75	Contra bass(74-75)					Yes
82-87, 135-141	Sarrusophone				<i>Una corda</i> Left pedal, <i>f</i>	
218, 221-223, 226-228	Timpani/bassoon					
243-245	Harp/Timpani/violoncello section/ double bass section			<i>secco</i>	Left pedal	

310-311, 314, 318- 319	Harp/ Timpani/ double bass section		<i>All'estinzione</i> (to inaudible)		2 pedal	
385	Oboe/ English horn					Yes
391	Oboe/ horn					Yes
399						Yes
403	Harp					Yes
Total bars in work: 43						
Total bars of piano: 419						

Table 4.3: Use of piano with orchestra in *Agon* (source Copyright 1957 by Boosey & Hawkes, Publisher)

Bars	Doubling	Octave usage	Pianistic effects	Percussive effects	Pedal usage	Solo passage work
1-3	Harp/strings (pizzicato)				<i>l.v.</i>	
10-13, 23-25	Contra bass			<i>Secco sf</i>		
166-167						Yes
171-178	Timpani, harp(172-178) flute					
182-183						
191-206	Trombone(rhythmic doubling, not in pitch)				<i>Sempre una corda f</i>	Yes
208-227	Trombone(rhythmic doubling, not in pitch)					Yes
244-247	harp				<i>Sempre secco(una corda f)</i>	
253	violoncello section					
352-354	flute		Piano sustains			Yes
356	Clarinet/flute (part)					Yes
358	Flute(part)					Yes
360-361	Strings(part)					Yes
362-364	Flute/clarinet, strings(part)					
464-471, 485-490	Horn(canon)			<i>Ben marcato</i>		Yes
496-497						Yes
500-501						Yes
512-515	Horn/trumpet/tr ombone/tam-			accents		

	tam/timpani/strings(part)					
560-563	Harp/strings				l.v., pedal	
570-573, 583-585	Contra bass			<i>Secco sf</i>		
620	Tutti orchestra in final chord					
Total bars in work: 100 Total bars of piano: 620						

The tables show the way in which Stravinsky integrated the piano into the orchestra by frequent doublings with various instruments. It can be seen that there are few pianistic effects and relatively little piano-solo passagework. Another tendency is for Stravinsky to minimize the use of pedal. An interesting comparison can be made with *Petrushka*, which is an earlier and much larger work with a large orchestra. In *Petrushka*, the total bars using the piano are 539, the total bars of the work being 1267; almost fifty percent of the score. Moreover, the pianistic effects are more varied and frequent. The piano has a central role but its use varies, sometimes it is used as a soloist, denoting the role of *Petrushka*, and in other passages, it doubles with various instruments in order to generate a sharper and clearer sound. When doubled with higher-pitched instruments such as oboe, flute and piccolo, at the start of the work, the piano creates a more percussive effect on each note. There is a resulting precise doubling in pitch, dynamics and articulation. It is clear that Stravinsky conceived the work as a piano concerto as can be seen in a number of sections where it is used as a solo instrument. In its non-solo use, however, it still remains a crucial component of the work. It is interesting to see how it is used in this early work as a doubling instrument and the way it can enhance the colour of the orchestration. Stravinsky returned to the use of piano as a doubling or partial doubling instrument in his later works, and explored new ways of integrating the piano with other instruments of the orchestra.

Also frequently employed, was partial doubling, as well as doubling in order to create subtle variations in rhythm and pitch. Stravinsky's aim seems to have been a desire to generate as wide a range of tone colours as possible. To achieve this, it was necessary to constantly vary the combinations of instruments. He seemed to have a particular preference for the piano sound doubled with the flute or piccolo as well as the clarinet and oboe. Other instruments such as bassoon, bass and contrabassoon are often doubled with the lower registers of the piano. Another preference was the piano sound doubling with the horn, tuba and trombone, in the low registers. As pointed out in *Threni* above, the use of the sarrusophone, when combined with the piano, can generate an unusual and unique timbre.

Taken together, what emerges from this analysis of Stravinsky's later serial works is his constant innovation and creative energy in combining the piano sound with other instruments of orchestra. However, there was less emphasis on the piano's percussive tone and polyphonic qualities; rather, it was used to complement and create new sounds with other instruments. As an integrated element of the orchestral texture within a serial system, Stravinsky explored new ways in which the piano sound could be exploited with the other orchestral elements.

In his early, middle and late periods, Stravinsky made considerable use of a number of pianistic effects. These include passages which feature *arpeggios*, *tremolos* and *glissandi*. They are often played between the hands with passages often sustained on black or white keys. In his earlier works, *glissandi* occur more frequently, whereas in his middle-period works they tend to be restricted to the orchestration of earlier pieces as seen in *Quatre Etudes* and *Suite No.2*. There is, however, further use in *Persephone*

composed in the 1930s. The final appearance of *glissandi* can be seen in his *Symphony in Three Movements* (1945) but they do not appear in his later works. Nevertheless, it is clear that he had a preference for the glissando effect. In regard to arpeggios, these tend to be more common in his earlier works, as seen in *Suite L'Oiseau de feu* and *Petrushka*, with infrequent appearances in his middle-period compositions such as *Oedipus Rex*. In his later works however, they do not occur. Tremolos are featured in several of his later compositions and can also be seen in a number of early- and middle-period works. Passages which involve the crossing of hands appear frequently and often at speed, as seen in his middle-period compositions (e.g. *Concerto* and the *Capriccio*). It appears that Stravinsky was particularly attracted to this technique on account of its percussive effect. Alternating hands, for instance, were used in his serial works: *Sermon*, *Narrative*, *Requiem Canticles* and *Prayer*. Another pianistic effect which occurs in *Threni* involves the pianist allowing the sound to vibrate ‘*all' estinzione*’: in other words, until it is inaudible.

As noted above (Literature Review Chapter 2), Stravinsky considered the piano a highly effective percussion instrument throughout his career. Its effect is particularly evident in his *Piano Concerto*. His pianistic effects reflect a dry, detached, objective and largely non-lyrical approach. He often indicated numerous, and different types, of *sforzandos* and accents in order to identify varying levels of stress. It can be seen that Stravinsky tended to emphasise various pianistic effects in his works at different periods. This shift in approach and interest in different ways of creating unique types of sound are symptomatic of his desire to innovate and experiment with new compositional forms, as exemplified in his late serial period.

This change in Stravinsky's approach to composition raises the question of why he felt motivated to embrace and develop aspects of atonality and the 12-row form of composition. In this researcher's view, there are number of factors which may have contributed to this change. The determinant factor may well relate to Stravinsky's mentality and mindset in regard to composition: this appears to be very close to that of Webern. The restrictive nature of 12-note serialism provided Stravinsky with the perfect vehicle to work and re-create structures and patterns of notes within given parameters. It is also possible that he felt that the neoclassical composition paradigm had run its course and that a new atonal paradigm opened up newer and richer possibilities for the composer. It is evident he relished solving musical problems within limitations which embodied a sense of order and structure similar to Bach's writing in his fugues. Therefore, although much has been made of Stravinsky's radical change in style of music during his career, it is important to keep in mind that his way of approaching the compositional process, and his intrinsic way of thinking, remained relatively consistent (see Andriessen & Schönberger 1989; Griffiths 2013). These themes are further explored and discussed in the Results and Discussion Chapters below. Another area of discourse concerns the legacy of serialism, its influence on modern classical music and the issue of atonalism and critical reactions. These themes are examined in due course with reference to music scores and interview data in the following chapters.

#### 4.5 Evaluating musical influences

In the literature relating to the evolution of Stravinsky's ideas and his music, much has been written on the various influences which impacted on Stravinsky's music (*cf.* Andriessen & Schönberger 1989; Craft 1972; White 1966, Druskin 1983). It is

generally agreed that he was open to a number of musical styles including those of Bach, Mozart, Glazunov, Pergolesi, and later, jazz and ragtime performers, as well as Webern's serial music.

In this context, the term 'influence' is defined as a force which can exert an emotional effect on someone; modify or guide behaviour or opinion, and act as a persuasive force of varying degrees (adapted from *Penguin Concise English Dictionary* 2017:395). In a musical sense, in this researcher's view, it is possible to elaborate the definition to include: revealing identifiable traits associated with a composer, noting specific characteristics and historical styles from other composers and works, and identifying how such influences manifest themselves. These may not be overtly obvious and conscious signatures and inferred influences may take many forms.

It may be useful to consider Stravinsky's development as a composer, a continuum which never seems to have been interrupted. He was invariably open to new ideas and musical forms and engaged in experimentation throughout his career. He was also aware that some critics had labelled him as a mere '*pasticheur*' who simply borrowed and re-worked themes and motifs from various classical sources (Stravinsky 1959). This simplistic claim can be challenged. As Andriessen and Schönberger (*ibid*) point out, Stravinsky took what he considered inspiring, interesting and of a specific intrinsic value, and then re-created and re-worked the selected material. This was similar to the way that Bach transcribed many of Vivaldi's works. In brief, it was not what, or from whom, he borrowed, but what he finally *did* with it, as summed up in his famous quotation: 'A good composer never borrow, he steals' (Stravinsky 1959). He managed to produce a highly personal body of work which also seems to capture the essence of

composers such as Bach, Mozart, Tchaikovsky and many others, through a form of ‘inspired kleptomania’, to which he readily admitted. The end result, however, could be quite unique. Bernstein (1972:1), for instance in his *Homage to Stravinsky* writes:

Some private alchemy, some secret magic, [Stravinsky] absorbed all these essences, metamorphosed them, and gave them all back to us shiny-new, original, inimitable.

This creative process, therefore, was essentially de-constructive and analytical: Stravinsky would identify features which especially interested him and then transform these elements in his own motifs, themes and musical architecture. As Bernstein points out, the end result is the creation of new and original musical language. It could be argued that Stravinsky retained an almost childlike curiosity in his approach to music making and interpretation throughout his musical life, and that he was constantly intrigued by music from the past as well as by contemporary styles.

After reviewing the literature relating to the influences on Stravinsky, my own view is that many of Stravinsky’s works can be considered as a form of palimpsest, in that layer upon layer of diverse musical influences are re-constructed and then synthesised into a new form. These may be very faint and half obscured, erased or transformed, but some can still be identified in many of Stravinsky’s works even though they are often difficult to recognise in their new form. It is also argued here that it is important that performers of Stravinsky’s piano works are made aware of these influences and of Stravinsky’s creative thought processes. In this way, performers can approach his works in an informed, analytical frame of mind. Stravinsky’s piano works did not suddenly appear from nowhere; but by carefully tracing this path, it is possible to better understand his

evolving ideas. Moreover, it may be possible to appreciate the unique attributes of his works. In this way, performers may be able to more fully understand his works and offer convincing and informed performances.

It was also necessary to highlight the various influences which impacted on a number of his works such as the influence of Bach, Pergolesi, Beethoven, the Belyayev Circle, and Glazunov, as well as the influence of jazz and ragtime music. It was also evident that many sources highlighted Stravinsky's continuous legacy and lasting influence on modern classical music. It would be thus fair to say his music still resonates today for many musicians and composers.

## **Chapter 5. Musicological Analysis of Stravinsky’s Piano Works: Case Studies of the Music Scores**

### 5.1 Introduction to Results Chapters

In this chapter, the term “musicological analysis” is based on two useful definitions by Cook (1987:1) and Kerman (1980:312). The former described as “the practical process of examining pieces of music in order to discover, or decide, how they work”. The latter defines the focus of analysis “the synthetic element and the functional significance of the musical detail”. In this analysis, however, it is posited that musicological analysis tends to focus on descriptive and theoretical aspects without an emphasis on performance. Therefore, the analysis is distinct in that it includes both the attributes noted above as well as analysis from performer’s perspective.

In order to address the aims and objectives of this study, the following Chapters are structured using the methodology detailed in Chapter 3: case studies, document and interview analysis.

- Research question 1: How may knowledge and understanding related to Stravinsky’s life, context, musical development and values inform the performance of his music regarding his three stylistic periods; what are the most significant factors involved in this process?
- Research question 2: How much latitude of interpretation is required for the pianist when performing Stravinsky’s piano music from his three different periods?

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<u>Chapter 5</u>	<u>Chapter 6</u>	<u>Chapter 7</u>
Music Score analysis	Recording Analysis	Interview Analysis

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Synthesis of the three Chapters

The main thrust of these analyses is driven by the need to consider the pieces from a performance-orientated, rather than a formal theoretical, perspective. By synthesising these components, it is possible to gain further insights into the various characteristics, themes and variations of interpretation and the relationships which link the analysis as a whole. Accordingly, this approach may enhance a deeper understanding of the works, inform aspects of latitude of interpretation and various performance issues. In order to create a richer picture of Stravinsky's music by integrating the above, the aim is therefore to:

1. Identify the main characteristics, patterns of data, tendencies and approaches relevant to the case study examples.
2. Draw attention to the most important findings pertinent to the above research questions.
3. Compare and contrast the variables and complexities of Stravinsky's three piano works.
4. Draw attention to the unique nature of Stravinsky's music and identify the development of his musical language.

## 5.2 Analysis of the original score

The term 'analysis' refers primarily to an understanding of the compositional intent directly conveyed by the information or instructions as cited in the score. The analysis in this thesis, therefore, traces the developments and changes in Stravinsky's compositions, and provides a detailed examination into musical elements from the performer's perspective. In order to set a solid foundation for interpretative decisions, the analyses are based on elements such as: phrasing, character, rhythm, dynamics and harmony, in order to identify the differences between the three periods of Stravinsky's musical output. In regard to structural elements, Stein (1962:70) makes an interesting

point in that: ‘If the performer understands the structure, he can phrase sensibly, distribute correct accents and stresses, and properly balance the texture.’ Another important factor regarding this approach to analysis is highlighted by Berry (1989:218):

Analysis tempers the purely subjective impulse, resolves unavoidable dilemmas...no performer can reach a persuasive judgement...with only inarticulate preference: any choice made about the music must be constructively substantiated.

My interpretation of his comments is that careful analysis can effectively modify subjective responses to the music and thus reveal the dynamics of the work. In Webster’s (1991:591) words, it is necessary for performers to stand ‘outside’ musical works and adopt a more objective mindset.

Other considerations, external to the score, will be identified by the examination of Stravinsky’s own recordings and the playing of his piano works by the interviewees (see Chapter 6). Other variables such as understanding and critical responses, as well as the factors defined in Webster’s contextual analyses are considered within the context of authentic performance practice (see Literature Chapter 2.3–2.5). There is a range of interrelated factors which can all exert varying degrees of influence on a work’s performance interpretation. For instance, according to Webster (1991:591):

The conditions of its composition and premiere (the purpose for which it was written or commissioned; the place and circumstances of performance, the makeup and attitudes of the audience etc.); the relevant musical conventions (genre, ‘semantic’ associations of instruments and musical ideas, rhetorical content, etc.); the historical and social context; relations of the work to compositional traditions and influences; its later dissemination, reception and historical interpretation; and so forth.

According to Cross (1994), there is another useful type of analysis, that contrasts with the traditional concerns of the ‘analyst’, and which can reflect the concerns of the contemporary musician. He argues that many analysts of modern music are often too attached to their own theories, and that hence, their critical approach tends to be inappropriate for modern works. He makes a valid point which can be applied to Stravinsky’s works, that in order to differentiate modern works from works of previous eras they need:

...to be understood in its own terms and, in order even to begin to be able to discuss it, one has of necessity to adopt the language of modernism, the language of opposition, of difference and of criticism (Cross 1994:186–7).

In general, pianists need to balance and evaluate the salient elements identified via rigorous contextual analysis. It could be argued that by adopting this approach, it is possible to acquire a better understanding of Stravinsky’s musical language, which can thus improve the pianist’s interpretation of his piano music. The following analysis sections investigate these compositional aspects and analyse piano excerpts from Stravinsky’s three distinct periods: Russian, neoclassical and serialism.

### *5.3 Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*

The *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* was composed in 1904, during the period of Stravinsky’s study with Rimsky-Korsakov. According to Stravinsky, as well as later researchers (e.g. Griffiths 1992, Cross 2003), this sonata incorporated a large number of suggestions from Rimsky-Korsakov, and also, presumably, Kalafati. The piece consists of four movements, the last two movements being played without a pause. Griffiths points out that in order to conform to the romantic style prevalent at that time, Stravinsky looked back to late-nineteenth-century idioms. The piece has a more lyrical,

rich, warm sound in which the piano is used with the orchestra in a similar way to that of Glazunov (Griffiths 2013: 24). Taruskin (1996) and Joseph (1983) make the point that Stravinsky emulated Tchaikovsky most skillfully in this work; for example, in the latter's Symphony No. 5. As Joseph (1983:43) confirms: 'Tchaikovsky's music had deeply affected the earlier piano works of Stravinsky.' The sonata was not completed until the following summer of 1905 and Stravinsky no longer conformed to the romantic style after the completion of this work. Well-documented evidence shows that Stravinsky put a great deal of effort, however, into composing this thirty-minute sonata.

Considered as one of the major works of his early piano repertoire, Stravinsky, for the first time, tackles the challenge of bringing structural cohesion to a larger musical form in this sonata. *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* contains a number of characteristics which are typical of romanticism, and the work is representative of early Russian piano music in general. Nonetheless, Joseph (1983:34) argues that the main weakness in Stravinsky's early piano works is the lack of structural control. This assertion seems rather questionable as the internal structure of this sonata is indeed tightly organised. Moreover, the relationships between each section are relatively organised and clearly defined in the score. It could be that Joseph is referring to comparisons of this early sonata with Stravinsky's later works.

Tchaikovsky's music serves as a useful paradigm which typifies the romantic style at that time. Consequently, Stravinsky's *sonata* exhibits certain similarities with Tchaikovsky's Piano Sonata No. 2 in G-major; the following distinctive features can be identified. At the beginning of the first movement, there are similarities with the

general atmosphere typical of the ‘Russian’ romantic music, both pieces start with a chordal melody which then transfers to a lyrical passage.

Example 5.3.1: Stravinsky *Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* – 1<sup>st</sup> movement (bb. 1–5)



Example 5.3.2: Tchaikovsky *Sonata No. 2* – 1<sup>st</sup> movement (bb. 1–4)



Example 5.3.3: Stravinsky *sonata* – 1<sup>st</sup> movement (bb. 28–31)



Example 5.3.4: Tchaikovsky *sonata* – 1<sup>st</sup> movement (bb. 19–20)



From the examples above, it is possible to observe a number of similarities between the two works. For example, a number of dotted rhythms are presented at the beginning of both sonatas in order to give a sense of energy to the rather grand and powerful atmosphere. The use of *fortissimo* and density of the writing also creates the same effect. In both cases, first subject comes across as strong, robust, vigorous and assertive, and rather ‘masculine’ in nature. By contrast, the second subject may be considered more

‘feminine’ in character in that it has a much softer, less aggressive, smoother and more flowing quality. This very classical approach to composition starts with Beethoven, and continues through Schubert, Brahms, and other early-twentieth-century composers, Stravinsky’s early piano sonata is very much in accordance with this tradition.

Stravinsky was very traditional, musically speaking, at the beginning of his career. The music can therefore be understood by referring to a cluster of contributory factors:

1. It can be understood by referring to traditions, such as harmonic tension. These tensions emerge and then begin the building up of, or accentuation of, the tension to a climax or high point and then releasing it.
2. It is also characterised by a regular metrical pulse: downbeat and upbeat; the texture: thick or thin; the melody: going up and down. These characteristics all contribute to the interpretation of the performer.
3. Most importantly, these elements are in direct contrast to the music of Stravinsky’s later neoclassical period, which included equal measure, lack of harmonic tension, and fewer big lyrical gestures; these will be discussed later.

In another piece, it is possible to identify certain similarities to the *Polonaise Fantaisie* (1846) by Chopin; it is particularly notable in the transition from the ‘big’ chords to arpeggio patterns (see Example 5.3.5 and 5.3.6). This type of gesture appears in a large amount of romantic music, and it can be argued that these arpeggio patterns can reinforce the harmonic effect of the previous chord.

First, both composers wrote *pp* before the arpeggio to indicate the dynamic to be softer and that this is to be a lyrical passage. Second, both composers use a rich chord before arpeggio patterns to produce a full and prolonged harmony. In Chopin’s piece, there is

a pedal mark under this chord, including a *diminuendo* before the music arrives at this point (Example 5.3.6). Thus, as a suggestion for interpretation it is worth considering, even though no pedal is marked in Stravinsky's sonata, using the pedal in the same way can create the same effect (Example 5.3.5).

Example 5.3.5: Stravinsky sonata – 1<sup>st</sup> movement (bb. 25–27)



Example 5.3.6: Chopin *Polonaise* (bb. 5–7)



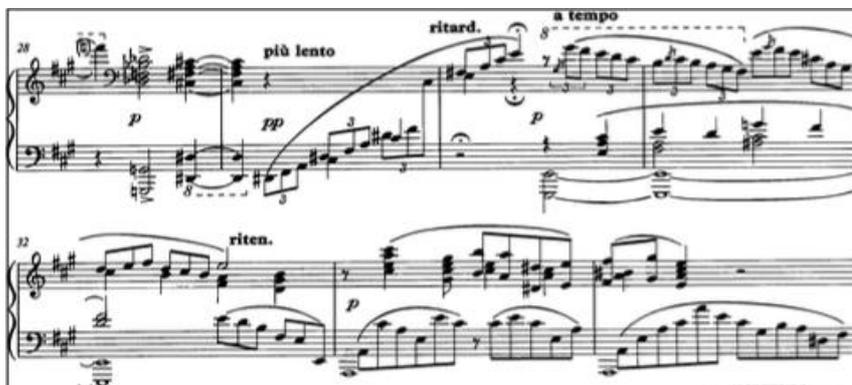
The music of Stravinsky's 'Russian' period is often characterised by a highly melodic and lyrical sound. He continued to use the functional harmony, tonality and traditional structures employed by his predecessors. In regard to approaches to harmony at that time, a typical romantic-style technique involved creating a tension between the notes and beats. In this way, it is possible to create an internal connection between the music score and the pianist's emotional response. In regard to performance, this requires performers to represent the music score within 'psychological' time (see Literature Review Section 2.5.3). This is because, in the classical tradition, there is often a close relationship between tension and the expression of emotion through the music (Taruskin 1995).

Interestingly, this tendency is clearly evident in Stravinsky's early sonata. For example, at the very beginning of this sonata, there is a prolonged tension before bar 31 (Example

5.3.7). The chords continue with no direction and the tension is maintained. The resolution is delayed until the music arrives at A major in bar 33. The listener has to wait for a resolution in the prolonged harmony, until tension is released at bar 3; the harmonic tension can also be assimilated by the performer. This construction can effectively control the listener’s psychological state.

Composers often delay the resolution to engage the audience in the tension of the music. For example, in Rachmaninov’s Prelude Op. 23, No. 4, he delays resolution until bar 53 (Example 5.3.8). This distinct move from tension to relaxation clearly enhances the experience of the audience, in anticipation of a harmonic resolution. This interconnection also affects the character of the piece making it richer and more complex.

Example 5.3.7: Stravinsky’s early sonata (bb. 28–34)



Example 5.3.8: Rachmaninov prelude (bb. 48–54)



In regard to phrasing, as seen in Examples 5.3.7 and 5.3.8, it is possible for the performer to sing the melody according to the slurring. Allowing a breath between each phrase is similar to the use of comma in a written sentence, or the use of a pause when telling stories. In Example 5.3.8 (bb. 48–50), the pianist can ‘breathe’ between each bar but have a more continuous flow of the breath when the music is progressing to the highest point (bar 51) within the long phrasing. Similarly, bars 30–32 are preparing for a development of the melody until bars 33–34 (Example 5.3.7). Thus, the latter section has a deeper and longer breath lasting for two bars, compared with the section in bars 30–32.

Another obvious feature of post-romantic music is *tempo rubato*. These slight changes in tempo can create a different character to the music (Fink 1999). As a case in point, Stravinsky uses it from bar 32 (Example 5.3.7) to indicate the indeterminate character of the tempo and to enhance characterisation. As seen in both examples, the use of changing texture of both Stravinsky and Rachmaninov exhibits strong contrasts in the music. They tend to use this composing technique to express various characteristics which can all be felt or assimilated by the performer and listener. It is worth noting that there is a dynamic marking *ff* at the beginning of Stravinsky’s sonata, and the next one, *forte*, is not appear until bar 16 (Example 5.3.9). This musical notation is typical of the romantic to post-romantic composers’ approach, in that it allows performers enough room for their own interpretations between the two dynamic markings.

It is impossible to sustain *ff* throughout this number of bars without changing the dynamics, and there is adequate room for performers to consider how the dynamic

progresses until the next notation indicated by the composer. They can thus interpret the dynamics according to harmonic progression and melody patterns. These can be demonstrated in the recorded performances of the participants, and as evidenced in the semi-structured interviews (see Chapter 6).

Example 5.3.9: Stravinsky sonata (bb. 1–18)



Example 5.3.10: Stravinsky sonata – 3<sup>rd</sup> movement (bb. 124–127)



According to the interviewees, a large number of the chords in Stravinsky's early piano works are often awkward to play. Examples 5.3.9 and 5.3.10 illustrate this difficulty: the first two beats of the right hand in bars 11–14, and the right-hand chord progression in Example 5.3.10, especially on the last beat. It is difficult to stretch these chords, and even for pianists who have quite a wide span or 'big hands' have to perform a rather unnatural hand position. This has been cited as evidence (in the interview data) that

Stravinsky was not an outstanding pianist, as he did not fully understand the limitations of gestures; nor did he care about the technical problem involved in playing his piano works. It has also been commented that he did not use the piano to its full potential and exploit the qualities which the piano can effectively achieve. Moreover, although he composed at the piano, there is convincing evidence to suggest that he thought orchestrally when composing. Stravinsky's reason for composing at the piano is stated thus:

I do compose at the piano and I do not regret it. I'll go further; I think it is a thousand times better to compose in direct contact with the physical medium of sound than to work in the abstract medium produced by one's imagination. (Stravinsky: Autobiography 1938:5)

This can be seen in very early works by Scriabin and Rachmaninov (Examples 5.3.11 and 5.3.12) where certain passages may be uncomfortable to play in regards to gesture. However, as noted by one of the interviewees (see Chapter 7), Stravinsky never developed a style where the gesture became easier for pianists, whereas other composers did. In general, Stravinsky was more interested in key changes rather than making the music pianistic. For instance, in the unusual musical gesture and chord in Example 5.3.10, the pianist could imagine a wind section also playing while they play this passage. Thus, the performer may consider using the pedal to various degrees when it appears appropriate to do so. The decision largely depends on how the pianist chooses to interpret a particular passage.

Example 5.3.11: Scriabin Etude in C-sharp Minor (bb. 1–2)



Example 5.3.12: Rachmaninov Four Pieces (bb. 15–19)



It is clear that this composition inherited and largely preserved the traditional techniques of Western classical music, such as tonal harmony, metrical structure, and conventional syntax, which were also identified in composers in the romantic era, such as Tchaikovsky and Chopin. This sonata is important as it is Stravinsky's first major composition in his 'Russian' period. It is important, therefore, for the performer to understand the style and pianistic aspect of this composition, and also the influence of other composers, in order to gain a better understanding of how Stravinsky's compositional style evolved, as well as how he synthesised certain features of various other composers. This, I would argue, is a crucial requirement in fully understanding Stravinsky's piano works from all three periods.

#### 5.4 *Serenade in A*

In his neoclassical period, Stravinsky adopted a compositional approach containing elements of the classical periods. Stravinsky admitted that he was, in many respects, 'looking back' to Bach (White 1966; Griffiths 1992; Andriessen & Schönberger 1989).

It can be argued that these classical influences served as an important catalyst for Stravinsky, in that they inspired him to create his own unique musical language.

*Serenade in A*, composed in 1925, is considered a particularly innovative work in Stravinsky's piano repertoire (White 1966; Griffiths 1992), and it can be seen as an important step in the creative process of Stravinsky's compositional career. In contrast to the *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*, the *Serenade in A* differs significantly in a number of stylistic, structural and pianistic features which are detailed below. As a typical example of neoclassical composition, the *Serenade* does not exhibit any overtly romantic elements. It is more a type of objective and emotionally detached work which reveals classical influences, especially those of Bach and Beethoven.

Considered by many critics and performers to be one of his finest and most original piano works (Vlad 1986), the four movements are, *Hymne*, *Romanza*, *Rondoletto* and *Cadenza Finale*. They are quite different from each other, representing the changing stages of a festive celebration. The tonality of the four movements seems to gravitate towards the key of A which serves as a 'tonic pole' (White 1966: 65), although the work, as a whole, is not clearly associated with any specific key. This makes it especially challenging to play, as it is an unusual approach compared with all of the previous piano repertoire.

On initially listening to the piece, it appears to have an unusual mixture of styles, in that it preserves elements from the classical period, while, at the same time, there are features that cannot be confined by that tradition; for example, there are elements of counterpoint imbedded within more modern elements. In my view, the key to a

convincing performance of the piece lies in the ability of the pianist to effectively display the interplay between the different layers of sound, which gives the piece its unique sound and architecture. In fact, it has been argued that the work is not actually a harmonic work (*cf.* White 1966; Joseph 1983; Griffith 2013; Walsh 2006; Taruskin 1996). Joseph (*ibid*) makes the interesting point that one cannot find textual, harmonic elements in the score, but that they still seem to be there.

A classical structure can be identified in the work, but Stravinsky has introduced a range of innovations which give the work a sense of dynamic movement and unpredictability. Thus, due to these innovative elements, the overall form, if one tends to view the work through the traditional form, becomes rather vague and unclear. Without thoroughly adhering to traditional models, which the previously discussed sonata seems to rely on, Stravinsky introduced a set of different and unusual harmonic chords. It is important to be aware of the way in which he carefully studied and analysed the contrapuntal works of Bach (see Section 4.3.1 and 4.3.2). Therefore, it is crucial to recognise how Stravinsky used and transformed Bach-like elements which are certainly present, but not immediately obvious – into his own musical language and gesture. It has been commented that the *Cadenza Finale* is not actually a pianistic piece, like the sonata, but rather, it appears to be a re-working of an orchestral piece (personal communication, Martin Jones 2018).

At the beginning of third movement, *Rondoletto* (Example 5.4.1), although the key is A major, it starts on chord III (C-sharp, E, G-sharp) concealing the function of the tonic chord (A, C-sharp, E). The harmonic part can be seen in the right hand I– IV– I and also the left hand.

The texture of Stravinsky's *Rondoletto* is very similar to that of Bach's Prelude and Fugue in C Minor (Example 5.4.2). The distance between emotional response in the nature of modern and earlier classical music can differ in many respects. For example, the traditional harmonic progression may be considered to be the expected emotional response; however, the resulting dislocation can make neoclassical music more autonomous. Interpretations of Stravinsky's neoclassical works may thus rely on a high degree of objectivity on the part of the performer. The rhythm in Example 5.4.1 below is formed by 'monometric' units, a term defined by Nabokov:

Look at any one of the bars [in Stravinsky's music] and you will find that it is not the measure closed in by bar lines, but the monometrical unit of the measure, the single beat which determines the life of his musical organism. (cited in Taruskin 1996:1601)

The rhythm is therefore governed by the monometric unit, a texture which can be seen in Bach's prelude. Thus, an understanding and awareness of objectivity, regularity and 'antological' time can enhance interpretation (see Section 2.5.3). According to Stravinsky (1939, 1998:31):

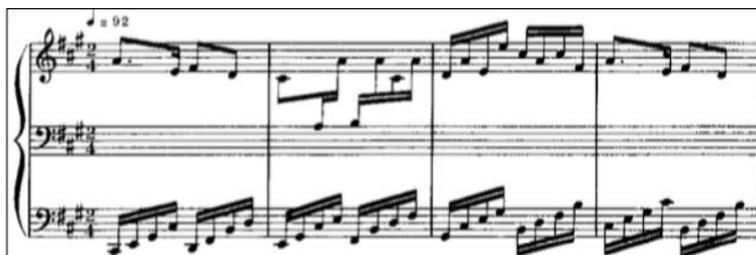
Music that is based on ontological time is generally dominated by the principle of similarity. The music that adheres to psychological times likes to proceed by contrast. To these two principles which dominate the creative process correspond the fundamental concepts of variety and unity.

Therefore, a dynamic with minimal fluctuations or variations can create a sense of calmness. The phrasing can be divided into either three or six bars; the most important consideration is to maintain a sense of balance. In regard to similarities between both

examples, the progression of semiquavers and demisemiquavers continue throughout the piece. It is very rhythmic, giving an almost mechanical strangeness to the piece. Performers are expected to play with a detached staccato. In a sense, it could be compared to playing the harpsichord, which has no pedal, therefore creating a rather detached sound. In this case, performers can imagine how they would approach Bach's prelude including the sound, touch, phrase, dynamics, articulation and overall memories of structure, while they perform *Rondoletto*.

Despite the similarities to Bach's music, numerous innovative features of *Serenade in A* need to be taken into account. First, the constant changes of harmony can be identified (Example 5.4.1). By contrast, the harmony is much more consistent in Bach's piano works. Second, irregular changing of time signatures (see Example 5.4.3) which cannot be seen in any other compositions from the classical period, such as Bach, Mozart and Beethoven. Third, it is noticeable that there is some unusual notation appearing in Stravinsky's neoclassical piano works (see Example 5.4.4). The artificial comma at the end of bar 11 is not an indication in regard to phrasing or breathing, but its function appears to be for performers, in that they should be aware of a change of time signature.

Example 5.4.1: Stravinsky *Rondoletto* (bb. 1–4)



The image shows a musical score for the first four measures of Stravinsky's *Rondoletto*. The score is written for piano and consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked with a quarter note followed by '♩ = 92'. The music features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a detached staccato articulation. The harmony changes frequently, with the bass line often moving in a chromatic or stepwise fashion, creating a sense of constant harmonic motion.

Example 5.4.2: Bach Prelude and Fugue in C Minor (bb. 21–23)



Example 5.4.3: Stravinsky *Rondoletto* (bb. 33–37)



Example 5.4.4: Stravinsky *Rondoletto* (bb. 10–11)



In *Cadenza Finale*, the left-hand accompaniment in an arpeggio figuration enhances the fluidity of the themes. In Bach's Partita in E-Minor No. 6 (Example 5.4.5), the left hand is very similar to the descending arpeggio in bars 21–22 (Example 5.4.6). Both lead the direction of the phrasing. In this case, the left hand plays with inflection according to each arpeggio pattern. Although the initial dynamic is *piano* (see Example 5.4.7), a more heightened sense of dynamic motivation is created within the form of the arpeggio lines.

Example 5.4.5: Partita in E-Minor No. 6 Air (bb. 25–27)



Example 5.4.6: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 19–23)



It is interesting to note that the descending third at the beginning of *Cadenza Finale* is similar to the beginning of the second movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata K.281 (Example 5.4.8), and both begin off the downbeat. There is also a *piano* marking under the thirds melodic phrase in the Mozart sonata. This may refer only to the beginning of this movement. It effectively begins with *piano*. It is worth considering the dynamic range which would have been possible in Mozart's time, when performing this piece.

Example 5.4.7: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 1–18)



Example 5.4.8: Mozart Piano Sonata K. 281 Andante (bb. 1–3)



In addition to similarities with classical compositions, there is also a link to late-nineteenth-century French music in this work. This influence is particularly evident in the *Romanza* and *Cadenza Finale* movements. For example, Debussy's *Clair de Lune* (Example 5.4.9), in regard to harmonic and melodic gestural shaping, there are a number of chromaticisms (E–D-sharp B–A) in the descending diatonic line, and additional notes alter the diatonic intervals with relatively unexpected intervals in bar 42. Stravinsky also removes or adds extra notes in order to vary the texture of the melodic; for example, Stravinsky removes the G in the interval of a third in bar 15, unlike the similar passage in bar 5 (see Example 5.4.7). In addition, he adds one note in the fourth interval of bar 36, which is a change from bar 34 (Example 5.4.10).

Example 5.4.9: Debussy *Clair de Lune* (bb. 41–42)



Example 5.4.10: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 30–45)

The image shows a musical score for Stravinsky's *Cadenza Finale*, measures 30 through 45. The score is written for piano and consists of three systems of two staves each. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 30 begins with a *poco marc.* (poco marcato) dynamic marking. The right hand plays a series of chords, while the left hand plays a descending chromatic line. Measure 31 features a *p* (piano) dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 32 features a *sempre legatissimo* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 33 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 34 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 35 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 36 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 37 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 38 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 39 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 40 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 41 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 42 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 43 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 44 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent. Measure 45 features a *p* dynamic marking. The right hand continues its chordal texture, and the left hand continues its chromatic descent.

Apart from the features mentioned above, when the theme of the piece emerges several times, each appearance is slightly different. Stravinsky is very skilled at moving intervals or changing accidentals. For example, when comparing bar 34 and bar 39 (see Example 5.4.10), the intervals in the right hand and thirds in the left hand move one note lower. In addition, there is an extra ‘#’ and ‘b’ added to bar 39. In performance, when both hands play together, there are different colours in the two sections. This can also be seen in bar 34 and bar 36. The tone colour is changed by the use of accidentals and intervallic movement in the left hand. For instance, the bottom C changes to C-sharp and the third moves one note up in bar 36. There are many subtle changes; and these create significant elements which typify the character of the whole piece.

It is worth noting that there are three unusual apostrophes used structurally and expressively in *Cadenza Finale*: at the end of bar 12 (see Example 5.4.8); bar 45 (see Example 5.4.10); bar 56 (see Example 5.4.13). Their function appears to emphasise differences before and after the pause. The first one is between bar 12 and 13, where the key changes from minor to major; the second one is between bar 45 and 46, where the character changes from *poco marcato* to *ben cantabile*. As a result, there is a complex variety of colour, rhythm, and dynamics in the performance. There is also a degree of tonal uncertainty: bar 13 and 14 are in the major, and bar 15 and 16 are in the minor. This indecisiveness is evident throughout the piece, and another instance can be clearly seen in bars 24 and 25 (Example 5.4.11).

Example 5.4.11: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 24–25)



Example 5.4.12: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 1–23)

It is interesting to note that in the opening section of *Cadenza Finale*, after regular four-bar units, (for example, bars 3–6, bars 7–10, bars 13–16, and bars 17–20), the musical phrases are interrupted by a change of time signature in bars 21 and 23 (see above, Example 5.4.12). The time signature suddenly changes to 3/4, and the melodic line is punctuated with internal repetitions, but the left-hand pattern continues, unaffected by this. The arpeggio in the left hand changes to a group of four quavers rather than a group of six, and Stravinsky breaks up the metres into irregular patterns in order to disrupt the symmetry of the phrases. This leads to combinations such as 1+2 bars or 3+2+3 bars. As a result, the phrasing marked in the right hand is 2+1+2+2+3+2+1+3+2+2+1+1.5+0.5 bars (Example 5.4.12). The irregular phrasing and repetition patterns in bars 22 and 23 also increases the intensity.

In his piano music, Stravinsky also made frequent use of superimposed rhythmic pedals. These can be employed as polyphonic devices and exhibit precise and clearly defined stages. The composer provides each one with an independent rhythmic-metric period. Several of these connected superimpositions do not re-appear at the same intervals and it appears that they serve to provide a more varied effect. The rhythmic invention here consists of two types. The first refers to linear or single rhythms which involve the repeating of rhythmic-metric periods designated to one particular fragment, section or line. The second differs as they relate to multiple dimensions which are both linear and vertical. These are composed of fragments which have fixed repetitions; but interestingly, they may vary in response to their separate or independent rhythmic-metric periods (see Keller, 1994).

Another example can be seen in Example 5.4.13, where the pulse remains regular but the time signature changes frequently. This generates a series of constantly shifting accents which disrupt the previously symmetrical patterns. In other words, the accents in the right hand change due to the constant alternation of time signatures. For instance, F-sharp and C in bar 53, results in three quavers and four quavers in a group, whereas D and C-sharp in bar 54, result in two quavers and three quavers in a group, and so forth. The contours of the lines, in particularly the low D and C-sharp in bar 54 may be a reason why Stravinsky selected this choice of time signature, because it clearly dictates the phrasing. These irregular time signature changes cannot be found in the previous classical and romantic periods. Mussorgsky used unconventional time signatures in his compositions, such as *Promenade* from *Pictures at an Exhibition* in which the time signature alternates between 5/4 and 6/4. These tendencies are representative of Stravinsky's innovative approach to his compositions at this time.

Apart from this, the accents in the right hand is a function of the duration of the left hand thirds.

Example 5.4.13: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 53–56)



Stravinsky also experimented with patterns made by the counterpoint of different metres in *Serenade in A*. For example, after the comma in bar 56 (see above Example 5.4.13), further development is created using a contrapuntal compositional technique. It develops from two-voice writing (bb. 57–60), to three-voice (bb. 61–64), to four-voice (bb. 65–68), and then gradually returns to two-voice (Example 5.4.14). It is possible to identify the true origins of this figuration from the writing in Bach's fugues. For example, his C Minor fugue from Book 2, also has the same sequence of contrapuntal motion (Example 5.4.15).

Example 5.4.14: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 57–71)

The musical score for Example 5.4.14, titled "Cadenza Finale" (measures 57–71), is presented in two systems. The first system begins at measure 60 and features a piano (*p*) dynamic with a *poco a poco cresc* (gradually increasing) instruction. The second system begins at measure 70 and includes the instructions *sub. meno f* (subito meno forte) and *ben tenuto* (well sustained).

Example 5.4.15: Bach *Prelude and Fugue No. 2 in C Minor* (bb. 14–25)

The musical score for Example 5.4.15, titled "Bach Prelude and Fugue No. 2 in C Minor" (measures 14–25), is presented in two systems. The first system begins at measure 15 and includes the instruction *Oder*. The second system begins at measure 20 and includes the instruction *25*.

The examples above may only show some superficial resemblances, as Stravinsky uses more complex and unusual ideas to produce the texture for four voices. These innovative features reflect the unique nature of his music. An example can be seen in bars 67 and 68 (Example 5.4.14), where the left hand requires a large stretch in order to play two different voices marked with slurs. In fact, it is almost impossible to play every note *legato*, even if the pianist's hand can stretch to the distance of a tenth. This is an instance, therefore, where it is allowed to use pedal in order to connect the notes.

The importance of the intervals descending from a quaver or a dotted crochet (B C, bar 37–38; F-sharp F bars 48–51; F E bars 51–52) can be seen in the fourth movement. A similar pattern can be also seen in a number of Bach's compositions. For instance, bar 40 in his *Flute Sonata in E-Flat Major* (Example 5.4.16), in particular, the interval between the Bb and Db at the beginning of treble clef. The degree of interval distance can influence the duration of the notes and also the timing between the notes. In this case, the second note is normally slightly delayed.

Example 5.4.16: Bach *Flute Sonata in E-Flat Major* (bar 40)



As mentioned before, the *Serenade* is built around A major, but the tonal impression of A major is barely maintained because of dissonant elements. Indeed, it may be necessary to emphasise the nuanced harmonies. Despite the fact that they sound rather dissonant, they can nevertheless convey a subtle sense of elegance. During the

neoclassical period, these characteristics were prevalent and distinctive elements of Stravinsky's work.

At the end of the analysis of *Serenade in A*, the various influences in this work and the innovative elements are marked and evidenced. It could be argued that the pianist needs to take these stylistic echoes of earlier music into account when interpreting Stravinsky's piano music, especially compositions from baroque and classical period, as seen in the above examples.

#### *5.5 Movements for Piano and Orchestra*

Stravinsky's interest in serialism and its compositional techniques is manifest in *Movements* (1959), and should be seen as a cumulative process. His late works differ markedly from his earlier music in many significant ways. In the last twenty years of his life, he embarked on a series of innovations regarding the structure and theory underpinning his works. It is possible to identify a succession of innovations in these works as shown below.

Table 5.5.1: Lists of innovations in Stravinsky's later works.

Work	Date	Innovation:
<i>Cantata</i> <i>Septet</i> , <i>Three Songs of Shakespeare</i>	1952	first use of a series
<i>In Memoriam Dylan Thomas</i>	1954	first fully serial work
<i>Agon</i>	1954-57	first inclusion of a twelve-tone series
<i>Canticum Sacrum</i>	1956	first to include a movement
<i>Threni</i>	1958	first completely twelve-tone work
<i>Movements</i>	1959	first work to make use of twelve-tone arrays based on hexachordal rotation
<i>Sermon, Narrative, Prayer</i>	1961	first work to use verticals of rotational arrays
<i>Variations</i>	1965	first work to rotate the series as a whole
<i>Introitus</i>	1965	first work to rotate tetrachords of the series
<i>Requiem Canticles</i>	1966	first work to use two series in conjunction

Adapted from Straus (1999:231)

As shown above, the innovative elements of *Movements* can be seen in an historical context and in relation to Stravinsky's serial works. The striking aspect was the composer's consistent focus on innovation which further emphasises the radical changes in his approach to composition even at such a late age. They serve to underscore his fascination with the 12-tone system. Moreover, it is generally agreed that many scholars find the composer's later work more challenging in terms of analysis (Babbitt 1968; Spies 1994; Straus 1999). For example, Spies, in company with Babbitt, offered the following anecdote regarding his first look at Stravinsky's *Movements*:

This was just before a performance of *Movements* and he wanted to show us his charts...I saw there were all sorts of Greek letters before set tables and I couldn't begin to fathom what he was doing, and Milton didn't quite know what it was either, but he suspected, and afterwards we got together and for years we talked about this because we wanted to see this thing again and see what he was getting at...

we began to piece together what might have been on that table (Spies, 1977 recorded radio interview).

Both Babbitt (1968), Spies (1977) and Straus (2001) have established a tradition of analytical scholarship regarding Stravinsky's later works. The approaches of Babbitt and Spies were similar to that of Stravinsky's in that they adopted a descriptive, numerological or quasi-mathematical approach to his music. In other words, the only focus was the notes on the score and an avoidance of emotional interpretation. This approach generated much criticism. For example, Van den Toorn (1983:19) reported that many performers considered deep analysis as 'peculiarly suspect, a perverse kind of intellectualism, and act of desecration.' Taruskin (1996:1673: note 99) considered the programme notes for the premiere of *Movements* as incomprehensible jargon ('gobbledygook').

Even Stravinsky became critical of the tendency to over-analyse his serial works using technical jargon, and with less attention given to actually performing his later works. Another interesting point was made by Spies (*ibid*) who was openly critical of Stravinsky's use of serial techniques claiming that the composer had a limited grasp of the technique, commenting:

Stravinsky's use of the twelve-tone system is a highly idiosyncratic thing, in which, although he himself might have thought he was writing twelve-tone theory, we would have to conclude that it is only in a very limited sense.

Given the above citations, it is clear that the analysis of *Movements* requires a very different approach to that of the other two piano pieces, and it is important to be aware

that the 12-tone system has its own traditions, terminology, techniques and analytical paradigms. This approach to analysis invariably requires the application of precisely stated rules, where the musical elements determine the rhythms, repetitions, texture and mathematic design of the composition. It is also important to add that a highly detailed and comprehensive analysis of *Movements* lies beyond the scope and aims of the study. The main aim is to describe the basic underlying structure of the piece and focus on the techniques used by Stravinsky. As stated in the introduction to the chapter, the objective is to focus on aspects of performance practice rather than providing a highly detailed, theoretically informed, analysis of the piano music.

*Movements* is a comparatively brief composition consisting of five movements. The salient characteristics of the piece are its frequent fragmentation, varying rhythms, and its contrapuntal density. All of these elements serve as stimuli which can enhance the 12-tone structured system. The single tone rule determines all the relevant accompanying and thematic material. At the beginning of the work, the solo piano plays this as a distinctly nonlinear gesture: E-flat–F-flat–B-flat–A-flat–A–D–C–B–C-sharp–F-sharp–G–F. Interestingly, this appears as a form twice in the whole work. As the piece progresses, it tends to be fragmented into smaller tetragonal components, and the row then reappears in a slightly different order.

Stravinsky referred to the harmonic structure of *Movements* as essentially ‘antitonal’. Certainly, the triadic elements are featured less frequently than in the other serial works listed above. Unusually, when the triadic references occur during the piece, they are often passed over without any detailed development.

It should be kept in mind that Stravinsky tended to reject the conventional methods devised by many serial composers. He, rather, utilised the form in its most basic representation i.e. using a series of pitches. He used this to create his own unique style of serial composition which became progressively more serial from 1952 to 1966 as suggested in the above table. He thus constantly developed, redefined and introduced many innovations which typify his serial-period styles (*cf.* Straus 1999; Rust 1994; Van den Toorn 1983; Griffith 2016).

This analysis focuses on a detailed analysis of the fourth movement of this piece. I would justify this choice for several reasons. First, it is a useful paradigm which represents many features of Stravinsky's approach to serialism at that time. Second, as pointed out by participants in the interviewee analysis below, the fourth movement is a very interesting but complex section which performers may find particularly challenging. Third, it is the only movement where fifteen instruments play together and therefore offers a more comprehensive sound and atmosphere.

In the fourth of Stravinsky's *Movements*, he uses similar transformations to those that occur in Webern's *Variations for Piano*. However, Stravinsky uses a different architectural form: the score is composed of three very similar sections, each of which indicate, to varying degrees, similar dynamic markings (Example 5.5.2).

Example 5.5.2: IV Movements (bb. 96–135)

Flauti I  
Flauti II  
Violini Solo  
Violini div.  
Violoncello (C.B.)  
Piano

Tempo: ♩ = 80

Measures: 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109

Dynamic markings: *mf*, *gda*, *pizz. >*, *poco sf*, *p*, *mf p sub.*, *attacca subito*

Performance instructions: *Fl. II = Fl. picc.*, *p legato*

(stesso tempo) (3)

Picc.

Fl. I

Cl.

Cl. bas.

Vle. div.

Vc. div.

Piano

8va

110 111 112 113 114 115

116 117 118 119 120 121 122

attacca subito

4 Vc. Soli

(sempre stesso tempo)

Picc. Fl. I

Picc.: Fl. II

Vle. div.

Vc. div.

Cl. bas.

Trb. I

Trb. II

Trb. bas.

Piano

Vle. div.

Vc. div.

C. B. Soli

arco marc. and ten. 5/8 in mf

arco

The obvious connection between them consists of two superimposed fifths. In this context, 'superimposed' refers to one chord on top of another. This can be achieved by playing one chord on the left hand and, at the same time, playing another chord on the right hand. The relationships between these chords can be seen in Example 5.5.3. Each

of the chords includes A and C-sharp within one register. There is, however, a difference: the third of the chords just serves as a re-registration of the proceeding one. In contrast, there is, at the fifth, a pitch transposition. It appears that Stravinsky is using these chords in order to emphasize the relationship between the informal aspects of serial structure within the movement. In Example 5.5.3, the series is presented in a clear way in that this section is constructed on IR-O, P-O. In addition, it can be seen that there is a single appearance of I-O. The consequence of these interrelated elements is that the transpositions are not utilised, and therefore it is possible to refer to them as P, IR and I as shown in Example 5.5.4.

Example 5.5.3:

Example 5.5.3 shows a musical staff with three measures. Above the staff, bar numbers 98, 111, and 125 are indicated. Below the staff, fingerings are given: 8 5, 4 9, 4 9, 8 5, 4 9. Labels IR, R, and IR are placed below the staff under the first, second, and third measures respectively.

Example 5.5.4:

Example 5.5.4 shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff is labeled RI and has a bracket above it labeled P. The second staff is labeled IR. Below the first staff, a series of numbers is written: 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 1 2 3 4 5. Below the second staff, a series of numbers is written: 6 7 8 9 10 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0.

An interesting feature of the score is that by comparing P and IR, it becomes clear that the bar 111 chord fulfils a similar function within P. This is because the chords in bars 98 and 125 are used within IR. In other words, each one exhibits similar serial derivations as seen in terms 4–5 and 8–9 as illustrated in Example 5.5.3. It is evident that A and C-sharp feature in both P and IR. They serve to offer an audible connection

between them. However, the two other notes E and G-sharp or D and F-sharp differ from the former. The difference is that they help identify the specific transform being used. Moreover, closer scrutiny reveals the four other existing pairs of notes also used between P and IR. These include E–E-flat, D–C, G–F-sharp and A-sharp–G-sharp, the final two also make an appearance in RI. As shown, all of these fulfil a significant role. This can be seen in the cello solo shown in bar 107. From bars 125 to 126 the bass clarinet and trombone are played. There are detailed music indications on these notes such as accents, *sostenuto*, slurs and dynamic markings. Another noticeable feature is that there are clearly marked two-note motives.

By focusing on the textures of the motives and chords, Stravinsky informs us of the surface characteristics of the *Movements*. He also uses dynamics and register to consolidate the basic serial relationships. The structure of the composition serves to clearly denote and define a number of pre-compositional structures. The difference to Webern’s piano variations is that Stravinsky uses the same technique, but in a more restrictive and tighter way – using a reduced number of transformations.

Table 5.5.5 illustrates the close relationship of the three sections which exists between particular groups of serials, as well as the freer structure described by Stravinsky’s orchestration. These elements underpin the main compositional components in this movement and in *Movements* as a whole.

Table 5.5.5:

2 flutes	4-11	
Vle/vcl div	4-5, 8-9	
Variable group	0-3	

Piano		0-11	0-11	0-11
Vcl/cb soli				

[source adapted from Cook 1999]

For the pianist, there are a number of important considerations to hard work on stage. First, the rhythmic phrase from bar 127 to bar 135 exactly repeats that of bar 100 to bar 109 which thus underlines the ABA order. However, connections between the elements of the serials are relatively informal. This can be seen in the rhythmic link between the piano, bar 104 and bar 105, bar 117 and 118, as well as the C–D–F-sharp–G sequence which clearly occurs three times. It can be also observed in bar 108, bar 109, and bar 132 in the piano part. There is also an appearance in bar 126 and bar 127 in the bass clarinet and trombone parts. The repeated chords emphasise the information but also connects with the motive which pervades *Movements* as a whole.

Another important consideration is that in order for performers to focus on the musical surface, they need to follow all the music indications in the score, as the surface of the music cannot be accurately determined from the serial organisation alone. The very detailed music indications in each bar are even more important indicators than the notes to a certain degree. Given the structure, architecture and the internal organisation of the *Movements*, it is conceivable that it could be played in reverse or even inverted. The sound would differ but the internal structure would remain the same.

In Chapter 7, there is a summary of all the Results Chapters.

## **Chapter 6 Performance Analysis of Stravinsky's Piano Works: Recordings of Stravinsky's Own, and Interviewees', Interpretations**

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on an analysis of Stravinsky's own recordings as well as interviewee interpretations of the three case studies. The aim of the analysis is to draw attention to the various differences and similarities of approach conceived by both Stravinsky, and the professional pianists. It also highlights areas which can allow latitude of interpretation and looks at how the interviewees have approached Stravinsky's music scores in this respect. It thus serves to identify the possibilities, options and important elements, which may enhance performance of his piano works.

### 6.2 Stravinsky's own recordings

In this section, Stravinsky's own recordings of three pieces: *Piano-Rag-Music*, *Piano Sonata* and *Serenade in A*, are analysed. These are the only actual recordings of Stravinsky's own piano performance, and he made some interesting comments in regard to the value of these recordings of his music (Stravinsky & Craft 1972:234-41). He stressed that it was crucial to 'safeguard' or protect his work by explicitly indicating and describing how the music should be played. These recordings, therefore, should be considered as detailed guidelines for prospective performers. Stravinsky uses the term 'document' to refer to these instructions. He wanted his music to be heard: 'free from any distortion of my thought, at least in its essential elements.' (Stravinsky & Craft 1972:234-41).

It is worth noting that, although the recorded performances appear to have met the composer's approval at that time, they were by no means perfect performances. Their

overall quality can vary in that a number of inconsistencies, flaws and changes in the score can be detected. In many ways, these may reflect Stravinsky's rather idiosyncratic approach to performance as a whole. For example, there can be many nuances and gestures which are not indicated on the score but appear in the recordings (Cross 2003). A number of critical evaluations of Stravinsky's strengths and weaknesses as a composer can be found in the literature (Van den Toorn 1983; Griffiths 2013) as well as Stravinsky's own criticisms of his own recorded performances (Stravinsky & Craft 1972). Straus's (1999) analysis, for instance, draws attention to the numerous errors found in Stravinsky's *Movements*. The important point to keep in mind is that it may be near impossible to create a perfect and definitive performance and that inconsistencies and flaws are all part of the music making process. In Stravinsky's case, like many other composers and musicians, he appeared to exercise his right to make changes to his own work.

The first piece, *Piano Rag-Music* was composed by Stravinsky in 1919 and was later edited by his son, Soulima Stravinsky. This is one of the representative works of his style before the 1920s. First, the work is very rich in its characteristics and hence worthy of further investigation. Second, it was composed during the period where he had had a break from writing piano music: the piano work he composed prior to this had been a decade earlier. Therefore, this piece can be treated as his 'return-to-piano' work. Finally, it is one of three piano works which is accessible in a version recorded by himself. Recordings by Stravinsky of the rest of his piano solo works are not easily accessible; these are the only ones which could be found for this analysis.

The second recording, *Piano Sonata* was composed in 1924 at the beginning of Stravinsky's neoclassical period. It was later edited by Albert Spalding, an American violinist and composer, and is considered representative in terms of the radical changes which were manifest from one period to another.

The third recording is *Serenade in A* which was composed in 1925, also later edited by Soulima Stravinsky. Many critics and musicians, including Alfredo Casella, consider the *Serenade in A* to be Stravinsky's best composition for the piano (Vlad, 1978:91). Berger, for instance, suggests that:

The *Serenade* that reveals much more substantially than anything Stravinsky wrote before it in what sense he was developing his 'constructive values' in a new direction. (cited in Berger 1971:85)

In *Serenade in A*, Stravinsky attempts to synthesise the various elements in order to accentuate the emotional force of the work in the recording. The recording clearly reflects the composer's intentions at that time. However, with hindsight, Stravinsky later offered his own criticisms in that the overall texture and colour of the recording, as well as other elements, could have been changed for greater effect (*cf.* Stravinsky & Craft 1972; Cross 2003; Griffiths 2013). Thus, it is necessary to investigate this music in greater detail, especially as, to date, no comparative analyses have been made. It is worth noting that, in regard to making judgements concerning the dynamics featured in the music score (e.g. *ppp-fff*), this researcher sought the evaluation of several musicians in order to confirm her own judgements. Through this process of triangulation, it was possible to confirm and agree on the appropriate dynamic markings.

For this analysis, as noted above, this researcher consulted three professional pianists and triangulated their views on the determination of dynamics in Stravinsky’s recordings. Determining the appropriate dynamics can be both a difficult and subjective task. Unsurprisingly, therefore, they did not agree about every dynamic in the recordings. However, myself and three other pianists concurred in regard to crescendo and diminuendo. The importance, therefore, is not about a single dynamic marking. Rather, it is more about playing forte or piano within a dynamic range. In my view, for example, Stravinsky started to play from forte, but another observer felt he started to play from fortissimo. I would maintain that, in this context, it is of lesser importance, and therefore it is not a significant issue. To reiterate, the important point to keep in mind is that the process largely depends on the dynamic changes. It should also be pointed out that the sound quality is good enough to distinguish the different dynamics.

### 6.2.1 Stravinsky’s recording of *Piano-Rag-Music*

This section presents a comparative analysis of Stravinsky’s own recording (recorded July 5, 1934) and the piano score (sourced from Boosey and Hawkes, *The Stravinsky Piano Collection*, 2007). It mainly focuses on dynamic and tempo markings as these are considered the most important elements. After repeated listening to his recording of the work, it was possible to identify the salient features of both the dynamics and tempo.

Table 6.2.1: *Piano-Rag-Music*

M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score	<i>J</i> = 144/ ff		<i>meno f</i>	<i>sf</i>	<i>p</i>		<i>cresc.</i>	<i>ff</i>	
Record	<i>J</i> = 144/ff		<i>mp/ dim.</i>	<i>p / rubato</i>	<i>p</i>		<i>none</i>	<i>ff</i>	
M.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score	<i>mf / stac.</i>	<i>sf</i>	<i>stac.</i>	<i>sf</i>	<i>ff</i>	<i>a tempo/ p</i> <i>Poco ped.</i>			<i>sf</i>
Record	<i>mf / no stac.</i>	<i>mf / ped.</i>	<i>no stac.</i>	<i>sf</i>	<i>ff</i>	<i>J</i> = 118/ <i>mf</i> <i>Poco ped.</i>	<i>dim. / ped. each left hand's octave</i>	<i>ped. each left hand's octave</i>	<i>mf / ped. each left hand's octave</i>
M.	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Score		<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>		<i>ff</i>	<i>mf</i> <i>(poco sf)</i>	<i>p</i>		

Record	breath	p/ ped. each left hand's octave	mp/ ped. each left hand's octave	ped. each left hand's octave	ff	f ( <i>Poco sf</i> )	p		
M.	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Score		accent sf	accent sf	accent sf	accent sf	p/ <i>molto legato</i>	staccatissimo		<i>sub.f</i>
Record		accent sf	accent sf	accent sf	accent sf	p/ <i>molto legato</i>	staccatissimo		<i>sub.f</i>
M.	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Score	<i>poco f</i>	cresc.	sub.p			<i>come sopra</i> (p)			
Record	<i>poco f</i>	none	mf			p			
M.	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Score	sf			sff		f			ped.
Record	mf			sff		f			no ped.
M.	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Score	f			Ped.	dim.	p			f (accent)
Record	f			Ped.	dim.	p			f (accent)
M.	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Score		ff				<i>meno f</i>		sf	
Record		ff				p		p	
M.	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
Score	ff		sfff		mf				ff
Record	ff		mf		mf				ff
M.	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Score	dim.	p-cre- ff- sff- p- sf- p- cre/ ped.	sff		cresc.		mp	sff	
Record	dim.	p- p(no cre)-f- cre-sff-p-(no sf)-p- cre/ ped.	sff		cresc.		p	sff	
M.	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
Score	cresc.		mf- sub.p- cresc.- sf	ff- dim.- cresc.	mf- ff- mf- ff- sff- ff-p	f			<i>più f</i> /ped.
Record	cresc.		mf- sub.p- cresc.- sf	ff- p- cresc- dim.- (no cresc.)	p- ff- mp- ff- mf- ff- mf	mf			<i>più f</i> /ped.
M.	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
Score		cresc.	sff- cresc.		cresc.	accent			
Record		none	mf- none		cresc.	accent			
M.	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117
Score	accent	cresc.		<i>con tutta la forza</i> / ped.	<i>sub.pp</i>		accent		sf
Record	accent	none		f / ped.	<i>sub.pp</i>		accent		p
M.	118	119	120	121					
Score	dim.			ppp					
Record	none			ppp					

In view of the dynamics (Table 6.2.1), there are twenty-one bars showing conflict with the original score, which is fifty-one per cent of the total. It is likely that Stravinsky was not fully aware of the various changes he made to his earlier music. The following bars were considered to contain the most significant features in this recording: bar 39,

is interpreted with the dynamic *mf* instead of *sub p*; in bar 69, Stravinsky played *p*, but wrote *meno f* on the score; also, in bar 75, he played *mf* but *sfff* is shown in his written version. Moreover, while interpreting longer bars such bars 83, 94 and 95 the dynamics in Stravinsky's playing vary more than usual: As can be seen in Example 6.2.1, the dynamic progression is: *p-cre-ff-sff-p-sf-p-cre/pedal*. However, in Stravinsky's own recording, he interprets it as: *p-p-(no cre)-f-cre-sff-p-(no sf)-p-cre/pedal*. The intensity of the music in this passage might have been interpreted differently due to various factors; for example, a pianist may, over time, acquire a different understanding of the harmonic progression, phrasing, and articulation. These may change as the result of greater familiarity with the piece. Another relevant factor concerns the quality of the instrument at the time and the recording environment. It is worth considering these differences from the composer's own perspective and then to compare them with the participants' perspectives. In this way, it is possible to make more informed decisions regarding how the work can be interpreted and performed.

Example 6.2.1: *Piano-Rag-Music* (bar 83)

The image displays a musical score for Stravinsky's *Piano-Rag-Music*, specifically bar 83. The score is presented in two systems. The first system features a grand staff with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. It includes a section marked *8va alla* with a dotted line above it. The second system also features a grand staff with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. It includes a section marked *8va alla* with a dotted line above it. The score is attributed to Stravinsky — *Piano-Rag-Music*. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *sub.p*, *f*, and *p*. The score is divided into two systems by a horizontal line.

Another interesting point is that Stravinsky did not follow most of the dynamic markings in the score. That is to say, it is difficult to listen and get sense of how he actually played with *crescendo* or *diminuendo* in his performance. One of the reasons may be that he did not have a high enough level of technical skills as a pianist, and therefore could not consider all possible interpretative decisions while he performed the piece. Another reason might be because he thought differently about the piece after fifteen years (the music was written in 1919, while the recording was made in 1934),

and after so many years approached in a quite different way. It is evident that his decision making is quite different in the recording; for instance, it seems that he preferred playing in terraces between different dynamics in order to make the music more intense and contrasting.

As for the tempo aspect, Stravinsky starts the performance at the same tempo as that marked in the score, i.e., one crotchet as 144. However, from bar 15, he changes to a slower tempo, one crotchet as 118, even though there is an *a tempo* marking in the score. Moreover, where the barring is irregular a number of other factors may come into play: First, the time signature 4/4 might change because the music follows the natural sense of the melody-jazz improvisation where such irregularities are characteristic. Second, the tempo of the entire piece is not very consistent; this is mainly shown in sudden changes in various measures.

In regard to pedal, accent and staccato: Stravinsky did not play the right-hand interval staccato as the score indicates, apart from bar 10; he did not follow the pedal marking in bar 54; also it is clear that there is often a slight delay before a triplet or septuplet. However, he takes great care to indicate accents in his playing, and seldom ignores accent markings written in his scores. The edition used for this analysis is Boosey and Hawkes (2007) collection of Stravinsky's piano music, it is the same as the original 1919 score. According to Stravinsky and Craft (1959), the latter accurately reflects the composer's intentions.

This discrepancy or variance may be due to two factors: either the inaccuracy of his performance, or that his ideas were still constantly evolving and developing, especially

in the 1920s. This rather restless innovation resulted in stylistic changes which, in turn, led to the creation of his neoclassical style. It may be inferred, however, that when the work was written in 1919, that it reflected his musical thought at that time. For the performer, it is therefore important to respect and fully understand why the piece was composed and the thought processes behind it, rather than focusing on variations in Stravinsky's own performance. In essence, the indications in the score are more important than the way he performed his piece at any given time. However, it is difficult to determine why Stravinsky played this Russian piece differently, and there is no explanation in the literature.

Finally, it could be argued that Stravinsky's aversion to performers making any changes to his score is basically unrealistic. Many commentators have pointed out (see Chapter 2), what Stravinsky actually stated in his writings, and what he actually did, was often contradictory. Moreover, in my view, given his rather pedantic and meticulous nature, it is possible to speculate that he was reluctant to admit his views may have been flawed in the first place.

### 6.2.2 Stravinsky's recording of *Piano Sonata* (1924)

In this section, there is an analysis of Stravinsky's own recording (November 6, 1930). The analysis here focuses on the dynamic, tempo and articulation elements of the work. Within the articulation, the accents he places on the notes are examined; they are very obvious and thus change the musical and stylistic features to a certain extent. It is interesting to note that he started the recording with the second movement, followed by the first movement, and finally, the third movement.

Stravinsky's own recording and his notation markings in *Piano Sonata* (1924) are firstly compared. In terms of dynamics, there are fifty bars, but only fifteen per cent of them have dynamic markings. Listening to Stravinsky's recording, there is a substantial amount of uniformity in regard to these markings. In addition, however, he adds relatively obvious dynamic changes in a total of sixty-two bars which are not included in the piano score. Most of them can be seen as *crescendo* and *diminuendo* in the 'Recording' row of the table. In particular, the second movement has many more dynamic alterations in his performance interpretation. For instance, Table 6.2.2 clearly shows that in bars 5, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 17, 18, 32, 36, 40, 42, 44, 47, 49 and 51, contain various dynamics changes in performance. This indicates that there are many more intentional, planned and deliberate elements in his interpretation. In addition, many additional accents can be noticed in Stravinsky's playing: for example, in bars 130, 131, 132, 133 and 134 (see Table 6.2.2, third movement), different notes are accented at the end of the third movement which Stravinsky did not mark in the piano score.

From the point of view of tempo, the first movement is slightly faster than the metronome marking in the piano score. Stravinsky plays crotchet equally 116 instead of 112. In the second movement, he plays the *Adagietto* quaver equally 50 and changes to quaver equally 96 from bars 13 to 40.

In the third movement, the tempo is one crotchet as 98, which is slower than the original tempo of 112. However, Stravinsky's tempo is mostly consistent throughout this piece. Also, the pulse and metre in his playing on the recording of the first and third movements are relatively stable. At the very beginning of the third movement, however, the semiquavers are attacked by accents on every beat running through the music.

Stravinsky did not actually indicate these articulation markings in the musical score, but in this section, he seemed to assume that the performer would play it with accents.

The other approaches such as *staccato* and *legato* are clearly heard in Stravinsky's playing. In addition, it can be noticed that the slurring is quite obvious in bars 10, 11, 12, 120 and 126. For instance, there is a slurring in the left hand from the 'b' in bar 10 to the F-sharp in bar 11, and then from the following note 'e' to the 'g' in bar 12. Performing pianists, therefore, might follow these examples to consider the rest of their interpretation. In addition, there is a *ritardando* in the recording at the end of the third movement which is not shown in piano score.

Table 6.2.2: *Piano Sonata* (1924) – 1<sup>st</sup> movement

M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score	$\text{♩} = 112 / p$								
Record	$\text{♩} = 116 / p$					accent in c			
M.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score									
Record				accent in c					cresc.
M.	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Score			accent / dim.						
Record	cresc.		accent / dim.						
M.	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Score					accent	accent			
Record					accent	accent		cresc.	
M.	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Score			cresc.	dim.					
Record	dim.	p	cresc.	dim.					
M.	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Score		accent	accent	stac.	stac.	dim.		dim.	
Record		accent	accent	stac.	stac.	dim.		dim.	
M.	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Score		dim.	dim.	dim.		dim.			
Record		dim.	dim.	dim.		dim.		cresc.- dim.	
M.	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Score			dim.			accent			
Record			dim.	cresc.	dim.	accent		cresc.	p

M.	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
Score						cresc.		sub. dim.	f
Record		dim.	mp			cresc.		sub. dim.	f
M.	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Score		p						pp	
Record		p					dim.	pp	
M.	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
Score	stac.	<i>poco cresc.</i>				<i>meno piano</i>			
Record	stac.	<i>poco cresc.</i>				<i>meno piano</i>			
M.	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
Score				<i>poco cresc.</i>	pp subito				
Record				<i>poco cresc.</i>	pp subito	p			dim.
M.	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117
Score	sub.p		<i>meno piano</i>			cresc.	sub.pp		
Record	sub.p		<i>meno piano</i>	cresc.		cresc.	sub.pp		
M.	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126
Score	cresc.	cresc.	sub.meno						poco sub. dim.
Record	cresc.	cresc.		sub.pp	accent in e-flat	accent in e-flat	accent in e-flat		pp
M.	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
Score		legato						legato	
Record		legato						legato	
M.	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144
Score	dim.								
Record	dim.		cresc.		cresc.			cresc.	
M.	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153
Score		dim.	dim.	dim.					
Record		dim.	dim.	dim.	mp			sub.p	
M.	154	155	156	157	158	159	160		
Score						dim.			
Record				cresc. - mp	dim. - p	dim. - pp	pp		

*Piano Sonata* (1924) – 2<sup>nd</sup> movement

M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score	<i>Adagietto</i> / p			p					
Record	$\text{♩} = 50 / p$			P- dim.- cresc.	pp- cresc.	dim.- p		dim.	cresc.
M.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score			dim.	[13-40] semiquaver = $\text{♩}$					
Record		accent in c	dim.	[13-40] $\text{♩} = 96 /$ cresc.	dim.	cresc.		dim.	accent - dim.
M.	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Score									
Record		accent in a (right hand)		accent in g-sharp					
M.	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Score						cresc.- dim.	cresc.- dim.		
Record					cresc.	cresc.- f - dim.	cresc.- f - dim.		sub.p

M.	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Score			dim.						
Record			dim.	cresc.	accent in e and g (left hand)	dim. - p		pp	
M.	46	47	48	49	50	51	52		
Score	stac.								
Record	stac.	cresc. - mp		dim.		p			

*Piano Sonata (1924) – 3<sup>rd</sup> movement*

M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score	<i>J = 112</i>								
Record	<i>J = 98 / accent in every 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> beats</i>								accent in d (right hand)
M.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score									
Record	slurring from note b to F-sharp in m.11 (left hand)	slurring from note e to g in m.12 (left hand)	slurring from note c to b (left hand)			accent in a	accents in a		cresc.
M.	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Score									
Record	mp – p			dim.- cresc. (r.h) / mp- p – mp- p (l.h)		accents in a	accents in a	pp	
M.	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Score									
Record							accent in e		accent in e
M.	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Score					sf	sf- p - sf	p	accent	
Record		accents in c and b	accents in c and b	p	sf	p- sf	p	accent	
M.	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Score	dim.								sf
Record	accent in b / dim.					accents in f and g-sharp	dim.		sf
M.	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Score				sf- sub. dim.			cresc.	cresc.	sub.p
Record				sf- sub. dim.		pp	cresc.	cresc.	sub.p
M.	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Score	accent				sf				
Record	accent				sf	dim.			
M.	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
Score									
Record									
M.	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Score									
Record	cresc.		cresc.	dim.	cresc. - mf	dim.	cresc.		dim.
M.	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
Score				cresc.	sub.p				accent
Record			dim.	cresc.	sub.p				accent
M.	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
Score		accent							
Record		accent	accent in c				accent in a		

M.	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117
Score								<i>più f sub.</i>	<i>sub.p</i>
Record	mp - p			cresc.	dim.			<i>più f sub.</i>	<i>sub.p</i>
M.	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126
Score									
Record			slurring on note c and b, g-sharp and a sharp	cresc. - dim.	mf (left hand) / pp (right hand)				slurring on note g and e, f and d
M.	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
Score		pp							dim.
Record	accent in b	pp	dim.	accents in a, c	accents in b, f, d sharp	accents in f, d sharp	accents in f, d sharp, d sharp	accents in d sharp, d sharp	dim. / <i>ritardando</i>
M.	136	137							
Score	dim.								
Record	dim.								

The three tables above show how Stravinsky's interpreted his *Piano Sonata*. It can be seen that he generally tended to follow his own notation in the music score. There are, however, more articulation points in his recordings when compared with the written scores as well as a greater emphasis on dynamics. It is clear that his way of approaching this neoclassical work differs considerably from that of his previous 'Russian' period and this illustrates changes in his musical ideas; for example, there is a return to a more objective and 'purer' style, inspired by past classical composers.

In reference to the above, it is possible to infer that Stravinsky's notion of 'objectivity' changed over time. In my view, it is evident his ideas and approaches to his own music had changed during that time, especially between 1919 to 1934. For example, the documentary evidence shows that Stravinsky was interested in, and thus borrowed from various non-Russian or 'foreign' styles of music types. For example, from 1924 onwards, there are piano duets based on western dances such as polka, waltz and Napolitana and gallop and his theatre works. The *Soldier's Tale* (1928) dance styles such as ragtime, tango and waltz are combined with various Russianism. As Taruskin (1996) points out, they were all treated in similar ways in the post war period. Stravinsky was clearly interested in exploring these styles in more detail.

Consequently, his *Piano-Rag-Music* (1919) appears to adapt various jazz elements but he reconstructed in a fragmented or fractured way. Moreover, it is also an undanceable piece. Although recorded during his neoclassical period, it should be kept in mind that the definition of neoclassical music changed over time. By the time, Stravinsky's recorded *Piano-Rag-Music*, it referred to any types of music which included styles from traditions, cultures or new dance forms. In Walsh's (2006; 2019:2) words '*It became an attitude and a set of techniques rather than a particular style; it became a matter of How rather than What.*' It is thus argued that as neoclassicism evolved, it became more a set of techniques, and hence notions of objectivity also changed. It is important to keep in mind the rather ill-defined nature of neoclassicism as a musical term.

### 6.2.3 Stravinsky's recording of *Serenade in A*

This section presents an analysis of another recording from Stravinsky's neoclassical period, a piano work called *Serenade in A* (recorded in July 5-6, 1934). It focuses on both the dynamic and tempo aspects, as these are the most important elements which create the overall character of the piece. Generally, Stravinsky follows the piano score, but there is more personal expression in this recording. For instance, there is a very rich set of dynamic changes with occasional *subito* moments. The detailed information is shown in Tables 6.2.3–6.2.6 below.

With regard to the dynamics, there are ninety-seven bars containing changes from the piano score. However, this number is only twenty-four per cent of the total bars as compared with fifty-one per cent in *Piano-Rag-Music* from the 'Russian' period. To be more specific, Stravinsky not only followed the dynamics markings presented in the

piano score, but also added extra levels of *crescendo* and *diminuendo*. This makes the music more vivid and colourful, especially in the first movement, *Hymne*, as shown in Table 6.2.3. His dynamic changes follow the melodic and harmonic line most of the time, with slight movements up and down in a few bars. The most obvious examples are from bars 52 to 75, where the left-hand sequence is directly linked to the changes in dynamics. If the pattern goes up, he plays *crescendo*; if the pattern goes down, he plays *diminuendo*. The reason for this change is that it provides a subtler sound and makes the music flow more smoothly. Therefore, his approach follows a more traditional method of performance. Although the composer introduced many innovations in the music score, his way of approaching the work remained basically the same. Therefore, the pianists approaching this work should adapt a similar approach to that of classical music.

Furthermore, his recording clearly shows the accents he put on a longer sentence within the second piece, *Romanza*. In bars 4 and 78 (Table 6.2.4), Stravinsky set the accents in each bottom note of the harmony patterns, in order to emphasise the lower note when approaching it. From the performer's perspective, this rule can be followed in a large number of piano works, in particular those from the baroque and classical periods.

With regard to the tempo in the recording, Stravinsky plays exactly as indicated in the piano score in the first movement, *Hymne*, and the fourth movement, *Cadenza Finale*. This can be seen in the first bar of Table 6.2.3 and also Table 6.2.6. In addition, the composer wrote the tempo marking twice in *Hymne*, as seen in bars 43 and 77 (Table 6.2.3). It also can be seen in the 'Recording' row of the table that Stravinsky's tempo follows these markings. However, he does not play the tempo as shown in the score in

the second movement, *Romanza*, and the third movement, *Rondoletto*. The tempo of the recorded performance is generally faster than that indicated in the piano score. Thus, pianists should consider the tempo in these two movements more carefully. The following chapter on the analysis of the piano scores considers the various perspectives and elements pertinent to this work.

Apart from two main elements, dynamic and tempo, there are also rubato, *ritardando*, *rinforzando* and *subito piano* elements (see Tables 6.2.3 to 6.2.6). They are very distinct in Stravinsky's playing but, significantly, not shown in music score. For example, bars 5, 18, 22, 75 (Table 6.2.3); bars 6 and 77 (Table 6.2.4); bars 57, 58, 122 (Table 6.2.5); bars 30, 45, 56, 95 (Table 6.2.6). These slight changes are often due to changes in harmony, such as in bar 22 of *Hymne*; or due to changes of phrasing, such as in bar 6 of *Romanza*. There are times when the changes can be heard in Stravinsky's recording and these show the intention of the composer. In a sense, he brings together the various elements and is able to effectively express the emotional force of this work through the recording. This researcher would refer to these instances as 'special moments' whereby the music has increased tension. The composer's vocal musical language is linked to these special moments. In my review, it is at these points where 'the magic of the music' resides. In addition, Asaf'yev's comment vividly describes the sound in the *Serenade in A*:

The sound of the *Serenade*, I repeat, is predominantly a dry piano sound, 'pedal-less' and its technique makes extensive use of accentual displacements in a context of steady movement. (Asaf'yev 1982:257)

Table 6.2.3: I *Hymne* [Blank=No Marking]

M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score	$\text{♩.} = 58 / f$		<i>simile</i>				<i>p</i>		
Record	$\text{♩.} = 58 / f$				<i>rubato</i>	<i>dim.</i>	<i>p / cresc.</i> (left hand)	<i>cresc.</i> (left hand)	
M.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score		<i>cresc.</i>				<i>f come prima</i>			
Record	<i>dim.</i>	<i>cresc.</i>	<i>dim.</i>		accents in b	<i>f come prima</i>		<i>f</i>	<i>dim. / rubato</i>
M.	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Score		<i>p</i>		<i>sempre legato</i>					<i>cresc.</i>
Record	<i>cresc.</i> (left hand)	<i>p</i>		<i>Sempre legato / cresc.</i> <i>sub. p / accents in e</i>	accents in e	accents in d	accents in d	<i>dim.</i>	<i>cresc.</i>
M.	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Score	<i>f</i>		<i>p</i>						<i>Ped</i>
Record	<i>f / mf</i>	<i>f / mf</i>	<i>p</i>		<i>dim.</i>	<i>cresc.</i>	<i>dim.</i>		<i>Ped / accents</i> <i>in d sharp</i>
M.	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Score		<i>cresc.</i>		<i>più f</i>	<i>dim.</i>	<i>pp</i>	<i>tempo / p</i> <i>expressivo</i>		
Record	accents in d sharp	<i>cresc.</i>		<i>più f</i>	<i>dim.</i>	<i>pp / dim.</i>	$\text{♩.} = 58 / p$	<i>cresc.</i>	
M.	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Score		<i>sempre legato</i>				<i>f</i>	<i>p / con poco</i> <i>Ped</i>		
Record	<i>dim.</i>				<i>cresc.</i>	<i>f / mf / f dim.</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>cresc.</i>	<i>dim.</i> (second half of the bar)
M.	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Score		<i>cresc.</i>			<i>F</i>				<i>dim. / p</i>
Record	<i>cresc.</i> (first half of the bar)	<i>cresc.</i> (r.h) <i>cresc. - dim.</i> (l.h)	<i>cresc. - dim.</i> (l.h)	<i>cresc. - dim.</i> (l.h)	<i>f / cresc. - dim.</i> (l.h)	<i>cresc. - dim.</i> (l.h)	<i>cresc. - dim.</i> (l.h)	accents in f (l.h)	<i>dim. / p</i>
M.	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Score	<i>cresc.</i>	<i>p sub. / dim.</i> (l.h)		<i>cresc.</i>	<i>Mf</i>		<i>rf</i>		<i>sub. più p</i>
Record	<i>cresc.</i>	<i>p sub. / dim. - cresc.</i> (l.h)	<i>dim. - cresc.</i> (l.h)	<i>cresc.</i>	<i>Mf</i>	<i>cresc.</i>	<i>rf</i>	<i>cresc. - dim.</i> (l.h)	<i>sub. più p</i>
M.	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
Score				<i>dim. / rit.</i>	<i>dim. / tempo / p</i>			<i>pp</i>	
Record	<i>dim. - cresc.</i> (l.h)	<i>dim. - cresc.</i> (l.h)	<i>sub. p / cresc.</i> (l.h)	<i>rit. / dim.</i>	<i>dim. / ♩. = 58 / p</i>	<i>cresc. - dim.</i>	<i>cresc. - dim.</i>	<i>pp - dim.</i>	

Table 6.2.4: II *Romanza* [Blank=No Marking]

M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score	$\text{♩} = 96 / p$	<i>dim.</i>		<i>mf / non-legato</i>	<i>P</i>		<i>dim.</i>		<i>p</i>
Record	$\text{♩} = 116 / p - \text{dim.}$	<i>p - dim.</i>		<i>mf / non-legato / accents in g, f, e sharp, d sharp, b, d sharp, b, d, b, d</i>	<i>p / dim.</i>	<i>rit. / dim.</i>	<i>dim.</i>		<i>p</i>
M.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score									<i>cresc.</i>
Record	<i>cresc.</i>			<i>cresc. - dim.</i>	<i>dim.</i>				<i>cresc.</i>
M.	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Score	<i>express. / poco più f</i>							<i>più p (sempre express.)</i>	
Record	<i>poco più f</i>		<i>cresc.</i>			<i>dim.</i> (l.h)	<i>dim.</i> (l.h)	<i>più p</i>	
M.	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36

Score				cresc.		dim.	p		
Record				cresc.		dim.	p	cresc.	dim.
M.	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Score				cresc.	dim.		<i>dolce</i>		
Record	cresc.	dim.	cresc.	cresc.	dim.	cresc. (l.h)	<i>dolce</i> / slurring from b to g		
M.	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Score	cresc.	<i>poco più f</i>							
Record	cresc.	<i>poco più f</i>		cresc.			cresc.		
M.	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Score	cresc.	rf			<i>meno f</i>				
Record	cresc.	rf		cresc.	<i>meno f</i>	dim.	p		cresc. (r.h.) dim. (l.h)
M.	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Score	<i>espressivo</i>					p			
Record	<i>espressivo</i> / dim.		dim.			p - cresc.	dim. (r.h) - cresc. (l.h)	dim. (r.h) - cresc. (l.h)	
M.	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	
Score	<i>poco rf</i>		cresc.	p		mf / dim.		sf	
Record	<i>poco rf</i>	dim.	cresc.	p	dim. / rit.	mf / dim. / accents in c, a sharp, g-sharp, g	dim.	sf	

Table 6.2.5: III *Rondoletto* [Blank=No Marking]

M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score	<i>j = 92 / mf</i>								
Record	<i>j = 96 / mf / accent in every beats</i>	cresc.			accent in c-sharp (r.h) / accents in g-sharp and F-sharp (l.h)	accent in c-sharp (r.h) / accents in g-sharp and F-sharp (l.h)	cresc.	dim.	cresc. - dim. (l.h)
M.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score			p	mf					
Record	dim. - cresc. (l.h)	accents in b, g-sharp	p	cresc.	dim.	cresc.	dim.		
M.	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Score						<i>poco cresc.</i>			sf
Record			cresc.	dim.		<i>poco cresc.</i>			dim. / sf
M.	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Score	<i>meno f</i>						<i>poco cresc.</i>		
Record	<i>meno f</i>		cresc.				<i>poco cresc.</i>	dim. - cresc.	
M.	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Score		<i>più f</i>		cresc.	<i>p sub.</i>			mp	
Record	cresc.	<i>più f</i>		cresc.	<i>p sub.</i>		cresc.	mp - cresc.	
M.	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Score							cresc.	<i>p sub.</i>	
Record	cresc.		accents in c, b flat	accent in c			cresc.	<i>p sub.</i> - dim.	
M.	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Score								cresc.	
Record			rf / dim.	rf / dim.				cresc.	
M.	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Score					<i>sub.meno f</i>				

Record	cresc. - dim.	cresc.		dim.	<i>sub.meno f</i>	dim.	cresc.		
M.	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
Score							cresc.		f
Record	dim.			cresc.	dim.		cresc.		f
M.	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Score					<i>sub.meno f</i>		sf	p	
Record				dim.	<i>sub.meno f</i>	dim.	sf	p - cresc.	dim.
M.	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
Score				cresc.	P			<i>incalzando</i>	
Record		cresc.	dim.	cresc.	p / accent in F-sharp	accent in F-sharp	accent in F-sharp	<i>incalzando</i>	cresc. / accent in f
M.	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
Score					P <i>sub.</i>				
Record	dim. - cresc.					dim.	cresc.		
M.	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117
Score	<i>meno p</i>							cresc.	
Record	<i>meno p</i>				cresc.	dim.		cresc.	dim.
M.	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126
Score	<i>più f</i>					p		<i>poco rit./ molto dim.</i>	
Record	<i>più f</i>				dim. / rit.	p		<i>poco rit./ dim.</i>	
M.	127	128	129						
Score									
Record									

Table 6.2.6: IV *Cadenza Finale* [Blank=No Marking]

M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score	$\downarrow = 84 / p$ <i>teneramente / sempre poco Ped</i>								
Record	$\downarrow = 84 / p$ <i>teneramente / sempre poco Ped</i>	dim.	cresc.	dim. - cresc.	dim. - cresc.	cresc.	dim.	cresc.	dim.
M.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score									
Record	cresc.		dim.	cresc.	dim. - cresc.	dim. - cresc.	cresc.		
M.	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Score									
Record		dim.			p - dim.	p - dim.	cresc.		
M.	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Score			cresc. / dim.	<i>p / sempre legatissimo/ accent in d</i>					
Record			cresc. / dim. / rubato	<i>p / sempre legatissimo/ accent in d</i>	cresc.		dim.		dim.
M.	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Score									dim. / accent in a
Record		accent in c	dim.	slurring from a to b in bar 41		slurring from b to e in bar 44	dim.		dim. / accent in a / rit.
M.	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Score	p							<i>meno p</i>	
Record	p / cresc. (l.h)	dim. (l.h)	cresc. (l.h)	dim. (l.h)	cresc. (l.h)	dim. (l.h)		<i>meno p</i>	

M.	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Score	mf			p			<i>poco a poco</i> cresc.		
Record	mf	<i>sub. p / rubato</i>		p			<i>poco a poco</i> cresc.		cresc.
M.	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Score						f		<i>sub. meno f</i>	cresc.
Record						f		<i>sub. meno f</i>	cresc.
M.	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
Score				[p]					
Record			dim.	p		cresc.			
M.	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Score								cresc.	
Record	cresc.	dim.	cresc.	dim.	cresc.	dim.	cresc.	cresc.	dim.
M.	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
Score									
Record					<i>sub. pp</i>				
M.	100	101	102	103	104	105			
Score					<i>morendo / dim.</i>	ppp			
Record			cresc.	dim.	dim.	ppp			

As the above tables indicate, the approach is similar to that of the 1924 *Piano Sonata* in many ways, in that it precisely follows the notations in the score. However, the recordings provide a more detailed record of how the composer actually performed his neoclassical works.

### 6.3 Summary of Stravinsky's own recordings

In this section, the focus is on all three of the piano masterpieces with analyses of Stravinsky's recordings of the works, namely *Piano-Rag-Music*, *Piano Sonata* (1924) and *Serenade in A*. It was found that in *Piano-Rag-Music*, there are a number of markings present in the piano score, which the composer, in his interpretation, however, often did not follow. This may be because the markings on the piano score did not actually reflect Stravinsky's artistic thinking and his own interpretation at the actual time of recording. Another important point to make is that the quality of the recording is good enough to distinguish the differences in tempo and dynamics in order to make this analysis accurate. Thus, pianists should be more aware of these markings, and to

understand the importance of the language behind them. This decision making process may be informed by pianists' familiarity of the score; past experience in playing Stravinsky's music and overall sensitivity to the possible subtle variations. Another aspect of decision making is knowing when there is more scope for interpretation as evident in Stravinsky's own recordings.

Obviously, Stravinsky was the person who knew his music best and knew how it should be interpreted. The analysis of his recordings, therefore, aims to understand more about his language, in that it offers different perspectives for pianists to consider, in order to achieve a better interpretation of Stravinsky's music. When they choose not to follow the markings on the piano score at some points, their interpretation, therefore, could still match the musical characteristics and features of Stravinsky's music of the 'Russian' period.

In both the *Piano Sonata*, and *Serenade in A*, there are many fewer markings shown in the piano score, but the composer followed these markings fairly consistently in performance. It might be because, along with his musical development, he improved on the accuracy of the original markings when composing his music. Thus, there are few places which need to be altered in order to compare with the previous period. When pianists play Stravinsky's piano works from the neoclassical period, for instance, this researcher would suggest following the markings on the piano score. The reason is because of dual authentication as the composer's writing and interpretation are generally consistent. In addition, there are additional various changes and expressions in the recordings, which have regular changing patterns. Pianists also need to understand these patterns in order to create a more appropriate and versatile

interpretation based on the original markings. In addition, his recordings are a crucial indication as to how his work should be played (Hill, 2000:119). A careful consideration of Stravinsky's interpretation of his own music leads to a deeper understanding of his musical language. The changing from, or consistency with, the markings, do not affect the musical characteristics or styles of the music within that period. In addition, this focus can provide a space for pianists to make decisions and to find the most convincing way to perform the piece.

#### 6.4 Interviewee interpretations

In order to engage in an understanding of a work and its relevance to interpretation, it is necessary to examine the types of changes the interviewees might want to make:

1. The initial modification may involve adding certain details to the score, i.e. 'addition'.
2. The second may be referred to as 'alteration' in which changes are made to the composer's original score, even though there are clear instructions to the contrary.
3. The third involves 'exclusion', whereby the performer ignores the composer's notation altogether.

The interpretations of two different performances of the selected case studies are compared and analysed. By using a dialectic framework, two potential solutions to the difficulties of interpretation can be identified. The analyses focus on performances by P2 and P3 of the early *Piano Sonata*; P1 and P3 of the *Cadenza Finale*; and P1 and P4 of *Movements*. It can be considered that these are performers with a robust sense of individuality in regards to expressing their own musical ideas and interpretations.

Regarding the descriptions in the tables below, several terms are defined based on my own definitions and interpretations given the context of the analysis. The term ‘emotive’ suggests the capacity to arouse a heightened intensity of feeling or expression as presumably intended by the composer. In contrast, ‘romantic’ refers to certain signatures or characteristics which are typical of romantic style of piano and orchestra music. The term ‘passionate’ implies a slightly more intense feeling than ‘emotive’. Admittedly, these definitions are both personal and subjective but they serve to describe the overall impressions of the music. The use of the term ‘lyrical melody’ refers to a rather more emotive and tuneful melodic passage or phase, whereas ‘long melody’ refers to how the melody is sustained or maintained in regard to its duration or re-appearance within the work.

#### 6.4.1 *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*

The table indicates the various approaches of P2 and P3 regarding first movement of Stravinsky’s early piano sonata.

Table 6.4.1: Comparison of two performances and their elements

	P2	P3
Tempo	Tempo rubato	Frequent tempo rubato
Phrasing	Long melodies with irregular phrases	Lyrical melodies with irregular phrases
Dynamics	Highly controlled	Less controlled
Character	Emotive and romantic	Passionate
Articulation	Legato	Legato
Pedalling	Frequent use of pedal	Less frequent use of pedal
The most important element	Phrasing; dynamic; pedal	Harmony
Element allowing more latitude	Tempo; dynamic; pedal	Phrasing

In the above table, it can be seen that the impressions of the work by P2 and P3 include both similarities and differences. The main relevance of the data is that, although they approached the work in roughly similar ways, their selection and differing emphases of the important elements, consequently produced different outcomes. For example, when approaching tempo rubato, they each played different lengths and shapes in order to accentuate climatic release points. The phrasing also differed: P2 identified the highest point from which Stravinsky wanted to delay the solution, whereas P3 tended to exaggerate the rubato. P2 was, by contrast, definitely more restrained. Nevertheless, P3 was particularly convincing when conveying the passionate and emotional character of the piece. This may have been as a result of this interviewee's frequent performances of romantic piano pieces, and subsequent knowledge of their common musical language.

Concerning the most important elements, P2 argued that they were: phrasing, dynamics, and especially, pedalling, which was considered the 'soul' of the piano' i.e., its essential attribute. P3, on the other hand, believed aspects of harmony to be the primary and key component of the work, adding:

This sonata has a lot of intrinsic harmony. It gives me a clear idea of what to do with colour. It also helps me with the phrasing, I probably go more intense or less intense depending on the harmony. For example, Stravinsky wrote very interesting harmony, but from all the late-romantic pieces I have played, I feel the harmony really gives something 'special' to the piece more than anything else.

In their evaluation of elements which allow for more latitude, P2 stated that this sonata is much more romantic, so there is much more scope for differences in tempo, dynamics and pedalling, so there is more room for rhetorical shaping and interpretation. By

contrast, P3 argued that phrasing offered more scope for exercising degrees of latitude or potential leeway. For example, you can choose to play with a very metronomic rhythm, or you can choose to play with very delicate intervals between the notes and know where to find the places to play rubato in lyrical passages.

The interviewee interpretations provide evidence that the emotional element in this musical style requires different levels of decision making. The notation markings are more numerous than in the neoclassical work. Indeed, the notation markings in this piece are similar to that of romantic and early-twentieth-century Russian piano music. When comparing the interviewees' approaches, it is possible to identify the strong influences of this period in both of their performances. As noted above, the six pianists might adopt similar approaches to the pieces initially, but their subsequent interpretation involves a range of variables regarding the musical elements.

#### 6.4.2 *Serenade in A*

The table below shows the different approaches by P1 and P3 on performing *Serenade in A: Cadenza Finale*.

Table 6.4.2: Comparison of two performances and their elements

	P1	P3
Tempo	Steady tempo	Frequent tempo rubato
Phrasing	Precise	Melodic shape
Dynamics	Highly controlled	More climactic, less controlled
Character	Pure	Dream like
Articulation	Mainly detached	Moderate, but often differs
Pedalling	Experimental generally dry	Conservative, more traditional generally wet
The most important element	Phrasing	Dynamic
Element allowing more latitude	Dynamic	Tempo

As the table shows, in the researcher's analysis of these two performances, the two pianists often interpret from the score in a number of ways. It can be seen that P3 tends to exercise less control in regard to dynamics, tempo and pedalling, but exhibits a more heightened sense of expression. She argued that: 'there is less instruction in it, and there is a lot of repetition, then, you can do different things in the repeated sections.' P1, on the other hand, stated that: 'my freedom depends on where in the piece we are, where in the piece does this part suggest'.

By contrast, P1 emphasises the specific elements which he considered interesting but also fails to include other features and details. The two interviewees appeared to play to their individual strengths. For example, P1 demonstrated his own marked sense of rhythm and articulation skills, whereas P3 presented a more powerful sense of expression and latitude.

In reference to the categories noted above, the majority of the interviewees belong to the 'addition' category, especially those who play in a rather more 'extreme' manner. This may be a response to the dryness and lack of clarity in the notation. In the *Cadenza Finale*, there was a tendency for the performers to add their own interpretations to the score which may contradict the composer's original intention (Stravinsky stipulated he was against any overt interpretation in his music). P1 stated that:

I heard Richter say he was against the interpretation of his performance. His sound, pacing and rhythm spacing is so wonderful. You don't need to do much with the music.

In regard to the most important element in *Cadenza Finale*, P1 kept to the phrasing markings shown in the music score. In contrast, P3 pointed out it was about dynamics, stating:

There is not much direction on the score, especially in terms of dynamics...the pattern can help with the shape, this is the same approach I take with Bach. Bach did not write any dynamic markings; therefore, I try to find patterns...if there is sequence, I try to do something about it, if there is repeat pattern, I try to do more at the first time, less at the second time.

Regarding the element which allows more latitude, P3 indicated that it was tempo. P3 commented:

Stravinsky tells you that one crochet is 92 at the top. He does not say you cannot slow down; you cannot speed up. I was practising with the metronome, to get the feel of 92 for the whole piece. After I get the feel I try to pull the tempo, because there are so many repetitions, I intend to change things when I do the second time...the lack of the notation gives me more freedom.

P1 pointed out that the dynamics can allow more latitude, precisely because Stravinsky did not indicate detailed dynamic markings; therefore, it allows the performer to emphasise the different layers of dynamic variation.

When discussing their interpretation to *Cadenza Finale* based on musical elements, their different responses revealed their respective approaches: P3 uses 'exclusion' and 'alteration' more often than the other interviewees. P3 also made unusual and unpredicted modifications to the composer's original score, while P1 kept closely to

the text. The tempo of P1 was approximately crotchet as 92 which is the tempo marking presented on the score. It is evident that P1 attempted to convey a general feeling of tempo as indicated in the score. Perhaps P3 was not fully aware of how to interpret the piece, possibly due to a lack of knowledge and experience as compared with P1. In many ways this situation emphasises the importance of this research, in that an informed musical intelligence based on experience and practice can enhance interpretation and decision-making process in regard to this work.

P1 states that he only played what was in the score. However, ascertaining exactly ‘what lies in the score’ means, is not an exact science: it can be open to various interpretations. Notation can exhibit inconsistencies and ambiguities and can thus be viewed in different ways, as Busoni points out:

Every notation is, in itself, a transcription of an abstract idea. The instant the pen seizes it; the idea loses its original form (Busoni 1911:85).

In regard to interpreting notions of latitude, it is possible to envisage degrees of scope along a continuum defined by two extremes. One involves an expressionless and mechanistic, metric performance, while the other concerns complete latitude in interpreting musical notes. By comparing two pianists with regard to these extremes, P1 is closer to the first whereas P3 is closer to the second.

#### 6.4.3 *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*

The table below indicates the different approaches by P1 and P3 regarding the first movement of *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*

Table 6.4.3: Comparison of two performances and their elements

	P1	P4
Tempo	Followed tempo marking	Followed tempo marking
Phrasing	Precise	Precise
Dynamics	Highly controlled	Highly controlled
Character	Brittle, fragmented	Highly rhythmic
Articulation	Strict adherence	Strict adherence to markings
Pedalling	Rarely used	Rarely used
The most important element	Rhythmic dissonance	Rhythm
Element allowing more latitude	Character	None

The table shows a comparison of the two performances and their respective elements. The reason for selecting these two interviewees was that they expressed a special interest in this work and were intrigued by its stark, rhythmic and unpredictable character, and they both performed this piece during the interview. They were both familiar with other serial piano music and have recorded works by other composers, such as Webern and Schoenberg, but not this Stravinsky case-study work. The interesting aspect of both their impressions was that the performance had to be tightly controlled and every note had to be clearly articulated. In their performances, they were able to achieve this clarity. Indeed, the musical notes may be considered more important than the phrases, they can create the whole structure and architecture of the music.

Regarding the most important elements, both P1 and P4 agreed that rhythm was the predominant element which required particular attention. P4 made the valid point that:

There is no room for changing the rhythm because you have to play with the orchestra. The nature of the music is not about notes themselves, because it is very hard to have harmonic language in the serial music...it is more about pattern, and the most of the piece has rhythmic constructs; therefore, the rhythm is very important.

In regard to elements which allow more latitude, P1 observed that the music allows almost no opportunity for the performer to stamp his or her personality on any performance. In his view, the music is stripped down to its complex structural elements.

P4 commented on the centrality of notation:

The reason we do not have lots of freedom in this music because the notation becomes the music itself. All the markings are the central consideration of the music. It is very difficult to give freedom while interpretation when there are so many markings on the score.

The performance from both interviewees convincingly maintained the rhythmic integrity of the piece showing the appropriate due care and accuracy required by the work. In P4's view, the articulation marks required particular and careful attention. She believed that they were more important in this work than in the other two case studies.

#### 6.5 Summary of interviewee interpretations

Arguably, this could be a predictable outcome given the diverse background and experience of interviewees. However, the important point worth stressing is the extent and variety of viewpoints and how to approach Stravinsky's piano works. The above analysis shows that the participants went about interpreting the pieces in subtly different ways. For the first piece, early piano sonata, it shows that the participants tended to use a similar approach when they interpreting pieces from late-romantic and early-twentieth-century Russian piano music, the main differences were use of pedal throughout the piece. For the other elements, such as tempo, phrasing, dynamic and articulation, their approaches were similar. My interpretation is that pianists exhibit the prior knowledge on how to interpret the piece in appropriate style. This may be due to the fact that they have had considerable experience in performing and recording the

pieces in similar style (i.e. late-romantic and early-twentieth-century Russian piano music). It can thus be inferred that they are very familiar with the way the music can be interpreted.

For neoclassical piece, however, the pianist may not be fully aware about appropriate approach even if they have already played twentieth-century piano music. This unique style of *Serenade in A* requires more careful scrutiny and practice in order to gain insight into how to effectively interpret music notations. For example, P1 offered in my view, a more convincing approach and explanation compared to that of P3. He appeared to have a much deeper understanding of the music, a view based on my listening to his performance. Moreover, he seemed to be thinking in the same way as Stravinsky, in regards to keeping strictly to the score. P3 did not seem to be fully aware of the intrinsic differences between Stravinsky's first and second periods. Therefore, it is understandable that she would play the piece in a way that was too romantic in nature, as she did not quite understand Stravinsky's ideas underpinning this neoclassical work.

In *Movements*, the pianists did their best to follow the many detailed, and clearly marked, notations in the music score, and their explanations were relatively uniform reflecting the strict structural organisation of the work. The nature of the piece showed that they did not have to consider their own interpretation to any significant degree. It was seen that rhythm was considered a crucial element when performing the piece, and it is also important to exercise strict control so that each note can be properly articulated. There were, however, variations regarding the intensity of elements such as sound and atmosphere. In the Discussion Chapter, this researcher offers her own approaches to the three case studies.

Taken together, the analyses of the three pieces underscore the importance of a number of aspects regarding approaches to music. First, it involves an underlying awareness of Stravinsky's musical language in order to interpret and perform the three respective styles. Second, through this awareness, it is possible to infer areas in which latitude or variation in emphasis can be effectively exercised. This requires an informed analysis of the score and the way in which the musical elements can offer subtle variations. This is not an easy task, especially for the second and third pieces. Even for experience professionals, it is a complex task and clearly involves a deeper understanding of the score and how to bring out the intrinsic character of the music. Nevertheless, in my view, it is a fascinating process in which we can gain deeper insight into how it is possible to formulate variations in approaching the music.

## **Chapter 7 Results and Interviews with Professional Pianists**

### 7.1 Introduction

In Chapter 7, the interviewee data generated by interview questions (Appendix I) is presented. The three piano works analysed in previous Chapters serve as a central framework; the interviewee responses focus directly on these case studies and their varied and related elements and characteristics. Examples from the respective music scores are provided to enhance clarity. The first aim of this chapter is to present and display the comments, viewpoints, experiences and approaches concerning the pieces without offering explanation, elaborate discussion on, or interpretation of, the responses and their meanings. The second aim is to allow the professional pianists to relate their own experience and their stories which have formed their approach to Stravinsky's piano music.

### 7.2 Interviewee profiles

As noted in Chapter 3 Methodology, this research aims to obtain data relevant to the research questions by using the data collected from semi-structured interviews of six selected participants. All the interviews were recorded on video between March 2017 and March 2018 in various locations: Sheffield (P1, P6), London (P2, P5), Birmingham (P3) and Bristol (P4). The participants are described as P1, P2, P3, P4, P5 and P6 respectively.

The interviewee samples were selected after careful reflection and a shift in criteria prior to March 2017. In the earlier two pilot studies and subsequent interviews of six other participants, it became clear that a higher level of a greater degree of interviewee was required. The data from the previous interviewees were therefore rejected and

replaced by that gained from the later participants. This change also resulted in further refinements and slight adjustments to several of the interview questions.

The interviewee profiles are as follows:

P1 is a British male, aged 62. He is a professional pianist, university piano tutor and recording artist who has played collaborative works of Stravinsky including *The Rite of Spring*, *Petrushka*, *Concerto for Two Pianos*, *Les Noces*, *L'Histoire du Soldat* for clarinet, violin and piano, and *Sonata for Two Pianos*.

P2 is a British male, aged 79. He is a highly experienced, professional concert pianist and recording artist. He is well known for his critically acclaimed concert performances and recordings of all of Stravinsky's piano works. These include *Capriccio for Piano and Strings*, *Firebird*, the duet version of *The Rite of Spring*, *Septet* and *Duo Concertante*.

P3 is a Korean female, aged 31, with a PhD in performance from a British university. She is a full-time, professional concert pianist and researcher. She is an experienced performer and specialises in the piano works of Russian composers in the early-twentieth-century. She has won several international piano competition prizes since graduating from her university studies and has made a number of classical music recordings.

P4 is a Taiwanese professional pianist, aged 33. She holds a PhD in performance from a British conservatory. She has been exploring the relationship between piano performance and contemporary dance; for example, performing *The Rite of Spring* with

contemporary dancers in order to create a new musical and dramatic narrative. She made several recordings of the works of late-romantic and twentieth-century composers, including Stravinsky.

P5 is a British male, aged 55. He is a university professor of music in performance. He is also international concert pianist, piano teacher and a qualified piano examiner who has performed and recorded many of Stravinsky's works including: *Concerto for Piano and Wind Instruments*, *Piano-Rag-Music*, the piano arrangement of *Chorale*, and the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*.

P6 is a British male, aged 70+. As an emeritus professor of music, he is an active researcher, musicologist, author and pianist, who has also achieved international recognition as a concert performer and recording artist. Considered one of the finest pianists of his generation, he has recorded all of Stravinsky's works for solo piano, as well as *Concerto for Two Pianos*, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, *The Rite of Spring* and the piano duet version of *Petrushka*. As an author, he is considered an authority on Stravinsky and Messiaen, and frequently gives media interviews, lectures and masterclasses in many countries. He has also received a number of international awards and prizes.

### 7.3 Comments on the interviewing process and data

The six interviewees generated a significant amount of primary data totalling 33,000 words of transcription and sixteen hours of recorded interviews. The data set content consisted of comments, viewpoints and perspectives regarding different approaches to the interpretation of Stravinsky's piano works taken from the three distinct periods of

his life. Given the size of the corpus, it was necessary to carefully select the most significant, relevant and frequently cited themes which emerged from the transcript interview data.

At this juncture, it is important to briefly explain certain aspects regarding the data gathering and the nature of the interview data in addition to the descriptions provided in Methodology Chapter 3. The first point is that a number of the interview questions are deliberately general in their focus. There are several reasons why this approach is adopted. As pointed out by Robson (1993) and Smith (1995), regarding generating data from semi-structured interviews, initial general questions main function is to act theme or topic markers. They thus serve to establish contexts in which more detailed follow up questions can be used to elicit more information. By moving from the general to more detailed questions, it is possible to identify new themes, request fuller explanation, qualification and clarification through the effective utilisation of interrogative techniques (Cohen et al.2007; Robson 1993).

As this study analysed data generated by interviews, it is important to keep in mind the characteristics of spoken language and oral discourse structure. The study analyses written transcripts but they are derived from oral interactions. The spoken language is characterised by a number of features. These include less careful thematic planning; changes in subject matter; false starts and hesitations; repetitions and rephrases; unstructured sentence patterns and a mixture of idiomatic and formal language (Crystal 1987). All of these performance variables could be identified in the raw data.

Another feature to keep in mind is that the opinions, viewpoints and statements produced by the interviewees should be interpreted within the thematic structure of the discourse. For example, short statements taken in de-contextualised isolation may appear obvious or trivial but the important point is how the theme is used and elaborated with the discourse as a whole (Schneider and Barron 2014). The goal of the interview analysis is not to pass judgement on the validity and veracity of isolated statements. Rather, the task is to consider the discourse as a whole and identify patterns of information generated by the participants and their thematic relationships (as described in section 7.4).

After recording, the transcriptions were then edited and checked for accuracy and cohesion. As noted above, there can be performance errors in natural speech. Aspects of spoken discourse such as frequent hesitations, prosodic features, unfinished sentences, pauses, ungrammatical utterances, irrelevant digressions, humorous exchanges and inaudible words were systematically removed from the raw data. The resulting data, as textual evidence, was then coded and thematically categorised. The expertise of a native speaker was used to clarify the precise meaning of the interview data, and to compensate for any lack of understanding by the non-native researcher. This use of triangulation helped enhance the accuracy, validity and reliability of the primary statements.

It can be inferred that the length of responses may reflect both the intrinsic interest, and depth of knowledge, of the interviewees. One feature observed by the interviewer was the manner in which the participants often answered the questions. The interview questions often received an initial prolonged silence, followed by a comment such as

‘That’s a tricky one.’ or ‘That’s a good question.’ and so forth. Therefore, what the researcher found particularly interesting was the thoughtful, measured and unhurried way many of the participants responded to the various questions. In short, it was observed that they did seem to think hard and take their time as they may have never been asked such questions previously. This assumption was confirmed by post-interview correspondence and verbal confirmation.

In regard to the questions posed during the interviews, it is worth noting how they were received. Although the interviewees were used to responding to media interviews, class and lecture questions, this was the first time they had experienced more detailed questioning which focused predominantly on Stravinsky’s piano music and his other works. Another observation was that, given the length of the interviews, ranging between two to four hours in duration, it appeared to be an enjoyable and stimulating experience for both the interviewees and the researcher. Again, this was confirmed by participants’ comments and post-interview correspondence.

#### 7.4 Analysis of the interview data: themes and sub-themes

In order to facilitate the analysis of the data, it was necessary to organise the responses according to a number of themes and sub-themes which emerged from the interviews. The sub-themes and phrases listed below were frequently mentioned and discussed in the interview transcripts.

Table 7.4.1: Themes and sub-themes from the analysis of interview data and their relationships

Themes	Sub-themes
Rationale for understanding the music	Background of the composer Composer's intention General trend of performance Orchestral colour Performance tradition
Objective perspectives on latitude	Tempo rubato Pedalling Personal choice Stylistic influence Rules Different instrument Preconceptions of composer sound
Interpretation: decisive factors	Familiarity of the piece Personality Studio recording Live performance
Good performance	Accuracy Atmosphere Intuition Emotionally involved Communication with the audience

### 7.5 Interviewee comments on the Russian period and *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*

When approaching the sonata, P2 made the point that: ‘You tend to have the nineteenth-century Russian tradition at the back of your mind. Basically, different styles require different approaches. There are types of styles which reflect changes in his musical language, more so than other composers.’ The researcher asked this question: ‘I listened to your recording of the piano sonata, when you interpret this here (example 7.5.1), you play one bar and then stop a bit between. Why did you break the phrase?’

He made the point that a passage and phrase like this are very awkward to play (see example 7.5.1).

P2: Yes, this is a break...I did it on that day! That's hard to answer to be honest really. If I did it again, I'd probably do it in one bar. But you can't do it smoothly. That's the kind of thing that shows he wasn't really good at the piano. It's really awkward to play. He's thinking in an orchestral sense. I mean look at that for a stretch and I have quite a big hand. It's horrible to play...I used to think that he was more interested in key changes – he does it very often – rather than letting it fit on the piano.

Example 7.5.1: *Piano Sonata* (bb. 10–13)



In reference to the above comment, the researcher asked this question:

So the phrasing is influenced by gesture. In certain aspects, you can cover with the pedal up to a point. For instance, in this page, *forte* at the beginning. No dynamic for four lines. But what kind of elements can you base it on so as to change the dynamics?

P2 gave his response:

A good question, isn't it? In my view, you've got to decide about the whole structure of the piece and how it is going to grow. (See right hand chord in Example 7.5.1) Actually, there is his high spot. After that, he wants it to slow down. It is clear that patterns are part of it. It is also the nature of the sequence. This is a stretch which is really loud. In fact, the more you play it, the more you feel. The music should be less: you have to quiet down elsewhere. It's a big piece, almost thirty minutes; after this section, then you can come down a bit.

P5 made a point that when approaching a piece like this piano sonata, it is important to consider elements which create an orchestral sound:

As for the technical approach, it (early piano sonata) looks well written for piano even though he wrote a lot of solo piano music for him to play himself some of the work is not so pianistic. I do not think Stravinsky was a great pianist but he was not bad either. Sometimes, I think this can cause a problem in his music with his difficult gestures and indeed the shapes of things. The problem could be that maybe my hands are not big enough. Pianistically, though, it can be difficult to learn. I have this problem at the beginning of the *Serenade* actually. There are just a few chords. For example, I cannot put the chord down at the end of the first bar. Here are certain things in an octave which are not a good shape for my hand. There are some other things as well. As I mentioned that little arrangement in the *Chorale for piano* (1920). Yes, there are some awkward things. But funnily enough, actually a lot of the *Concerto* is quite pianistic. The first two movements especially.

Regarding his approach to this early sonata, P5 emphasised the importance of understanding and creating an 'orchestral sound'. For this piece, therefore, he would recommend his students to first listen to orchestral music such as *Firebird*, or Rimsky-Korsakov's orchestral works in order to establish the key characteristics of Russian romantic music, explaining: 'Just to get the romantic 'Russian sound' in my head. The piece is incredibly orchestral, very much like Glazunov' (P5). He also commented on difficult gestures of the work which could be problematic for performers and also refers to other works.

P1 offered his descriptions regarding the piece: ‘Typically, nineteenth-century Russian, full pedal, emotional, “big boned”, same approach to the Tchaikovsky sonata, I am not thinking it is by Stravinsky: very romantic, very traditional, I am thinking of nineteenth-century sound’ (see Example 7.5.2). ‘The second subject very romantic, lyrical, Schumann-esque, spiritual bond. Rich warm sound’ (see Example 7.6.5).

Example 7.5.2: *Piano Sonata* (bb. 1–5)



Example 7.5.3: *Piano Sonata* (bb. 32–34)



P3 emphasised the importance of tempo, commenting:

For the Sonata, you can certainly do your own interpretation but you still need to follow the instructions. For example, if you pull the tempo too much you will lose the sense of dotted rhythm and his tempo markings also give you guidance.

Referring to the two subjects above, P6 offered a number of interesting observations which are worth quoting in full:

The Sonata is a very early work dedicated to a virtuoso of the time, Nicolas Richter. It has these big, obvious gestures which are rhetorical. It is almost a fight between melodies. So you have these syncopations fighting amongst each other. Stylistically, it obviously goes back to the nineteenth-century and with the little kind of Cadenza there. The second subject is more lyrical with that kind of

broken chords. It is very accomplished. It is not very like later Stravinsky; it is nothing like the 1924 Sonata. But that was what going on when Stravinsky was twenty-two. This is the kind of music he was familiar with and you have got to start somewhere. It does have that heroic energy and impulsiveness.

Referring to Russian music at that time, P2 holds the view that the music of Rachmaninov and Scriabin at that time provides:

Great scope for rubato; variation of dynamics and speed. Later, Stravinsky almost wanted to clear music up and get rid of that expressionism. As a result, so often there is much less difference between performances.

Reflecting on the piece as a whole, P2 stressed the point that although Stravinsky composed at the piano, he intended to think orchestrally during this period, and treated the piano like an orchestra:

I just hear the woodwind play that; for example flutes, clarinet and bassoons. It could easily be transcribed to wind group and sound just as good. Different colour but the music would not suffer. It is definitely old tradition.

Referring in the score to the third chord of right hand in bar 45 (see Example 7.5.4), P2 also observed:

The 1904 Sonata is an early piece but look at that: putting all these notes together. It's an unusual musical gesture and chord. You could imagine a wind section playing that and it would be fine. This kind of music allows you to use the pedal.

Indeed, there are many other similarly complex chords like this, with harmonic doubling.

Example 7.5.4: *Piano Sonata* (bb. 44–46)



In regard to interpretation of his early sonata, P5 considered the importance of rubato in this piece and offered this interesting advice:

In that Sonata, rubato is more appropriate compared with the other two pieces in his later periods because it is very romantic. You could play this with a lot of rubato. For someone who did not know his style, they may think that rubato could make it more interesting. But that is not part of the style. It is to do with a certain sound and being expressive through the sound, not with the tempo. If you think of sections even in *Firebird*, they are very, very expressive. There are also tunes in *The Rite of Spring*, at the opening of the piece. It is incredibly expressive. But if I heard someone play it in a more romantic way, it would not be very appropriate. Stravinsky had this idea that music was incapable of expressing anything outside itself.

Similar to the comments by P1, P2 and P6, P5 referred to this ‘Russian sound’ in other works and described their characteristics (my emphasis):

There is a certain Russian expressiveness in the quality of the sound in the second movement of the *Piano Concerto for Wind Instruments*. The chords are thickly scored for the piano. It is very deeply expressive but not romantic. Because later on in the movement, there

are these cadenzas that come. But particularly when he has something melodic, it is expressive in sound. Sound is a powerful thing and is what attracts us to any piece of music and instrument. When you hear someone playing with an amazing sound, that seems completely appropriate to the music, it touches you in some way. For me, that is the difference between a great performance and an ‘okay’ performance.

Moving on from the interviewee comments on the *Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* and aspects of ‘Russian’ period, the following section tends to focus on the neoclassical *Serenade in A*.

#### 7.6 Interviewee comments on the neoclassical period and *Serenade in A*

Referring to this *Serenade*, P6 considered a deductive approach to the piece. He pointed out that it is possible to identify the many clues Stravinsky leaves in the score and thus work out its direction and structure. In this way it is possible to determine certain variables which may affect interpretation. He explained accordingly:

Stravinsky deliberately uses the Ds in such a way that they go parallel across the bar line. I am sure that is deliberate. He is using these little patterns. You could call them ‘rhythmic cells’. Each of them are like individual cells, and we can see them in *The Rite of Spring* so we can see where it comes from. They are in a very long line. There is an argument between the types...this is a fascinating movement, a very interesting choice.

When approaching the piece, P6 underlined the need to carefully formulate one’s own ideas regarding the musical implications, especially in regard to harmony and the distribution of sound patterns as rhythmic cells. He referred to the analytical process as

‘playing with shapes’. Concerning room for interpretation, he stressed the important point that there can: ‘be an enormous amount of decisions to take. You cannot just play it’.

P6 also made the point, that in regard to the interpretation of the piano works, it is crucial to use one’s own judgement. In some ways, the reduced number of markings requires the performer to exercise closer scrutiny. This is imperative, not only to gain an understanding of the concepts behind the piece, but also of Stravinsky’s way of thinking and how he organised the whole structure of his compositions.

It is interesting to compare the descriptive terminology of this piece to that of the above piano sonata. For example, P1 described the fourth movement in the *Serenade* as:

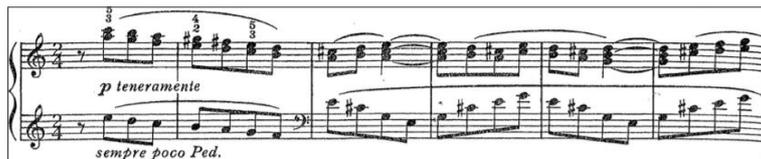
More precious, pure in style; beautiful, neat legato, no big bass, no left hand beat, more classical in style, more refined, less exaggerated, the pedal is the soul of the piano in the nineteenth-century, but not always in twentieth-century softer sound.

According to P5, it is essential to consider the overall sound and how to balance the chords, and underscored the point that:

The sound is every important in it. Listening to something later than this, there are certain things in the *Symphony for Wind Instruments*. There are certain sounds in the beginning part of the second part of *The Rite of Spring*. Just the sound of that reminds me a little bit of this. To be more accurate, it is the atmosphere. It is a very unique sound. It is different from other composers. It is very distinctive and individual. I would work a lot on how I would balance these chords. For example, I would pay attention to the lower part with the right

hand or left hand bit more in certain moments, as well as the fingering (see Example 7.6.1). There is a certain quality to the sound. There are some things like in Poulenc and Milhaud. There are unusual sounds that mark this out as Stravinsky. But the important thing is finding that atmosphere which is a little bit uncomfortable. The language is not so diatonic.

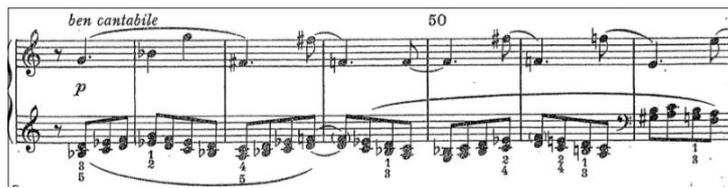
Example 7.6.1: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 1–6)



P5 also made the point that certain phrases in the *Cadenza Finale* were reminiscent of Debussy in that there is certain atmosphere which is similar to Debussy. In regard to which element would allow more latitude, P5 in reference to the piece as a whole (using 7.6.2 as an example), makes the following point:

The balance between the voices and dynamic markings, to some extent, I would think how I would sharpen all of this. I would experiment making lots of different shapes; for example, going up and down in terms of dynamic. I could keep to one flat dynamic, or I could interpret it diminuendo and then crescendo. This is partly because of the harmonic progression and in order to convey the beginning and ends of phrases. But I think you can do it quite subtly.

Example 7.6.2: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 46–52)



Here is an excerpt from the interview transcript where I asked P2 about his 1994 recording of this work. The original opening question was about his interpretation of the piece. The follow-up questions were concerned with the issue of how closely performers should follow the score. The justification for including the exchange is that it offers insights into how a professional pianist approaches aspects of interpretation, and his decision-making process. It allowed me to understand the rationale behind his interpretation. It also draws attention to how aspects of latitude can be embodied in the piece and how his ideas and thinking may have changed over time. The exchange developed as follows:

The researcher's interview question (Q1): Why did you use finger legato in your recording?

Because the score seems to suggest woodwind instruments rather than pure harmonic sounds generated by the piano and I still see it (see music examples in this section).

Q2: Do you think you followed the phrasing in the score strictly?

(While listening to the music) Yes, that's not bad. I would probably do more now, such as longer phrasing. You really want to listen to the phrasing. I thought it was a much longer line just going on. I did it more here (see Example 7.6.1), which is more clear than here (see Example 7.6.3), and maybe it was a mistake. I should've done one or

the other, but I think I would now, to be honest. The left is pretty smooth all the time. The left is alright, and it is the right that you are going to hear. (Q: So are you going to play the right hand legato?) I think I probably overdid it a little bit. (Q: Do you think you played the left hand quite detached in order to show the right hand?) Well, the left is just getting to the really long phrase. It just keeps on going. And I think the phrasing would be like a bassoon player taking a quick breath. (Q: Do you mean between each slur?) Yeah. Exactly. From bar 12 to bar 19 (see below Example 7.6.3). I think I would do it a little bit slower now as well. I would do it a little bit more *andante*. (Q: Why?) Because I think that (the recording) is just a little bit quick, a little bit too fast. Because then there will be more reason to have short phrases.

Example 7.6.3 *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 12–19)

Q3: You played *crescendo* before the pause. Is this the way you emphasise the pause to make it obvious to audience?

Well, did I get louder there? (Yeah.) Well, probably I shouldn't have done. (Playing music) I guess the speed is okay. Actually, I didn't do *crescendo* over there, it was the accent. I got through these kind of quiet.

Q4: Why did you do a *ritardando* before the pause?

I did so you can hear it, not to emphasise the pause, just to make the harmony clear.

Q5: Why did you put an accent on the first note of slur?

Well, that's the way you'll do it. You won't put the accent on the second note, would you? They wouldn't be equal, either.

Q6: I thought you would like to change the colour of this harmony.

A little bit after all of these. All those are in the same mood and the same movement. Here in the Cadenza a slightly different thing is going on. Apart from that, no. I just thought that if you are a woodwind player, you would play (humming). When I play it, I always emphasise the top note of the right hand.

Q7: Is that the right way to do?

I think, strictly speaking, there shouldn't be an accent there. It seems as though Stravinsky wants it to be on the same level. It's rather boring, don't you think? The note is going to sound louder just because it has the higher register. You shouldn't put a physical accent on it, or try not to.

Q8: So the way you use the pedal depends on the change of the dynamic?

Regarding the *Serenade in A*, there's no harmonic progression: it's not a harmonic piece so how would you use the pedal? Just touching it here and there to keep it smooth. When the hand position is not comfortable, you can cheat it a bit by using the pedal to make it sound smooth because it must not sound as though it is being pedalled all

the time. Just touch it to help you play legato. Maybe a quarter pedal, but just a touch.

Q9: How would you describe the character of the piece, the general mood and atmosphere of the music?

It is sort of happily drifting along. It is not going to have any disturbance. It is like water going along without any ripples in it. It is moving gently: it does not really disturb things that much. This quaver movement goes on all the time until it stops. It has a comfortable feel to it. It does not have any of Stravinsky's rhythmic punching or anything like that. It's just the opposite: smooth and calm.

Q10: Which of the three piano pieces would you consider the most demanding?

P6 made the point that the *Serenade* is rather deceptive: it is not as straightforward as the score suggests:

The *Cadenza Finale* looks simple, you could almost sight-read it, but I think it could be weeks and weeks just to realise it, to understand it. It is very challenging. I think it is a wonderful but difficult piece. Personally, I am more interested in the neoclassical works.

P6 emphasised the different character of this piece compared with the previous *Sonata* and offered this observation while referring to the score:

You have this flowing andantino, always a little pedal to create a warmth of sound, there is the piano detrimental. The fact that it is all in 2/4, it is not like *The Rite of Spring* where the time signature changes every bar. Here, we have a kind of teasing and rather playful playing across 2/4 (see Example 7.6.4). I also think the phrase marks are very important. Here is harmony and here is scale which goes all

the way to here and then changes but he, very perfectly, does not mark this like that. Although there is a change of harmony (see bar 25 in Example 7.6.4), this phrase line very specifically contradicts the natural tendency to isolate that (from second chord in bar 24 to the third chord in 25), because of the harmony changes.

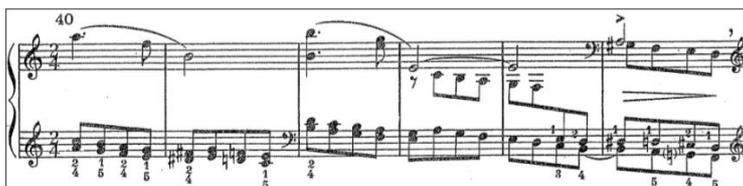
Example 7.6.4: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 24–29)



P6 observed that the *Serenade in A* has much less rubato than the earlier *Sonata*. It is thus necessary to think carefully about how to interpret certain features of the piece and makes the point that:

It is all to do with how you interpret; for example, the apostrophes in the score (see bar 45 in Example 7.6.5 below) and how they affect the piece. In my case, it could be because the wind players need to breathe, it could be a tiny silence. But a definite silence. The metronome could not go on through that. I am being true to the music because I am finding it has implications and possibilities. Another thing, it is difficult to define the term [rubato] strictly and regard to following the score as well as all the other descriptors. They all have a qualitative value or aspect. It is all a matter of judgement, taste, imagination, understanding, realising the implications. It is all deep stuff!

Example 7.6.5: *Cadenza Finale* (bb. 40–46)



To complete the interviewees' impressions of this neoclassical piece, the following Table 7.6.6 offers a summary of its key characteristics as derived from the interview data:

Table 7.6.6: Key features from interview data

P1	<i>More precious; pure in style; beautiful neat legato; no big bass; no left hand beat; more classical in style; more refined; less exaggerated; softer sound</i>
P2	<i>Not a pianistic piece; it is a reduction of an orchestral piece</i>
P3	<i>It has less structure than the Sonata; it is possible to do different things in repeated sections</i>
P4	<i>Particularly difficult to keep legato in the left hand; it is a bit tricky; very mysterious; difficult to choose direction</i>
P5	<i>The sound and atmosphere are very important; it is very unique; distinctive and individual; important to balance chords; unusual sound; atmosphere uncomfortable; the language is not so diatonic</i>
P6	<i>Phrase marks are very important; a little pedal is needed to create a warm sound; it has a flowing andante; the score looks superficially simple but it could take weeks and weeks to fully understand it</i>

What is particularly interesting, from the point of view of this researcher, is how the six participants expressed their impressions and observations using slightly different terms of reference and vocabulary. This may have been influenced by their varied backgrounds, ways of approaching Stravinsky's music, recording repertoire, and career paths.

### 7.7 Interviewee comments on the serial period and *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*

The following section focuses on the interviewee data directly related to Stravinsky's *Movements for Piano and Orchestra* 1958–59. The participants offered their viewpoints, experience and approaches to this markedly different compositional style. The piece is a good example of Stravinsky's change in direction: from his neoclassical period from 1920s to that of his serial period from 1950s. Referring to the music score, the initial impression provided by P1 was succinctly expressed:

Very brittle texture, exciting, brilliant sound, quite percussive, difficult rhythms, accents, staccato, played as accurately as possible, pedal rarely used, 'lots of surprises' for pianist and listener (unpredictable), difficult skips, timing, tricky for accuracy; you would hardly believe the pieces were from the same composer. More startling than Beethoven, you would even need a different type of piano action for each piece; Stravinsky wanted to stay in the mainstream of musical style.

P2 emphasised the fact that, in his view many serial pieces are relatively difficult to play and fully comprehend. Moreover, the performers' personality takes second place:

Lots of serial works are tough to understand and play, it is like gradually peeling away the performer's personality, there is less and less, you have just got to play the notes, you cannot do anything with it. Stravinsky has stripped it right down, there are instruction for nearly every note, it is all single line, you are not going to pedal this much (see Example 7.7.1). What can you do? – Not much. There is little room for interpretation, and for the performer to stamp his personality on it. Serial music is difficult, it is hard to learn, especially this breaking up of everything; it goes against what piano does well. Piano loves harmony, long phrases and pedal, sounds and harmonics.

Stravinsky treats it like a woodwind or bass instrument. It is stripped of all the things it likes doing well.

Example 7.7.1: *Movements* (bb. 4–7)



According to P3:

The serial period requires the least amount of interpretation, because it is very instructed. Thus, it almost gives you no room for interpretation – you have to follow exactly what is written on the score, especially the rhythm.

An expert in contemporary music, P5 details how he would approach the piece and what features he would prioritise, in particular the importance of analysing how the rhythm works. His insightful comments, prompted by my follow-up questions, are considered to be worth citing in full:

Because of the rhythm actually, I would try to work out the rhythm away from the piano, because it is like a little ensemble. I would first work out how the rhythm works. There is a sense of gesture in the rhythm; for example, in *The Rite of Spring* the rhythm is not gesture, it is more rhythmic energy and excitement.

The researcher's interview question follows (Q1): What do you mean by 'rhythmic gesture'?

For instance, whether you see this as a pure rhythm, the first two bars are one gesture, like a phrase (see example 7.7.2 below). So whether it is more pointillist, every note is important in the rhythm. Looking at this moment, there are a few little accents here (see above example 7.7.1). But here (see example 7.7.3 below), there is no indication of accenting. In fact, all the way though this first line here; am I going to direct something towards a certain point? Or is it something which is much more ‘note- for- note’?

Example 7.7.2: *Movements* (bb. 1–3)



Example 7.7.3: *Movements* (bb. 8–11)



Q2: How do you indicate this at the end of the phrase?

The most obvious thing is that this is a four-bar phrase, because of the repeating patterns. What is the effect of having changes of time signature? So how does that affect the music? There is something a bit more hurried about this. Because that bar is shorter (see example 7.7.1/7.7.3). I think that when you play this you can hear a sense of a musical sentence.

P5 made several pertinent points regarding the challenging aspects of the piece, especially for performers coming to the work for the first time, as well as for the audience (my emphasis):

Moreover, when the music is very complex like this, it is very easy to get lost with endless notes and endless bars of music. It is like reading a book, word by word, letter by letter. You cannot make sense of a group of words like a sentence. It is difficult for listeners and performers to understand. The performer would probably not play this from memory. You would want to have a sense of reading the music and its structure.

P5 again emphasised the significance of understanding the underlying structure of the piece as in the fourth movement of *Movements* detailed in Chapter 5:

So that was what I was meaning before when I mentioned the importance of structure. I would analyse this from the point of view of structure: recurring intervals and rhythmic patterns or rhythmic gestures. But once I have done that and seen it, I would then ask myself the question: ‘How does that affect how I play it and how the listener hears it?’ This is because it is not really useful reading this to people who are not musicians by just analysing it. In a complex piece like this, we need to have some sense of serial procedures. We must make these things clear to audience. If it only exists as an analysis, it is difficult to connect with them. You must be clear what Stravinsky is about.

P6 made the point that, although lacking in emotional content, the serial works can be ‘expressive’, and that in the 1950s:

This sort of music can be expressive. But ‘expressive’ does not have to mean ‘pulled about’. In *Movements* there is clearly not much leeway for rubato, so any timings or ‘placings’ would have to be subtle indeed. However, there is lots one can do in terms of touch and colour; for example, by varying the ‘sharpness’ of staccatos, balancing chords internally, or balancing contrapuntal lines, and above all, in the character of the gestures.

P6 also described his ideas and thought processes regarding this particularly demanding piece and offers the following ideas and advice:

In this piece, I am also thinking shapes, I am thinking about what patterns and what ideas get developed and how they emerge. Things like the interchange between the orchestra and piano; where there are similarities at that time while writing for orchestra and piano and what instruments are being used. *Movements* was inspired by Stravinsky’s admiration for Webern, and is very much influenced by Webern. It is more difficult than *Serenade* and *Sonata*, it is more difficult to penetrate the style, in order to find what their ideas were. You can clearly see the connection between this and that. It is completely new type of sound but the pattern are similar.

P4 also made the point that it is important to pay attention to the rhythm:

It is very important to keep it rhythmical, it has a very strictly written rhythm which makes the rhythm very strong. And it needs to be played very carefully and accurately. Once you follow the rhythm he wrote, there is very little room for you to change anything.

From the above comments, Stravinsky’s *Movements* from the serial period requires an awareness of the special nature of this type of piano work. It is highlighted that it is a

complex rhythmic piece to learn and that it is crucial to understand Stravinsky's compositional techniques and systems as detailed in Chapter 5 above.

### 7.8 Interviewees' references to other composers

The analysis of the interview data below revealed a consistent pattern of reference to other composers. Although directly asked about various aspects relating to Stravinsky and his piano music from distinct periods, the six interviewees also consistently alluded to certain characteristics of other composers. The data analysis showed that their objective was to emphasise and exemplify a particular point and make analogies and comparisons to the practices of other composers. It is particularly insightful to examine how the participants utilised these examples to elucidate and clarify various concepts, tendencies or intrinsic qualities of Stravinsky's music as compared to that of other composers. The interview code (e.g. P1) indicates the participant's reference.

Table 7.8.1: Stravinsky and other composers

<u>Composer</u>	<u>Cited in reference to</u>
Bach	Similarities to Stravinsky's opening section of <i>Concerto for Piano</i> (1924) (P5); Comparing use of pedal; differences between playing pieces of both composers; avoid too much pedal, use sparingly especially in faster passages; a slight touch can underline a harmonic movement (P5). Much more latitude in Bach when interpreting markings in score; virtuoso playing encouraged (P2, P3 P5, P6)
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Beethoven	Like Stravinsky an outstanding innovator; similar use of foreshortening to create tension (P6). There is often plenty of latitude written in the markings; importance of tempo in both composer's works as well as revised and changed tempi (P1, P6).

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Brahms            Theme: mental state and personality of composer (P3): dedicated works and letters to Clara Schumann (P5) gave revealing insights into the intimate nature and emotive element of his piano sonatas which could influence interpretation (P5).

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Chopin            Historical background: lived in poverty (P3); comparison of Stravinsky's mental state with that of Chopin. The latter was a mentally fragile and vulnerable individual which is clearly reflected in his music (P5); reading accounts of how he taught his students can give a better perspective in understanding his ideas (P3); considered important for performance practice (P4); contrasting how Stravinsky composed: Chopin composed pianistically rather than orchestrally (P6); he could get the best out of the piano and create new sounds (P2); In contrast, Stravinsky regarded it merely as a 'utility instrument' best suited to percussion and often composed with an orchestra in mind (P2, P6); Chopin was considered a far more accomplished pianist than Stravinsky (P1, P2, P5, P6). Chopin, like Stravinsky, was influenced by Bach and Mozart, and was the innovator of new harmonic language (P5).

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Debussy           Similar to Stravinsky; important to understand that Debussy often thought orchestrally when composing for piano (P5); this results in many lines and layers; use of pedal: early recordings reveal performers thought they should use lots of pedal much more than modern pianists would use (P6); like Stravinsky, he created new sounds for the piano (P5); perceived influence in Stravinsky's neoclassical pieces, especially beginning of *Cadenza Finale* expressing a sonorous quality (P2, P3, P5); Debussy's piano music would make an excellent complementary foil to Stravinsky's piano pieces in a performance repertoire (P5).

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Mozart            Like Stravinsky, he was able to create a distinctive musical sound (P3). Reminded (P4) of Mozart in the early *Piano Sonata* due to the phrasing and also in the dedicated music. Mozart ‘always seems to be there’ in *The Rite of Spring* for example, due to complex texture and the need to be precise and neat (P4). In contrast, (P6) compared Stravinsky’s style to Mozart, who is considered very ‘gushy’ if played with too much emotion. By contrast, (P4) stressed how the composer’s music was an effective and powerful emotional device. (P3) referring to a composer’s mental state, stressed the difference between the exuberance and joy often expressed in Mozart’s music which was in contrast to his tragic and depressing circumstances.

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Messiaen        (P6) referred to how Stravinsky and other composers, as conductors, may attempt to ‘control’ their music. However, they can vary considerably in the control they exercise. As an example, (P6) recalled how Messiaen notated his rhythms with detailed precision but always wanted to play with greater rhythmic freedom. Alluding to Stravinsky and his piano scores, (P6) also makes the point that performers may not be necessarily guided by what the score looks like on paper. (P6) commenting on Stravinsky’s dramatic change in styles in the 1920s shared Messiaen’s critical view that Stravinsky’s neoclassical works were at that time ‘a complete aberration’ compared to *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*.

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Prokofiev        (P1, P2, P5, P6) all referred to Stravinsky and the frequent discrepancy between what composers may state in their writings and interviews and what they actually do with their music. To exemplify this, (P5) remarked that Prokofiev was a complex character who wrote about his dislike of, and disdain for, the music of romantic composers, such as Chopin’s ‘over-emotive’ music. This sentiment is also reflected Stravinsky’s own comments. Nonetheless, (P5) stated that Prokofiev wrote some beautiful

melodies which are clearly romantic and emotional music, especially the melodies in the last movement of his third piano concerto. He made the point that performers ‘should not necessarily play it like a romantic piece of music.’(P5).

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Rachmaninov The interviewees (P1-6) all commented on some of the difficult passages in Stravinsky’s piano works. In reference to this fact, (P2) pointed out that both Rachmaninov and Scriabin, for instance, also featured sections which were difficult to play. The difference when compared to Stravinsky, however, is that they went on to develop a style where it became easier to play, whereas Stravinsky did not (P2). Referring to Stravinsky taking liberties with his own work, as witnessed in his recordings of both orchestral and piano works, (P5) used the example of Rachmaninov’s disregard for his own markings in his G-Minor Prelude, playing out of time, and even adding extra elements not written on the score. He was considered a far more accomplished pianist than Stravinsky by (P2, P5, P6), yet in contrast to Stravinsky he often lacked confidence in his own abilities (P5).

The comments made about Rachmaninov are particularly pertinent in regard to the analysis of Stravinsky’s own piano recordings of *Piano-Rag-Music* and his conducting of *Firebird* as described in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 (Section 7.9) above. It can be seen that there were a considerable number of differences from the original score as well as variations in regard to the musical elements.

The above table shows how the interviewees frequently used their in-depth knowledge and understanding of other composers to highlight certain aspects of Stravinsky’s music when responding to the interview questions. It should be noted that the interview questions did not consist of any overt or direct reference to other composers and

therefore the responses were unsolicited. Other composers also briefly mentioned, were: Boulez, Webern, Schumann, Bartok and Schoenberg, in order to draw attention to a particular fact or trait pertaining to Stravinsky's piano music and musical language.

### 7.9 Latitude of interpretation

As stated in the research questions, the central concern of this study is the key issue of latitude when interpreting Stravinsky's piano works. There was a considerable amount of discussion and a variety of viewpoints expressed by the interviewees on observations of latitude. As primary data, the thematically arranged comments were particularly insightful. P1 stated that:

It is possible to get emotionally involved in the story line of Stravinsky's works even though he did not seem to compose with performers in mind and giving strict instruction in regard to notation.

He went on to comment that Debussy seemingly had a similar approach: replying to an enquiry about possible changes to the score he angrily replied that: 'four semiquavers mean four semiquavers.' In other words, performers should do as instructed.

Concerning interpretation of Stravinsky's piano works, his own performances have to be considered, alongside the original score. The interviewees gave their impressions after they had listened to three excerpts from Stravinsky's own performance of *Firebird Scherzo* from the 1920s, 1940s and 1960s, during the interview. It should be noted that, the interviewees were not told that they were listening to Stravinsky's own performance before they gave their views of the recordings, and in the interviews conducted so far,

none of them realised that these recordings were from the same conductor. P1 and P2 both like the 1940s recording the most, P1 states:

It's almost like three different conductors, very interesting. He is always reinventing his music, adjusting the tempi, making some of the slurs, accents, more and more expressive. The 1960s one is more romantic. It just shows how you can come to the same score with fresh eyes and ears...I really did think there were three different conductors. Stravinsky was a pianist, and this influenced the way he conducted. That is absolutely fascinating. I like the 1940s one the best: the strictest one, when he was formulating his ideas on performance and perhaps how he should not be quite so wayward.

P3 and P4 preferred Stravinsky's performance from 1960s, they both thought his playing allowed more latitude, and that it sounded more complex in the last recording. It was remarked that there were: 'a lot of things going on' in regard to interpretation. P3 pointed out that he did: 'pull time here and there'. P4 also comments:

I like the last one more because I feel the dynamics were much richer. And the dynamics are more in sync within the rhythm in order to drive the rhythm in a certain direction...I did not realise they were Stravinsky's own conducted works as they are very different. Very interesting: Stravinsky himself changed his feeling about the tempo. The transformation in his music in these years is striking.

According to four of the interviewees, tempo was considered the most variable factor when comparing these recordings. It was remarked on by all of the interviewees that it was a key element in exercising latitude when interpreting works. Indeed, it was pointed out that performers often required advice or confirmation about when to vary tempo when interpreting works. For example, P1 commented that:

You have to try to find a tempo. But there are some pieces in which it is very difficult because the composer is saying ‘a little bit more here, a little less here.’ The very difficult fluctuating of tempo, which probably the romantic composers introduced; maybe they played classical composers like that. There are reports of Beethoven changing the tempi (G-major Sonata Op. 14 No. 2), which is very interesting: it doesn’t mean to say we have to copy that, but it is worth bearing in mind.

P1 further emphasised that:

When we talk about the freedom in his early *Sonata* and *Serenade*, we often firstly think about the rubato. With Stravinsky, this is rare. Not absolutely never. He has cantabile lines, but he uses less than other composers, certainly rarer than in nineteenth-century music. Also, in the text, there is staccato and legato, but in between staccato and legato there are many different lengths. So you have to decide for yourself what the lengths for staccato are.

In regard to the reason why Stravinsky did not always follow his notations in the score,

P1 argued that the rationale behind this might be familiarity with the piece:

The tempo and the heightened expression of the 1960s recording is too ‘soupy’ compared to what we usually think of Stravinsky. The lively tempo of the second recording, makes the music jump out of the page more. The first one is slightly sleepier, but of course in those days, the music was less familiar to the musicians. People could do one thing in 1920s, by the 1940s they were much more familiar with it. It is about familiarity.

As P2 also pointed out: ‘The more you practice, the quicker you play.’ However, in regard to P2’s previous recording of Stravinsky’s piano works; for example, in the

*Cadenza Finale*, he played one crotchet as 102 twenty years ago. He played a slower tempo, more strictly to composer's notation on the piano score during the interview (one crotchet is 92).

As the recordings appear to contradict one another, P4 argued that: 'this means we do not need to follow his speed or dynamic marks, because they sound so different in his own recordings.' Accordingly, an important question that pianists have to address is: How strictly should performers adhere to the notation in Stravinsky's music scores?

It is clear from the literature and the interviewee responses that this issue constantly generates much debate among performers and conductors. In many ways, it lies at the heart of performance interpretation, and involves the responsibility of the performer to faithfully interpret the instructions of the composer. Therefore, notions of accuracy, and careful attention to a composer's instructions are often the priority for the performer, especially in regard to *Serenade in A* and, more especially, in *Movements*. However, it should be kept in mind that the notation in the score may not be the main concern of the audience, as P1 commented:

First, I go for accuracy in the score and music and then let the music speak to me in a certain way; for example, mode, gesture and character but some of the notation is for the performer not the audience...if you are just accurate you can't deliver it properly.

On the one hand, there is the obligation to carry out the composer's wishes and intention, but on the other hand, performers are not 'copyists'. The whole notion of interpretation may be based on emphasising subtle variations and details suggested by the score. It is well known, however, that Stravinsky strictly stipulated the way he wanted his work

performed and ‘didn’t want the performer to get in the way.’ (P1). Interviewee P2 also commented, referring to *Movements*:

With Stravinsky, especially his serial work, you have just got to play the notes, you cannot do anything with it. He has stripped it right down. There are instructions in nearly every note. It is all single line... What can you do? Not much. There is little room for interpretation so the performer cannot stamp his personality on it.

Several of the interviewees made the point that certain composers, such as Debussy and Stravinsky, simply did not want to be interpreted. Their attitude appeared to be that if performers did not understand what was behind the music, and the careful instructions they had given, there was no point in playing it.

The participants commented on the relationship between historical periods of music and the use of notation. Indeed, in the romantic to post-romantic periods, it was expected that many performers would stamp their own individual personality on a piece, as witnessed by reports of Liszt’s performances.

Similarly, P1 regards his role as that of a ‘servant’ or ‘middleman’ between the composer and the audience. He considers it important to communicate the composer’s wishes even if it is not easy to do so; hence the notion of the ‘interpreter’ as a form of ‘middleman’ whose central aim should be to ‘create an exciting performance’ (P1). Referring to composers such as Bach and Mozart and their written instructions P3 added:

...for Mozart, he did not write many instructions; for Bach he often did not write any. I then have more latitude to do what I want to do

for those composers. If I have space to do my own interpretation. I will do that. Otherwise I would not go against the instructions. For example, if a composer puts *crescendo*, I would not play *diminuendo*.

P1 makes this qualified point in regard to making changes:

If you feel there is an established norm which you don't feel is right, I would break away from it. But I would not be original for the sake of it. For example, slight differences or changes in rhythm, dynamics can be important details.

As noted above, the role of the pianist also frequently featured in the discussion. This theme also emerged from an interview question regarding perceptions on what makes a good pianist. The point was made briefly made by P1 above but, interestingly, in regard to notation, when he stressed that it is for the performer to have knowledge of the notation, not the audience. The latter may be totally unaware of any absence, over-emphasis, or subtle differences in details interpreted from the score, as P1 commented:

Do you show all the notation to the audience? (...)They do not need to know it. Not everything is black and white for the listener, but it is for the performer to know the details of the score.

P2 made the point that, despite the large amount of documentary evidence regarding Stravinsky's piano compositions, it is important to consider that:

We may never know a composer's true intentions or wishes and there can be plenty of latitude within the markings: it is not an exact science. You have to decide how literally you have to follow the score...tempo and notation are very debatable points.

Nevertheless, P2 made an interesting point in that certain performers may prefer a more structured, prescriptive approach to performing music. In modern music, for instance, strictly following the markings may be considered the most appropriate way to produce a valid performance. Referring to the restrictions in interpreting Stravinsky's piano works, P2 underscored the fact that:

Some performers may like and want these restrictions, especially in modern music. It frees them from the burden of re-interpreting or changing any aspect of the score.

As the above comments indicate, performers need to scrutinise and understand the rationale behind the composer's markings; they must do this in order to understand their thinking and intentions. It was also reported, however, that, in some cases, it is very difficult to determine a composer's precise intentions.

#### 7.10 Important factors affecting interpretation

One of the main aims of the interviews was to determine the main factors which can influence the performer's interpretation of a composer's work. This theme has a direct relevance to this study's research questions as it involves perceptions of understanding in regard to Stravinsky's music scores, and determining the degree of latitude in performance. This involves understanding the composer's concerns, and knowing the background to the composer. P1, for instance, makes the point that:

Knowing in detail about the background of the composer may not necessarily improve the interpretation of the piece. Its value is that it can offer a fascinating insight to the world of the composer.

This point was also stressed by the other interviewees. As professional performers, it was considered essential for them to research and find out as much as possible about the composer and their other works. In this way, it is possible to understand the composer's frame of mind, attitude and past experiences, in order to effectively interpret the work.

#### 7.10.1 Influence of other performers

Another factor noted by the participants was that, although they had all listened to recordings of the works they were studying, they had different approaches. For example, P2 stated that: 'I do not like to listen to other performances of pieces when I am learning a new piece. I find my own view without the influence of another performer.' Similarly, P4 also avoids listening to recordings when learning a piece. However, P1 stressed the usefulness of recordings:

When I was working with Peter Hill on *Petrushka* for four hands. It was very helpful listening to the recordings, it helped me to understand the whole atmosphere of the interpretation.

P3 preferred to listen to different pianists' recordings in order to identify the general trends in their performance and their approach to interpretation. This involved comparing the recorded performances with her own ideas, in order to evaluate where she stood within this trend, adding:

I listen to other people's performances in order to see the different ideas, such as what kind of phrasing they did; what kind of rubato they did; whether they do any pedalling. I sometimes change my interpretation if I feel I am more convinced about their interpretation.

### 7.10.2 Composer's intention and emotion

Another sub-theme emerging from the interview data was that understanding a composer's approach to his work can help establish feelings of imagination, emotion and intention. P4 emphasises the point that:

Different imaginations can inspire me in playing the same music. For example, when I was learning Chopin's *Polonaise*, I read about the way Chopin taught his students, in order to have a better perspective in understanding his ideas. This is very important in regard to performance practice.

Understanding how a composer worked is how performers deal with aspects of emotion and expression. An interesting point concerns the extent to which performers should create levels of emotion when interpreting. P3 was of the opinion that:

Our job is not to create a completely new work from what the composer has written on the paper. It is to carry the emotion he had at that time, and to combine with your own interpretation. Knowing the composer, composer's background, what the environment was like when he composed the piece...music is such a powerful device to show emotion, it is important to know these events to understand the composer's emotion at that time.

The majority of the respondents considered that a composer's background, social environment and psychological state, can all have a bearing on understanding the music.

Accurate interpretation of a composer's intention is another issue. As noted above, Stravinsky was well known for his lack of consideration regarding the potential difficulties inflicted on the performer. It is also generally agreed that he was

unconcerned about the level of technical difficulty of playing his piano pieces. P1, referring to Stravinsky's serial music, added:

In here, Stravinsky is saying that I want you to get there, no matter how hard it is. It is kind of anti-freedom. He makes very difficult skips in time, it is like a game.

By contrast, P4 argued that a composer's intention is to be found in the musical notes and other musical elements, rather than in background knowledge or notions of intuition. Moreover, she feels that it is important to determine the composer's rationale behind the original score and to consider aspects of latitude, commenting:

I look for the composer's intention in the music notes...I am trying to understand the way the composer does the phrasing and dynamic marks. Then, I am going to consider the reasons why he wrote these marks. After I understand 'why', I can explore a lot more about 'how' I want to play, like articulation. Because there may be so many other things that the composer has not said in the music. This is where I can discover possible interpretations. This is my idea of freedom in regard to interpreting music, but it is based on an understanding of the music, instead of just having lots of freedom to play whatever I want.

As the above comments suggest, it is important to take into account a number factors when attempting to ascertain a composer's intention and emotional expression. These may include range of interlinked factors such as: understanding phrasing and dynamic markings; knowing how the work has developed compared with previous works; the composer's frame of mind; the emotional content, and thinking carefully about what exactly the composer wanted to convey.

### 7.10.3 Considering orchestral sound

It has been argued that it is important to keep in mind orchestral sound as it can help with the interpretation of Stravinsky's piano music. A point made by P2 is that the composer did not take into consideration what the piano could do well; in other words, he did not actually use the piano to its strengths. He seemed to have had the orchestra in mind, even when composing his piano works.

P6 concurred with P5's approach that it is crucial to carefully analyse the music before playing it on the piano. P6 made an interesting observation in that:

What is *not* in the score can be just as important as what is. Stravinsky sometimes keeps things open with no instructions. You can see he left the piece somewhat unfinished.

According to P6, this relative lack of instruction in the score may have been a reaction against the more detailed notation used to describe new musical features, as exemplified by Bartok, Elgar and others, explaining:

In the 1920s, he seems to have simplified things in order to get back to a more 'pure' type of notation. He only used the things that really mattered. But what a composer leaves out can be very important.

P6 makes the point that in regard to interpretation, it is important to use one's own informed judgement. In some ways, the reduced number of markings requires the performer to exercise closer scrutiny. It is imperative not only for understanding the

underlying concepts behind the piece, but also Stravinsky's way of thinking and how he organised the whole structure.

Stravinsky was first and foremost a pianist, but it has been remarked that he was also able to fully grasp the structure and power of orchestral composition. P1 remarks on this ability:

Stravinsky was writing at the piano, but he must have heard these orchestra sounds in his head. I do not think of the piano as a poor substitute for the orchestra. The evocative orchestration of early ballets, you must play with the aid of the pedal when necessary. It is a character thing as well...I think whenever you play music by a composer who did not just write for piano, like Chopin, you have to think of orchestral works. That what is fun about being a pianist: we have all the orchestra here...Many pianists become conductors, we are quicker because we have the whole of the music. It is not a poor substitute, we can hear some of the rhythms more clearly on the piano, but we must also think about the timbre and power of the orchestra.

Similarly, P2 is of the opinion that Stravinsky always had an orchestral sound in his mind when writing for the piano. The implication here is that it is useful to listen and refer to Stravinsky's orchestral works when studying his piano pieces. Referring to musical developments at the turn of the twentieth-century, P2 observed:

Keep in mind that Stravinsky got rid of all the old traditions at that time, in regard to the rhythm, melody, sound and dynamics. He created an incredible sense of power, even though the work is over a hundred years old, it is still amazing to listen to. You cannot imagine the differences in his style in only a few years, especially in regard to *The Rite of Spring*.

Referring to the relationship between orchestra and piano, P3 makes an interesting point in that the piano as an instrument has a piano sound, but the crucial advantage is that: ‘You can produce so many different colours. And one way to produce different colours is to imagine any orchestral sound.’

Accordingly, bearing the orchestral sound in mind can help pianists more fully understand Stravinsky’s piano music. It is conceivable that Stravinsky had orchestral sounds in his mind all the way through his compositional development. These can often be witnessed in the complex textures and various gestures in his piano works.

#### 7.10.4 Stylistic influence

P1 makes the point that the latitude of interpretation can largely depend on style, and stresses the point that individual interpretation is crucial to performing:

It is a stylistic thing, you tend to feel what can be freer, and what cannot be. Why do we play, if we are just going to play the same? Why do we play at all? You might as well give up. If you play an instrument, you’re doing something individual. Nowadays, we are very much stylistically aware of what we hear: Mozart, too much rubato. When you play Stravinsky’s Russian pieces, you can refer to these ‘healthy’ staccato; they’re more classical, Haydn-esque, and also Tchaikovsky, he was very *‘scherzando’*. There are similar techniques, but in the end, we all have a preconception of a composer’s style and sound. One of my hobbies is finding out the influences from other pieces when they were writing.

P3 again alluded to historical time periods:

I see freedom in every period, for baroque and classical music, the freedom is more reliant on the dynamics and pedalling; for romantic and post-romantic music, is more about rubato; for twentieth-century music, it depends on the composer.

P2 elaborated this sub-theme relating to performance tradition, stating that:

Performing style has changed since the 1920s, with much more care taken about playing exactly what is written, so lots less freedom. No changing notes or chords or adding octaves on the spur of the moment...There are many differences in the way music from different eras is played.

To summarise the above comments, it is evident that notions of performance latitude may be linked to performance style, performance practices in different historical eras, individual intuition and preferences, and the amount of latitude suggested by the score.

#### 7.10.5 Personal choice

The problem with adhering too strictly to a composer's score is that the performer may be just making a 'good' copy of the work. This point was raised by P1 who stated: 'I am against just copying. If you take the best of each recording it is just a collage.' Importantly, it was argued that performers should have their own perspective when analysing the music, rather than copying without really understanding it. In this case, latitude is always there because of different approaches in interpreting the same piece of music; pianists can have very different ideas and perspectives from each other. P3 expressed the view that:

As a performer, we have a very important role in interpreting each piece of music in a unique way. You have to play differently...in a unique way.

P2 also made some interest comments in regard to personal attitudes:

Freedom is very personal. I find some players use freedom (too much rubato) instead of expression for my taste. I think the music that speaks best is not pulled about too much...personal feeling is a major element which affects the interpretation.

It is therefore argued that personal expression is an important factor when approaching interpretation. As P4 argued: 'It is not just about musical notes.' Therefore, performers should carefully consider the way notation is written in the music score and to find ways to express it.

#### 7.10.6 Pedalling

The importance of pedalling when playing various works was frequently remarked upon by the interviewees. It can make a considerable difference to the way the music sounds when interpreting various pieces. Stravinsky did not clearly indicate pedal markings in his piano works. However, this does not necessarily imply that the pianist should not use pedal at all. The use of pedal needs to be carefully considered when interpreting his piano music. For example, P3 makes the following observation regarding the role of pedalling in interpretation:

We can have freedom to a certain extent in interpreting the piece. Especially in the way of rubato and pedalling. I also think there is more freedom to deal with pedalling than dynamic marking, because

the piano they had at that time is different from ours. Therefore, we probably have more sustaining sound as the piano is transforming all the time.

#### 7.10.7 Development of the piano

As above comment suggests, the development of the piano was another important factor which influenced notions of latitude in interpretation, as P2 also pointed out:

The piano has been transformed so many times over the past years, I believe that if you play the piano exactly as how you would play on the harpsichord, it would not sound nice at all: you need to adapt to the new instrument. And I think it is the same for pianos. Although the piano they had in 1920s is a completely different instrument to what we have now. One thing is that the tension in the strings has been significantly improved, because we have better technology to do that these days. It then allows you to do so many more things. I think you should not limit yourself to those little facilities they had back then. When you play on a modern Steinway, you should not limit yourself, you should try to use as many facilities as you can provide.

It can be seen that the evolution of the piano has influenced how pieces had been played in the past. It was also noted that playing Stravinsky's piano works from different periods could be even played on different types of piano – if absolute accuracy was required. It is clear that the modern piano has a much more refined and improved sound than those of previous eras.

#### 7.11 Summary of Results Chapters 5, 6, and 7

In the above Chapters 5 and 6, the music and recording analyses examined in detail the characteristics, structure and performance, aspects of three case studies. In Chapter 5, it was seen that the analysis of the three works highlighted a marked difference in style, compositional approach and overall architecture of the works. It also emphasised the importance of understanding how the Stravinsky conceived and produced these highly distinctive pieces.

The recording analysis of Stravinsky's recordings in Chapter 6 aimed to highlight both consistencies and inconsistencies between his recordings and the written scores, as well as the interviewees' performances. This underlines the fact that his ideas regarding interpretation of his own work, and how he conducted these, underwent varying degrees of change and emphasis. Interestingly, it was shown that, whereas his own performance of *Piano Sonata* (1924) and *Serenade in A* are much closer to the score, the other pieces: *Piano-Rag-Music* and his conducting of *Firebird* (see Section 7.9) clearly deviated from the music score. There was also comparison of the interviewees' different approaches to the works from three distinct periods, which indicated similarities and differences between their thoughts and interpretations.

Chapter 7 has analysed the primary data derived from the interviews. The interviewees' responses were structured in relation to the three case studies. The aim of this chapter was to organise and present the rich data generated from the interview questions. The main objective was to allow the participants to tell their own stories: their personal experiences, approaches to analysing Stravinsky's piano music, and the useful advice they would offer to performers. It was seen that the primary data generated a wide range of topics and themes relating to Stravinsky's piano music. This chapter also investigated notions of latitude when interpreting Stravinsky's piano works, and

investigated other, directly related, factors which performers should consider when approaching his piano music. This largely descriptive chapter is followed by Chapter 8 in which the comments and viewpoints of the interviewees are interpreted and discussed in relation to the research questions.

## **Chapter 8 Discussion**

### 8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research questions are addressed along with the approach of this research; also, the interpretations of the three piano pieces are discussed. The research questions are primarily performance focused. As cited in the previous chapter, the first question investigates how knowledge and understanding related to Stravinsky's musical career, historical context and musical development, and opinions, can inform the performance of his music across the three stylistic periods. The second question deals with latitude of interpretation in regard to the three case studies from Stravinsky's distinct periods. The first question thus mainly focuses on understanding the background to the works, whereas the second question looks at aspects of latitude when interpreting Stravinsky's piano music.

After much deliberation, the research questions emerged during the course of this research. In the first, the central thesis posited is, that by understanding the Stravinsky's cultural background motivations, intentions, and influences, it is possible to better rationalise the compositional and stylistic changes, as witnessed in his three piano works. In other words, it is argued that a better informed and musically aware performer is in a better position to interpret and comprehend the composer's work, and thus make more informed decisions in regard to the music performance. The converse situation would be the performer approaching the music 'cold', i.e., without any prior knowledge of the above considerations.

This emphasis begs the question: Is Stravinsky's music development any different from that of any other composer? The view of this research would be in the affirmative. As

confirmed in the literature review in many respects, Stravinsky's long career path, musical development, the assimilation of diverse influences, his constant drive for innovation, and moreover, the radical shifts in his style sets him apart from other composers of the twentieth-century. Given the amount of attention, research and revision devoted to the composer's music over the years, he is in many ways a special case worthy of revision and investigation (see Walsh 2006; Asaf'yev 1982; Druskin 1983 and Griffiths 2013 among others).

## 8.2 Structure of Chapter 8

In order to address the research questions, this Discussion Chapter makes references to data derived from Chapter 5 the music score analysis, Chapter 6 the recording analysis and Chapter 7 the interview analysis, with additional interviewee data sourced from the interview transcripts. The outcome of these are also compared and contrasted with the literature review in Chapter 2 and the sources in Chapter 4.

## 8.3 Addressing the research questions

Research question 1: *How may knowledge and understanding related to Stravinsky's life, context, musical development and values inform the performance of his music regarding his three stylistic periods?*

It is the view of this research that it is crucial to consider how Stravinsky's musical language evolved over his long career in order to make sense of his piano works, and to consider aspects of performance. As a product of his time, Stravinsky's piano works and his status as composer cannot be considered in isolation. Initially, he was very much the product of the Russian School and the Belyayev Circle at the beginning of the

twentieth-century. It is worth noting that the Circle served as a significant link between the classical era and modernism. There were composers, however, who broke away from the confines of its conservative formalism and who thus stimulated the careers of Rimsky-Korsakov, Prokofiev and Stravinsky. This period may be considered the first instance of experimental harmonics and the use of the octatonic scale (Maes: 2002). For many scholars, Stravinsky's early *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* (1904) appeared to be much influenced by Glazunov and typical of early Russian school. As seen in the interview analysis of the above work, interviewees emphasised its romantic nature and the use of pedal. P2 noted: 'It is very much Russian school; in this piece there are folk melodies and a traditional style compared with the later *Piano Sonata* or *Serenade in A*.' The respondent, P2, also made this observation:

The tradition of Russian music was based a lot on Chopin, Liadov, Liapounov, Rachmaninov, and Scriabin etc. and gives great scope for rubato, variation of dynamics and speed. Later, Stravinsky almost wanted to clear music up and get rid of that expressionism. As a result, so often there is much less difference between performances.

Frequent reference to achieving the appropriate 'Russian sound' and the stylistic signature of the piece was evident in the interview data. Moreover, there was also the emphasis on getting used to orchestral sounds while preparing to practice and perform the *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*.

### 8.3.1 Social and historical context

It was noted that the interviewees identified the possible influences which seem to pervade the case studies from Stravinsky's three distinct periods. The first, *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* was described within clear and descriptive boundaries as

exemplified in Chapter 7 Results. The interviewees frequently alluded to the ‘Russian sound’.

Another interesting theme for discussion is a topic often cited in the literature. In the 1920s, French critics and audiences were often perplexed, and consequently found it difficult to accept, Stravinsky’s neoclassical style as it was considered ‘less Russian’ in nature (*cf.* Druskin 1983; Joseph 1983; Hill 2000; Campbell 2003). Stravinsky’s previous works appeared to conform to the stereotype of how ‘Russian music’ should sound (i.e. the rather wild, rhythmic, percussive pagan and earthy elements inspired by folk musical and ritual.) This more ‘refined’ or ‘tamed’ neoclassical style did not seem to fit in with previous expectations of how Russian music was often perceived at the time and this attitude is often reflected in the critical commentary of that time (Druskin:1983).

Previously, the French musical community had been relatively positive in their assessment of Russian music, ballet and theatre; this attitude had its roots in cultural, political and financial factors. The public and critics, for instance, had been exposed to works by Balakirev, Borodin, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov and Diaghilev, and these offerings were generally well received, but as Schloezer (1928, cited in Campbell 2003:234) later pointed out:

What [Westerners] look for first and foremost in Russian art is precisely that which is different from their own; it is a certain ‘barbaric’ aspect: rough, untutored and, in a word, Asiatic. This Asiatic face of Russia, they think, is Russia’s true face.

It can thus be inferred that underlying the prevailing critical discourse, there was a stereotypical attitude at that time (Taruskin 1996:2009; Asaf'yev 1982; Druskin 1983; Andriessen & Schönberger 1989; Walsh 2002; Campbell 2003). There was a similar attitude prevalent in France toward notions of 'Germanic' music and its resulting sound, as characterised by Wagner and the Germanic tradition. Debussy, for example, championed the beauty and 'purity' of French music as characterised by Rameau and Lully (Schloezer *ibid*).

Given the account so far, in order to fully understand the main corpus of Stravinsky's works, it could be argued that when interpreting Stravinsky's piano music from the three distinct periods, the performer needs to take into account a number of factors: The 'Russian music' influence and its 'sound' for the early *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*; the French musical environment of the 1920s for *Serenade in A*, and the American-German influences of the Craft years in America, in the 1950s and 1960s, for *Movements*.

Furthermore, ideally, the informed performer requires an aesthetic awareness of the various genres and themes of Stravinsky's works, for instance: hybrid theatrical and operatic productions, Russian folklore and literature, Greek myths and religious (e.g. Catholic or Russian Orthodox) rituals. In this way, it is possible to trace the thematic and musical development of Stravinsky's musical language (Druskin 1983; Taruskin 1996: 2009; Hill 2000; Campbell 2003).

### 8.3.2 Understanding Stravinsky's mentality as a composer

The first research question refers to how Stravinsky's personality, values and opinions, may inform aspects of performance. When approaching the three piano works, it is argued that becoming more aware of the composer's thought processes may offer insights into his way of working and his technique of composing at the piano.

In parallel with many detailed accounts cited in the literature review Chapter 2 (in particular Joseph 1983; Andriessen & Schönberger 1989; Hill 2000; Walsh 2006; Griffiths 2013), the interviewees alluded to the importance of understanding his mentality and Stravinsky's way of thinking when interpreting his piano works, and comments such as: 'getting inside Stravinsky's mind' (P1); 'work out his way of thinking' (P2); 'I am looking at what the ideas are in the music, and I am trying to communicate these ideas' (P6), illustrate this view. They often referred to an analysis of sources in order to determine the psychology or mental state of the composer at any given time. As noted in the previous chapter, all of the interviewees agreed that: once the pianist is more familiar with Stravinsky's musical language, it is possible to deduce or de-code certain markings in the scores of the piano pieces.

The interviewees often described Stravinsky's approach to composition as: 'fastidious' and 'disciplined' (P2), 'meticulous' (P5), and 'ordered and systematic' (P6). These descriptions corroborate the evidence presented in the literature review by numerous authors and to an extent encapsulate his personality. It was seen that Stravinsky adopted a craftsman-like approach to composing and was fascinated with problem solving, and order and discipline, which could determine rule-governed systems. Stravinsky preferred to compose at the piano with clearly defined limitations and boundaries,

within which, it was possible to engage in creative re-ordering and the trying out of new patterns of sounds, such as complex chords.

Another characteristic of Stravinsky's way of composing was that he believed that limitations and restrictions helped to stimulate creativity. It is posited that permutations and alternative solutions can be more effectively generated when they are confirmed within certain parameters. They may account for his fascination with serial music and its compositional possibilities within the twelve-tone system as seen in his *Movements* (1958-59) and as analysed in Chapter 5 above.

As noted in the literature review, as an individual, Stravinsky sought order in his daily life and preferred a detached, objective approach to composing music, as suggested by the comments from the interviewees. Another revealing aspect of Stravinsky's mentality, is noted by Tymoczko (2002:101) who comments:

He embraced every conceivable musical technique...a man who knew many small musical tricks rather than a single large one...who cared not a whit about technical explanations or theoretical concepts. He is a composer who never once spoke about the octatonic scale and who described the *Petrushka* chord as in 'two keys'. Stravinsky worked at the piano, finding the note that would sound right though most other composers would have heard it as 'wrong'.

### 8.3.3 Considering orchestral sound: Stravinsky's use of the piano

As described in Section 4.4.1 above, Stravinsky's use of the piano in his orchestral works, and his orchestral sound in general, underwent considerable developmental changes during his career and these are clearly indicated in his works from the three

periods. It was seen that a distinctive pianistic approach characterised his early period with the piano being used as a solo and doubling instrument with the orchestra. This was followed by the piano being used as a more virtuoso instrument in a more contrapuntal style based on concerto principles in his middle period. The later piano and orchestra works were typified by doubling with various instruments in the orchestra with more emphasis on the piano's tone with a more pointillistic approach and less on its polyphonic and technical qualities.

As a consequence, the orchestral texture and sound of the piano and orchestra underwent marked changes and shifts in emphasis, especially in regard to pianistic effects, doubling with various instruments and the percussive and rhythmic use of the piano. All of the performers underscored the importance of understanding the underlying concepts and approach influencing Stravinsky's way of composing in his three periods and how his style of composing evolved. This awareness of the overall nature of the orchestral sound and Stravinsky's the use of the piano was considered crucial to effectively interpreting the three pieces.

In regard to aspects of performance, the performers also emphasised the importance of listening to Stravinsky's other orchestral compositions in order to become familiar with the styles and various elements which can create the overall sound and atmosphere. It is argued that this holistic approach regarding orchestral sound can help the performers form an accurate impression of the sound Stravinsky sought to achieve and express in his piano works.

An interesting, but unrelated point regarding Stravinsky's use of the piano and orchestral sound, is how he treated and approached composing with the piano. A point made by P2 was that the composer did not take into consideration 'what the piano could do well.' In other words, although he used the piano as the primary instrument when composing as underscored by Griffiths (2013), in P6's opinion, Stravinsky did not actually use the piano to its strengths. He seems to have had the orchestra in mind even when composing his piano works at the piano. P5 made a point also mentioned by the other interviewees (e.g. P1 P2 P4 P6), that Stravinsky was not an outstanding pianist and this can be seen in his awkward gestures and the general shape of the music as noted in Chapter 7.

#### 8.3.4 Stravinsky's use of past works: sources of influence

Another factor which may inform performance of the three piano pieces is an awareness of other motives and the styles of other composers. As cited in the literature, it is possible to identify what actually interested and excited Stravinsky musically. Influences on his neoclassical work in particular indicate that he looked back to classical works for inspiration and 'borrowed' selected elements which fascinated him. He often drew inspiration from composers such as Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Glazunov, Debussy and Webern, among others. He then tended to re-constitute them into something new through 'some private alchemy, some secret magic' (Bernstein 1972:1). It is noted above that the composer was considered by many to be a competent, but not outstanding, pianist. It is interesting to speculate to what extent this influenced his piano works and his approach to performance, especially in regard to levels of difficulty. Indeed, a number of interviewees (P1, P2, P5, and P6) commented on Stravinsky's

ability as a pianist when examining the music scores of the three case studies and recalling their own recorded versions. For example, as P2 pointed out:

Keep in mind he wasn't a really great pianist. He generated a huge output of work but with few piano works. He was not a gifted pianist or a comfortable performer...The fact that he was not a brilliant player like Rachmaninov or Prokofiev shows in the ways he wrote his piano works. They are not really great show pieces in the traditional sense, so it makes them harder to programme. They were what he could manage when asked to play the piano.

It is interesting to note that the participants who had recorded Stravinsky's works all reflected on how they would now play the pieces differently if given the opportunity. As shown in the interview data, this again reinforces the fact that the works are open to interpretation. This can be achieved through a thorough understanding of the work and its potential for reinterpretation; this theme is examined in more detail below. It is also inferred that no performer would want to repeatedly play the same piece in the same way. A case in point could be the view of P5, who stated that he had played Stravinsky's *Petrushka* arranged for two pianos and four hands over forty times, and was proud of the fact that he knew each performance was slightly different. Furthermore, pianists' musical ideas and thoughts about interpretation may change overtime as seen in P2's recorded performance of both the early *Piano Sonata in F-sharp Minor* and *Serenade*, in as reported in Chapter 7.

It has been noted that Stravinsky did not really care how difficult his work was (Bernstein 1972; Cross 2003). Anecdotal evidence suggests (Craft 1992) that his attitude was 'This is what I want.' and that he expected the pianists to achieve this. He

certainly put demands on the pianist in regard to gesture, awkward chords, or unnatural hands positions, but these may not be unsurmountable problems, as explained below (also Griffiths 2013).

Despite the changes in style evident in the case studies from his three distinct periods, it should be kept in mind that his actual approach to composing was relatively consistent, as argued by Druskin (1983), Joseph (1983), Andriessen and Schönberger (1989), Van den Toorn (1983) and Griffiths (2013). Indeed, when approaching the three pieces, it is important for the performer to also be aware of the unifying elements in Stravinsky's music as whole, in that there are certain consistencies underlying the surface layers (see Druskin 1983, Van den Toorn 1983). This process of composition often involved fusing smaller elements into a larger architecture which formed the basis of the musical structure. This characteristic was pointed out in the interview data by P1, P2 and P5 in reference to his early sonata, the *Serenade in A* and the *Movements*, and was also analysed in the music analysis in Chapter 5. As described in analysis of the three piano pieces, it is possible to determine both the surface and underlying architecture of these pieces. Through close analysis it is possible to gain an understanding of the way Stravinsky composed his piano music. By considering this, it is argued that these factors can enhance performance of the Stravinsky's piano music. This concludes the response to the first research question.

Research Question 2: *How much latitude of interpretation is required for the pianist when performing Stravinsky's piano music from three different periods?*

### 8.3.5 Defining notions of ‘freedom’ as ‘latitude’

In the context of the three piano pieces, the definition of ‘latitude’ in this study relates to the way in which a performer may interpret, alter, or re-interpret, to varying degrees, certain elements of the three piano scores in order to deliver a convincing and accurate performance. The interviewees however, expressed slightly different interpretations. For example, P6 questioned the use of the word ‘freedom’ in regard to interpretation of Stravinsky’s work. He considered it a misleading term and preferred to use the terms ‘latitude’ and ‘boundaries’. He argued that:

If you use too much freedom to perform Stravinsky as you wish, it is no longer Stravinsky’s work. You have to give a sense that you are indeed communicating Stravinsky’s piece. But there are numerous ways of doing that with Stravinsky.

Other interviewees used terms such as: ‘room for interpretation’, ‘leeway’, ‘working within boundaries’ and ‘scope of liberty’ (P1; P5). The key point is that notions of ‘latitude’ have to be considered within the boundaries set by the score. In other words, it is important to approach musical scores with the aim of identifying areas which can allow a relatively freer, or alternative, interpretation. This is especially the case when considering the different styles of the three pieces, but at the same time the performer has to be faithful to Stravinsky’s original ideas as emphasised by all of the interviewees. In this context, it is equally important to develop the skill of identifying Stravinsky’s intention when analysing his piano scores (P6).

As noted in the Results Chapters, this may include an understanding of elements which may include: tempo, phrasing, articulation, dynamics, an understanding of the structure, character, atmosphere, and so forth. The process of identifying the function of these

elements can inform the decision-making process. The parameters refer to the potential restrictions or limitations instructed and imposed by the music score, in keeping with the composer's intentions, and the character of the piece as whole.

#### 8.3.6 Stravinsky's music and its importance when considering latitude.

The key question here is: 'Why is latitude of interpretation important in regard to these piano works?' It is the view of this study that it is particularly important in the context of Stravinsky's piano works. As documented by others, and in his own writings, reported in the literature review above, he sought objectivity in his music and resented any conductor or performer taking liberties with his work. He often insisted on a strict adherence to the score and many scholars consider this attitude as reaction against the excesses of the romantic style of music prevalent at the turn of the twentieth-century. In brief, it is well documented that he did not want the performer to 'get in the way' (P2). This point was also emphasised by P1 who commented that: 'Freedom and Stravinsky are a little bit of an oxymoron.' Nevertheless, as noted in the Results Chapters, considering the notion of latitude of interpretation is a crucial component of performance practice in that it can help 'breathe new life' (P6) into these piano pieces. Moreover, there do exist opportunities for the performer to make informed choices in regard to exercising levels of latitude. The interviewees also stated, however, that pianists should never exercise latitude or take liberties with the score just for the sake of it.

#### 8.3.7 Latitude and the three piano works

As revealed in the Results Chapters above, considerations of latitude may involve re-emphasising small details, subtle variations, and degrees of intensity, which may exist

in the score. The challenge for the performer is to evaluate the significance and function of the notation. For example, in the piano sonata, P1 noted that this may involve deciding to vary the lengths of the staccato, and underlined the importance of rubato. In the same piece, P2 also stated that latitude can be exercised in the pedalling and rubato.

Of the three pieces, it was clear that *Movements* offered the least scope. It was, however, noted there could be some leeway in regard to intensities of loudness and some variation in the lengths of silence (see section on my approach to the pieces below). Furthermore, P6 made the point that in *Movements*, the performer can indeed do a considerable amount of adjustment in regards to touch and colour, varying the sharpness of the staccatos, and chord balancing. As highlighted in the recording analysis in Chapter 6, tempo may have been considered a key element in exercising latitude when interpreting works. Indeed, it was pointed out that performers often required advice or confirmation about when, where, and how, to vary tempo when interpreting the works. For example, when a performer approaches the *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*, it is important to first identify the most appreciate tempo. However, this can be problematic as the tempo indicated in the score is not precise. It resides within a specific range, as illustrated below. Indeed, it was seen that the piece has challenging tempo fluctuations, typical of romantic composers. As cited in the Results Chapters, there is tendency for tempo to slightly increase in correlation to performers' familiarity with the piano works. Therefore, it is pertinent to consider to what extent performers can strictly follow the music notation in the piano score.

### 8.3.8 Notions of latitude and the role of the pianist

All of the interviewees argued that it was crucial that the performer does not merely copy a particular recording or version of the pieces. Their responsibility is to create something different within the notational boundaries. The task, therefore, is to identify specific areas where it is possible to assess degrees of latitude when interpreting Stravinsky's music. In this way, it is possible for the pianist to identify specific musical elements in Stravinsky piano works in order to re-vitalise them and offer something new in regard to interpretation of his piano music. It was argued that performers thus have a fundamental responsibility to represent an accurate and convincing version of the composer's works.

### 8.3.9 Approaching the score

From the interview data, it can be seen that the interviewees offered a number of views regarding how to approach Stravinsky's music scores of these three pieces. As noted in Chapter 7, P6 drew attention to the fact that there were relatively fewer markings in the *Cadenza Finale* compared with many other composers' scores of that time. For example, P6 explained that composers such as Bartok and Beethoven used a great deal of detailed notation to explain new musical ideas. One reason was that Stravinsky wanted to get back to a more 'pure' classical form of notation in response to this tendency. As noted in the previous Results Chapters, this lack of detailed marking can allow the interpreter to both deduce and infer Stravinsky's way of thinking and determine his intentions. It was also stressed that when pianists approach Stravinsky's score, it is merely the starting point of the analytical process. It was stated that performers should, at all times, respect the intentions of the composer, while at the same

time, developing the skills needed to identify elements which could help re-create, re-define, and enhance, the interpretation of piano music.

This notion of 'awkwardness' was noted by several of the performers. It concerns certain movements of gestures which are difficult to play and can thus potentially cause problems for the pianist. In other words, the composer may not have taken into account how the pianist can technically play particular gestures. Two reasons proposed by Griffiths (2013) and Joseph (1983) is that Stravinsky was aware of his own limitations as a pianist, but may have composed pieces with certain accomplished pianists in mind. Another reason made by P2, and supported by Griffiths (2013), could be that Stravinsky had unusually large hands and thus his wider span could accommodate such gestures. Stravinsky made no reference to his 'awkward gestures' in his writings.

#### 8.3.10 Latitude and aspects of performing

Several of the interviewees expressed the view that no two performances of Stravinsky's piano pieces are ever the same, and that the whole point of performing the work is to both create the appropriate sound intended by the composer and at the same time create something new and exciting. However, it was pointed out that in recordings of Stravinsky conducting, he invariably did not adhere to his own score. It was also noted by P2, P5 and P6 that this was often the case with many other composers such as Prokofiev, Gershwin and Rachmaninov. They tended to exhibit much more latitude when performing or conducting their own works.

### 8.3.11 Composers and their works

P5 made the point that composers have to, at some stage, 'let go' of the work once it has been published. It then becomes an artefact which belongs to an open public domain. The completed work can then, potentially, be open to various degrees of latitude of interpretation. Four of the interviewees stated that they had worked with many composers and conductors, and drew attention to the fact that they had never been reproached for indulging in too much latitude when playing a composer's own composition. In fact, it was invariably the case that the changes to the composer's score were often appreciated as they added a new aspect of the work which the composer was not aware of or had simply overlooked. It is interesting to note that these professional pianists all stated the same view, that composers themselves may not be aware of the potential for reinterpretation and enhancement of their work. P2 commented that:

In my experience, many composers could not care less in regard to keeping very strictly to the score. For example, you may play it and ask a composer 'Is that okay'? Even though they wrote that mark, their view might change, so interpreting a written score is not a precise science.

Regarding the claim that composers are often less strict about notation in the score than performers, musicologist and theorists, P5 was even more emphatic: 'Blimey! Far less, I really do! Composers such as Stravinsky often hear their ideas very differently. I have learnt this from my work and experience.' P6 again expressed the view, that in his career, working with well-known composers and conductors, he had never met with disapproval, and commented that: 'Composers differ enormously in the "control" they exercise over performers of their music. I have worked with composers all my life, and can never remember any one of them accusing me of taking too much latitude.'

These comments conclude the discussion to Research Question 2.

### 8.3.12 Aspects of decision making

The interview data reveal that the performers employed a range of strategies in their decision making processes. These could be utilised to convincingly perform the three piano works. Given the nature of their comments, it is clear that decision making is an integral component of their analyses. It is directly related to notions of latitude of interpretation and how to execute a convincing performance.

Through analysing the interview data, it was possible to identify the various types of processes involved. These included an awareness and sensibility regarding Stravinsky's intentions and a consideration of interpreting the aesthetic goal of the piece. The evidence shows that the pianist employed a synthesis of holistic and analytical approaches to their decision making and interpretation. This often involved a process of inference. For example, the pianist could draw indirect conclusions and areas for potential latitude suggested by the score, especially in the early sonata and *Serenade in A*. P6, in reference to the latter score commented 'Stravinsky seems to be leaving us clues to how this section can be performed.' He also makes the point that it is important to take into consideration 'what is not indicated on the score where you would expect markings.' By contrast, the pianist's decision making also involved a process of deduction whereby it is possible to draw conclusions based on direct reference to the scores. Nevertheless, it was also emphasised by the pianist that interpretation and decision making can involve personal engagement and perceptions.

As the interview data shows, for each of the three piano works, decisions had to be

made regarding a range of elements: tempo, character, dynamic, articulation, phrasing, defining expressive instructions, the length of the performance and so forth. Other factors noted by P2, P5 and P6 concerned the type of piano on which the piece was originally composed and performance traditions. Arguably, the most influential variables determining the decision marking processes concern the pianist's own past experiences and familiarity with Stravinsky's piano works gained through their recordings, performances and knowledge of the composer's musical. Another point made was the differences between recording and live performances. In the latter, P1, P2 and P5 commented that audiences may well be unfamiliar with Stravinsky's rarely performed piano works. Therefore, when engaging in decision making, the performer may consider questions such as: 'How can I convincingly deliver the intrinsic character of piece?' or 'By identifying areas of latitude of interpretation, how can the pianist strike a balance between constraint and latitude and thus emphasise the often radical nature and expressive potential of Stravinsky's works?' As frequently noted by the pianist, these are complex tasks and activities. As noted above, there can exist a set of related and contributory factors which impinge on the decision processes.

Another theme emerging from the data was that the pianist did not refer to how Stravinsky's piano pieces 'should' sound. Their decision making approaches were not based on any idealised or prescriptive models. This point was particularly underscored in reference to comparing and analysing past and contemporary recordings of the works. They are best used as paradigms open to interpretation rather than idealised standards.

Pertinent to the points highlighted above, Doğan-Dack (2015:190) makes the point that: '[Performers] ultimately needs to resort to one's effective experiences and

representation, be they aural, visual or tactile...or multimodal, to give meaning to such terms in performance.’ Convincing artistic results cannot come following learned rules and prescriptions alone, but requires being true to one's own experiences and convictions.

In regard to the concept of responsibility and that of exercising latitude or freedom of interpretation, several points can be made. As evidenced in the interview comments, it was considered important to adhere to Stravinsky’s intention regarding performance. They concurred that they had a responsibility to deliver an accurate, persuasive and convincing rendition of his piano pieces. The pianist could thus accentuate the unique features of his works. In my view, the responsibility of the pianist ultimately involves bringing out the unique characteristics of Stravinsky’s works by accentuating piano textures and sonorities, the percussive qualities of the piano, fluctuations of dynamics, tempo and rubato and the pianistic effects. Moreover, by both inferential deductive analyses of the scores and pianistic effects, the pianist can potentially deliver a persuasive and subtly different or innovative rendition of the piece. In identifying areas in which latitude of interpretation can be expressed and exploited. The pianist does not serve as a mere ‘copyist’, instead, it is possible to ‘breathe new life’ into the work.

From my perspective, such variations should not distract from the overall impact of the particular piano work. Rather, they can ideally offer a slightly different but valid rendition achieved through interpretation. Another point worth emphasising is that this process is far from absolute, unqualified or pertaining to any sense of unrestricted authority. I would argue that ‘freedom’ or more precisely, latitude of interpretation is highly relative as it depends on many of the variable factor as discussed below in

Section 8.3.12 on decision making. For example, for the three piano works analysed in this study, each piece requires different levels of knowledge of the composer's intention and identifying different parameters of interpretation in regard to, for instance, articulation, dynamics, phrasing and so forth. Moreover, as underlined by P6, it is equally important to consider what is not marked on the score as well as what actually is and focus on sections with relatively fewer instructions. As commented by P6, the whole process is far from 'an exact science'. It requires various levels of skill, expertise, experiences and, importantly, the performer's own convictions.

#### 8.4 This researcher's approach to the three case studies

This section focuses on discussion of the decision-making process, especially in relation to musical elements such as tempo, dynamics, articulation, phrasing and pedalling. These are based on interpretation of the structure, character, atmosphere and personal intention.

As highlighted above, in order to play the music effectively, it is important that the performer has good background knowledge and understanding related to Stravinsky's life, social and historical context, musical opinions, and his compositional development. It is considered important that the performer should have previous experience in playing works which have similarities in terms of technique, stylistic features and notation indications, before learning piano works from Stravinsky's different periods. The reason is that the performer can then develop basic ideas from their experience. In many aspects, I would argue that this can enhance their understanding of the music score and the composer's intention.

As a pianist, I decided that the way I approached these pieces would be based on musical elements and other related factors. This includes an understanding of the background of the composer, the motivation and rationale of the work, how it relates to other works of its time period in terms of style, and how the composer himself played it. In this way, it is possible to create a mental image and feeling for the work in terms of its uniqueness, the relationship of its structural characteristics, and overall sound and atmosphere.

#### 8.4.1 Russian period: *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*

My approach would firstly consider the similarities between this early piano sonata and works by other composers from the romantic and early 'Russian' period; for example, piano music composed by Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Glazunov and Rimsky-Korsakov, among others. Thus, I am able to imagine the sound of their works, and to combine the overall sound in order to gain a mental sound-image of this piece. This approach can be applied in order to initially gain insights into the style and structure of this early piano sonata.

#### Tempo

In Stravinsky's early *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*, the tempo markings are not precise for each movement, but they always have an indication of range. For instance, the *Allegro* marking indicated at the beginning of first movement, should be between 120-156 bpm (beats per minute). It is not like *presto* or *prestissimo*. It conveys a sense of liveliness which is an important indicator of the character of the music and reflects the energy within the piece.

It is therefore important to consider the appropriate speed of each movement within these boundaries:

Table 8.1: Tempo ranges in Stravinsky's early *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor*

The first movement	<i>Allegro</i>	120–156 bpm (beats per minute)
The second movement	<i>Vivo</i>	156–176 bpm
The third movement	<i>Andante</i>	78–108 bpm
The fourth movement	<i>Allegro</i>	120–156 bpm

Also, particular attention should be given to how the rhythm connects with rhythmic drive. I like to intensify the tempo in general, because a slower tempo does not have the desired 'push' or intensity needed to bring out the character of this sonata. Overall, it is a faster piece, and there is a danger that if the pianist does not pay attention to the tempo, the rhythmic element may disappear and therefore the dotted rhythms will lose their character.

### Dynamics

In regard to dynamics, it is important to generally interpret them by following the dynamic indications throughout the piece, the dynamic elements can be interpreted based on harmonic progression. As the compositional approach of this piece is highly relevant to romantic and early Russian piano music, it is important to consider a strong Russian *fortissimo*; however, its character or quality may change. Thus, it is possible to vary it based on the sound of each voice, emphasising different layers throughout the whole piece. If I think that the bass needs to be emphasised, I would reduce the intensity of the *fortissimo* in the middle of the chord can be reduced. Once it is constructed, and the structure of the piece is built up, the dynamics can then fall into place. In a sense, building the structure of the music is like putting a jigsaw together.

Also, it is more effective to play *crescendo* from bar 7 at the beginning of the first movement in response to the six-bar statement. This passage can be developed by expanding and modulating; it is more like a bridge passage. The tone can be reduced so that I can build. The four bars, bar 7 to bar 10, are driving forwards, then there is a one bar, one bar, one bar element in bars 11, 12 and 13. Repetitions like this can be used to build up the dynamics.

### Phrasing

In regard to phrasing, the slur gives a hint of each phrase. Stravinsky does not phrase across the bar lines at the beginning, but later he begins to phrase against the bar lines. However, there is relatively long phrasing throughout the piece. The appropriate phrasing in this piece would use rhythmic patterns similar to the nineteenth-century romantic music style. For example, there is a one-bar repeated phrase from bar 7 to 11 based on harmony, rhythm and structure, it stretches out again after bar 11. From bar 11 is like a dead-end, but it is resolved in bar 14. Here, more *diminuendo* is played thus emphasising the unusual harmony. Throughout the piece, when the right hand has unusual harmonies, the left hand helps unite and hold the music together. As the phrasing changes, the dynamics also become more varied and changeable.

### Articulation

There are many dotted rhythms in the piece which give it an exciting dynamic character. Instead of strict quavers, the rhythm is dotted, and I think that detaching in the dotted rhythm creates a more exciting effective, which is closer to Stravinsky's Russian style.

## Pedal

I prefer to use lots of flutter pedal throughout the work, rather than using sustained and deep use of the pedal. I use finger legato whenever it is possible; the pedal can add to this as it can give a *cantabile* effect and there is retention of sound when the harmonic changes.

It is effective to create a rich, warm sound and the pedal can grade and vary the sound as finely as I want. Therefore, it does not sound like a ‘note by note’ articulation, whereas, if I play legato without using the pedal, it might. The slurs can also give an indication on how to vary the sound; this gives me a room for creating the sound I want.

### 8.4.2 Neoclassical period: *Serenade in A*

Here is a completely different compositional approach and style from Stravinsky’s ‘Russian’ period. He wanted to remove all the romantic elements and features and create a more ‘pure’ sound, and there are minimum markings compared with other two case studies. It is clear that Stravinsky was influenced by classical and baroque composers during his neoclassical period. It is therefore essential to approach the work in terms of objective performance and keep it cool in mood, with a light feeling. An interesting point is that it is possible to perceive the score as consisting of gestures or blocks. There is a form of tension in the music between the smaller gestures and the long, serene flow of the piece. In approaching this work, I am thinking about shapes and how they interact.

In my view, the most interesting challenge is the counterpoint between Stravinsky’s phrasing of right hand and left hand, and how I can shape the phrases and allow them

to ‘breathe’ naturally, without the music sounding metronomic and full of beats. My overall impression of the sound is that the *Hymne* reminds me of Beethoven; in the *Rondoletto* the sound, rhythm and structure reminds me of Bach; and I feel that in the *Romanza* and *Cadenza Finale*, there are strong hints of Debussy. My aim here is to bring out the beauty of the piece without being sentimental, and this is a challenge; it needs to be very carefully judged to get the correct balance.

### Tempo

Tempo is particularly challenging in this piece. On the one hand, I am trying to make the music flow, but on the other hand it should not be rushed or simplistic. Attention is paid to the exact metronome markings in the score as they are a very good indication of Stravinsky’s thinking about tempo. It is therefore important to keep closely to the tempo markings throughout the piece, because Stravinsky said he wanted a strict adherence to the music score, and as a performer I have a responsibility to carry out his wishes. Indeed, Stravinsky’s own 1934 recording of this piece confirms this tendency.

### Dynamics

In playing this piece, it is important to play within the dynamic range; there is not a big difference between the dynamic markings throughout the piece. There are, however, more slight variations in *Serenade* between each note. In general, the left hand is more polyrhythmic; the emphasis and stress of the left hand is in contrast to the right hand.

### Phrasing

I think it is effective to follow all the phrasing marked in this piece; a useful strategy is to listen carefully to the phrasing while I am performing the piece. It is often very

difficult for the pianist to maintain the legato in the left hand, due to the notes in arpeggios being spread very widely. Thus, I do not feel that following the phrasing in both hands always works well, and I tend to play these passages with the left hand slightly articulated. The right hand brings out the melody line, so that I can play the right hand with more legato than the left hand.

In addition, it is necessary to use pedal to help to make the music smoother and allow it to flow. I think a little bit of articulation sounds better. Also, a lighter touch actually helps the music to flow. When I play legato, my fingertips go into the key a little bit deeper but if I play staccato, I can play it a bit lighter. Another aspect is that the left hand has to cope with longer phrases and this continues throughout the fourth movement. Between each slur, it is effective to offer a light, break pause.

### Pedal

I think it is important to think about orchestral sound, especially the woodwind section when approaching the *Hymne*, *Romanza* and *Cadenza Finale*. I aim to use figure legato as the first choice, and I use pedal to mainly enhance the acoustic quality. The pedal also needs to be used to underscore his unique harmonies, and to vary the colour.

### Articulation

There are fewer articulation markings in this piece compared with Stravinsky's early sonata from 'Russian' period. It is important, therefore, to follow any articulation markings, to understand why Stravinsky indicated the markings in few places, and in these places, to understand what he is trying to communicate to performer, and the audience. It is also interesting to consider the three little 'comma' markings, used to

indicate a quick ‘breath’ rather than a small break. In this place, a *crescendo* is played before the pause, as the aim is to stress the pause in order to enhance the harmony to make it stand out.

#### 8.4.3 Serial period: *Movements* for piano and orchestra

In my view, this work is the most challenging in terms of performance. The score has many detailed and precise markings; it is clear that Stravinsky has a very definite plan and a structured organisation for the piece, as emphasised in Chapter 5. The music has a fractured and fragmented quality. What is very unusual about this piece are the dramatic changes in register. The note patterns seem almost ‘wild’ or unrestrained in nature and abruptly appear throughout the work.

The piece is characterised by a number of difficulties for the performer, for instance: percussive sound and rhythmic changes, and staccato sections with potentially problematic jumps which are difficult to play accurately. I have to carefully consider the unpredictable nature of the work, as it makes particularly difficult to memorise. As there are detailed instructions in every bar, there is very little possibility of latitude of interpretation. Although it is a tight and strictly conceived piece of music, it is still possible to produce different sound effects and slightly vary the atmosphere. Another factor is that the piano has a different role in this piece from other two case studies from earlier periods, as it doubles with the other orchestral instruments.

My approach is to perform the piece within a tight and restricted approach, thus conforming to the twelve tone system. As a result, I do not have to consider changing or re-interpreting the elements. The instructions are clear and explicit, and they convey

a brilliant, lively, rather aggressive and brittle sound when performing this piece. The key element here is the rhythmic complexity, most significantly, the time signature changes in nearly every bar. I therefore need to pay particular attention to counting the rhythm.

In stark contrast to Stravinsky's early *Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* and *Serenade in A*, there is no harmony in the tradition or horizontal sense, and very little use of pedal. It is important to work out how the rhythmic system operates, and it is also important to determine, and pay particular attention to, Stravinsky's note patterns and how the music develops in relation to these features. Another consideration is how to balance the interaction between the piano and the other instruments; the timing has to be precise and clearly articulated.

### Phrasing

It is possible to see the architecture of this music without actually hearing it. In the score, the organisation is explicit and visual in terms of how the note patterns are represented. In this way, it is possible to gain further insight into how Stravinsky organises the phrasing and formal structure.

### Dynamics

The music is very dramatic, with sudden changes. When performing the piece, it is appropriate to maintain and emphasise its rigorous, strict and rather severe character. It is also necessary to pay close attention to every single detail of notation. However, it is possible to vary the dynamics a little: for example, a close analysis shows that there is

room for leeway, when interpreting the dynamics in that I can subtly vary how loud or how soft I play within indicated dynamic markings.

### Tempo

There is no particular problem here, but it is crucial to follow the markings in the score. I am convinced that in the musical line, the rests are very important, so the silences also need to be of the correct and exact duration. Therefore, when I play the piece, I have to be particularly conscious of these features.

### 8.5 Relating findings to performance theory

During the process of conducting this research, I often speculated how my approach to the study related to aspects of performance theory. As emphasised throughout the thesis, the study is not a theory-driven research paradigm. Rather, it is a more performer-orientated practical approach to analysing Stravinsky's three piano works and aims to examine what performers could gain from such an approach.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to briefly discuss the role of music and in particular, performance theories. I would, to a degree, concur with a number of points made by (Cook 1999) concerning the nature of music theory and its relationship to performance analysis. Cook examines analysis of performance only in order to determine how it can define music theory and how it can be integrated within theoretical frameworks. He claims that music theory can be used to both reflect practice, and also influence it. He makes the point, however, that music theory tends to be concerned with understanding and analysing composers' works rather than analysing what performers actually *do*

when interpreting their work. Nevertheless, it is argued by several scholars that performers may effectively learn from theoretical analysis.

Another important point is raised by (Howell 1992:709) and (Cook 1999) in that music-theory discourse on performance is often authoritative and prescriptive. The theories tend to relate to the imposition of rules and methods on how a piece should be played. For example, Narmour (1988) often states what the performer ‘must’ or ‘must not’ do and refers to ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect’ evaluations of performances. This, in my view, may reflect the pedagogy tone of performance analysis in that it can be used to emphasise an idealised end result informed only by performance theory. The danger is that music then becomes measured in relation to the expectations and rules stipulated by the theory; but more seriously, it can be used as criteria for aesthetic and critical appraisal. Cook (1999:241) draws attention to the fact that:

The prescriptiveness of Narmour’s writing reflects a prescriptiveness that is characteristic of, and perhaps definitive of music theory as a whole.

A further related theme concerns Lerdahl and Jackendoff’s (1983) theory based on the use of the ‘competence/performance distinction’ formulated from Chomsky’s theory of structural linguistics. This controversial distinction is based on abstract knowledge (competence) and how the knowledge is manifest in practice and in real contexts (performance). Applied to music theory and piano performance, the paradigm appears to apply to an abstract notion of the musician as a performer. It thus uses an explanatory concept (i.e., the theory), which actually eliminates the performer as an individual

(Cook 1999:242). This approach would clearly contradict or negate the whole thrust of this study.

The intention here is not to challenge the crucial role of formulating theories in order to account for natural phenomena manifest in music as a discipline. By their intrinsic nature, theories are based on empirical observation and data-based evidence, as seen in the previous Results Chapters. They attempt to explain phenomena, but in order to do so, they must often employ a processes of abstraction, generalisation and simplification. They also attempt to predict trends and tendencies and likely outcomes. In my view, it is these last two qualities which can undermine; for example, music and performance theory, in that they may over-generalise and thus become theoretically underdetermined. By this, it is meant that they account for phenomena with less than the amount of evidence need to achieve validity. Moreover, they can also become difficult to empirically test and often prove impossible to prove and disprove.

#### 8.6 Problems in formulating theory

While acknowledging these difficulties, and the references from the literature cited above, it remains possible to offer tentative explanations and generalisations. This study uses an inductive approach to the data analysis which involves formulating a theory based on the findings, and then making generalisations and offering explanations. Given the findings in the previous Chapters, and the interpretations, it is possible to offer a tentative theoretical model. It would also have to consider the procedures involved in the learning and interpretation elements posed in the research questions and the consequent participant responses described. It is argued that a formulated theory accounting for these variables could serve as viable and useful platform for analysing

the works of other performers or composers. In other words, the theory could inform the practical application of performance practice as noted by Cook (1999) above. It was highlighted that the processes involved in understanding, interpreting and then performing the piano works are highly complex in nature, and can include a range of variables such as: performer intuition, pianist personality, past experience, present involvement and awareness Stravinsky's music, and the development of his musical language.

The analysis of the results in the above chapter and the identification of sets of interrelated factors identify elements which can affect the interpretation of Stravinsky's piano music. It is thus proposed that the complexities involved may make it problematic to formulate a robust and valid theory to account for the way the performers their approach decision making.

In the interview data, for example, at no point did the interviewees overtly express prescriptive and authoritative comments. As performers, their whole approach was explorative and analytical, without reference to theoretical models or even any reference to any musicologists or theorists. To conclude this section, it is considered appropriate to consider P5's unsolicited comments:

I think analysis is important but it should not be an end in itself. I think one needs to understand the mind of the composer and how they conceived their piano work. I do not think you can get that from researching performance theory. Understanding how composers think at the piano when they compose a piece is probably more important than some great analyses.

In reference to the serial-movements piece, P5 commented on its complexity, the importance of understanding its structure, and how the analysis should focus on recurring intervals, and rhythmic patterns and gestures:

How does that affect how I play it and how the listener hears it? This is because it is not really useful reading this [score] to musicologists who are not musicians. In a complex piece like this, we as performers need to have some sense of serial procedures. We must make these things clear to the audience. If it only exists as an analysis, it is difficult to connect with. You must be clear what Stravinsky is about.

For this study, it was particularly interesting to record P6's final comments at the end of his four-hour interview:

For you as a researcher, your subject area has the potential to become a philosophical- or theoretically-centred work. However, I do think your idea of having examples is really great. This approach, doing it through direct reference to the music is a valid one. To be honest, I am not comfortable with this type of philosophical or theoretical analysis in music. Your emphasis on performance practice as a practical aim is far more interesting because it is a very complex process.

## 8.7 Summary of Chapter 8

This chapter serves to address the research questions which form the basis of this study and have underpinned the motivation of the researcher. The discussion has focused on how the background to a composer's life, context, values and musical career development, can inform performers approaching Stravinsky's piano music. It has been argued that an enhanced awareness, and an appreciation, of other piano works can

influence how performers performed these three works. The discussion on latitude of interpretation highlighted the need to carefully consider the composer's piano scores and engage in informed decision-making. This can be achieved by identifying the potential variables which the pianist may apply in approaching these three case studies from distinctly different periods.

## **Chapter 9 Conclusion**

### 9.1 Research problem and research questions

This research has addressed the potential problems faced by pianists when considering how to play Stravinsky's three piano works, *Piano Sonata in F-Sharp Minor* (1904), *Serenade in A* (1925) and *Movements for Piano and Orchestra* (1958-59) from three distinct periods of Stravinsky's career. The first research question emerged from the need to acquire an understanding of Stravinsky's cultural background and mentality; the way in which diverse influences affected his compositional style; the composer's relationship with the piano; his way of composing, and how these factors contributed to the development of his musical language. It has been argued that a deeper understanding of these complex and overlapping factors could better inform performers approaching his piano works. It is also maintained that this attention is important as an analysis of these variables reveal how and why Stravinsky's musical style changed dramatically over his long musical career. In other words, when approaching the piano score the performer needs to think beyond the surface markings and notation. It is posited that by taking into account the above factors, the pianist is in a much better position to determine the rationale, motivation and intentions of the composer.

The second research question addressed the need to consider notions of latitude when interpreting these works and how they can inform decision making and performance. This focus was considered important as the evidence in the literature and the assumption of many theorists and, indeed, performers, often claims that Stravinsky's piano works and notions of latitude are incompatible entities. These assumptions are often based on Stravinsky's own many writings and accounts related to his life work. Nevertheless, in addressing the second research question, it has been possible to challenge these assumptions. It was proposed that this focus on possible areas of

latitude or the boundaries of each piece could draw attention to how the work could be effectively analysed and interpreted. In this way, performers could gain insights into how elements, such as: dynamics, tempo, articulation, phrasing, character and so forth, could be accentuated or de-emphasised to varying degrees. It was asserted that in being more aware of these variables the performer would; therefore, be in a better position make informed judgements regarding how the piece can be interpreted and played.

## 9.2 Research design

To investigate Stravinsky's music and facilitate the answering of research questions, the research design used a mixed-method approach which included a music analysis of the three pieces, a recording analysis, and interview data from six professional pianists. The latter were familiar with Stravinsky's piano works and several have performed and recorded his piano work on many occasions. What emerged from the synthesis of the Results Chapters was an appreciation of the many complexities of these pieces and problems around how to perform the works. It was seen that the responses of the interviewees offered a range of perspectives, strategies based on their own experience and knowledge as performers. It was proposed that by combining the data derived from Chapters 5, 6 and 7 it would be possible to create a much richer and comprehensive picture of the composer's work. It was therefore possible to gain a deeper understanding of the problems faced by performers in regard to interpreting the various musical elements, their significance, and complex relationships between them. The findings may thus be considered to be refined tools which can enhance performance decision making. Indeed, this researcher was able to gain much knowledge from this learning process and was then able to formulate her own performance approach to the three pieces, as described in Chapter 8. For example, in Stravinsky's early piano sonata, it

was possible ascertain the subtle ways in which tempo could be interpreted and varied in order produce a different effect; how phrasing is often affected by gesture and harmonic progression, and how variations in loudness can be used to good effect.

### 9.3 Contribution of the study

It is proposed that this research can contribute in a number of ways to the knowledge of Stravinsky's music and particular his three piano works. As such, it adds another chapter to the growing literature on Stravinsky-related studies. The following are considered the main contributions of this research project.

#### 9.3.1 Gaps in the literature

There is a clear gap in the current literature. To date, there are no detailed or comprehensive studies which investigate performance-based studies to Stravinsky's piano music. What the study aimed to do, was to go beyond the analysis of Stravinsky's piano works and consider their significance in regard to actually performing his music. For example, the few seminal works on Stravinsky's piano works and his relation with the instrument such as Joseph (1983) and Griffiths (2013) provide analyses and useful descriptions. However, the important point I would stress is that they do not go beyond their analysis and consider the implication of their study in regard to performance issues. There are no considerations regarding how the piano works can be played.

#### 9.3.2. Focus on the three piano works from distinct periods

Another contribution of the research is that it is the first study to focus exclusively on three different piano works from the respective periods. It is argued that by engaging in the process of comparing and contrasting the various characteristics of the works, it

is possible to achieve a deeper understanding of the three case studies. It is also maintained that by paying close attention to the musical elements in these works, it is possible to explore the different features in the notation given by Stravinsky to the various periods. These give us valuable clues as to how Stravinsky's compositional approach can influence the interpretation of the works.

### 9.3.3 Methodology: a combined approach

A further contribution of this research is that it offers a methodology using mixed methods which can be effectively used to gain deeper insights into the complexities and unique features of Stravinsky's piano works. By combining a case study approach, document analysis, music analysis, recording analysis, and interview analysis, it is possible to gain a greater appreciation of the multi-faceted nature of Stravinsky's piano music. It is proposed that such an approach can facilitate understanding of the music and thus enhance the pianist's interpretation. Again, I would emphasize the fact that there are, as far as I am aware, no studies which have synthesised and utilised these approaches in regard to analysing Stravinsky's piano music.

### 9.3.4 Drawing attention to Stravinsky's piano music

In a more general sense, the contribution of this research is that it draws attention to a relatively neglected area of Stravinsky studies. Stravinsky's piano music has been often overshadowed by his famous orchestra and ballet works such *The Rite of Spring*, *Petrushka* and *Firebird*, and over the years, they have been established as standard repertoire. In many ways, this has been unfortunate, as all the interviewees reported that these complex and fascinating works deserved to be much better known, and

performed more frequently. For example, my own research have confirmed the fact that these works are very rarely studied or played, and thus not fully appreciated.

#### 9.4. Practical implications of the study

In what way can this study be of use to performers of Stravinsky's piano music? I believe the work will be of particular interest to piano students and professional pianists. First, it deals with practical problems which pianists may face when understanding and performing his piano music. Second, it provides a framework of analysis which enables a close examination of the music score and recordings. These can be complemented by comparing the different viewpoints generated by the interviewees.

In my view, the latter was one of the most interesting aspect of the research project. This is because it revealed, in detail, the thinking of, and various approaches to analysis and performance of the piano music from a professional perspective. Again, I would stress that such a study, involving six professional pianists does not exist in the current literature. The videoed interviews of these participants' discussions while at the piano could be used as effective teaching material, especially for pianists who are coming to Stravinsky for the first time.

#### 9.5. Limitations

There are several limitations, however, which should be noted in regard to this study. The first concerns its restricted scope which focused primarily on three pieces of Stravinsky's piano music. Other works by Stravinsky, for example his *Etudes Op. 7*; *Piano Rag-Music*, and the *Piano Sonata* were excluded from the study. The reason for this was that the three pieces selected for this analysis were considered the most

representative examples of their respective musical periods, i.e. Russian, neoclassical and serial styles.

The number of interviewees was restricted to six respondents who generated the data for the analysis. One possible limitation could be that a larger sample could have been used. It is argued, however, that despite this relatively small number of high-level performers, they were able to provide a great deal of rich and informed data. It is possible that a larger number of interviewees would have possibly resulted in data saturation (i.e. repetitive patterns of information). In addition, this study has not focused on the extent to which Stravinsky, directly or indirectly, influenced other composers during his career, nor his impact on twentieth-century music as a whole. This inclusion would have considerably extended the scope of the study. Another potential limitation concerns the extent to which it is possible to generalise from the narrow focus of the case study. Nevertheless, the case study approach was able to generate sufficient data to answer the research questions and reveal further insight into how pianists can approach Stravinsky's piano music.

#### 9.6 Recommendations for further research

It would be interesting to use the same methodological approach using professional performers but focusing on other composers, such as Glazunov, Bartok or Schoenberg. Another potentially fruitful project would be to conduct a duel case study in which pianists compare piano works by two different composers from the same time period. In this way, it would be possible to compare and contrast analyses and approaches to interpretation. As noted above, however, the data generated by this study and the contribution of the participants could be used as effective guidance for students learning

Stravinsky's piano works. A future topic for research could focus on this theme in more detail. The aim here would be to generate a pedagogical tool which could be used for instruction, analysis and discussion.

#### 9.7 Final comments: present status of Stravinsky's piano repertoire

As noted above, pianists learning the classical piano repertoire rarely know about Stravinsky's piano music. They tend only to be aware of his famous orchestral and ballet music. As a classically trained pianist, I only started to know about his piano works during my master's degree studies. I have rarely heard anyone play them, either in the music college, or in concert halls. However, Stravinsky's orchestral works have increasingly been performed at major classical events, such as the BBC Proms and other music festivals, much frequently than would have been the case twenty years ago. The problem with Stravinsky's piano works is that they attract little attention to concert and festival organisers as they are considered outside the usual repertoire. There is a danger that this bias results in audiences never hearing these exciting and original piano compositions.

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## **Appendix I: Interview Questions**

### **General Questions:**

Q1: How would you define a 'good' pianist?

Q2: Have you ever played Stravinsky's piano works?

If YES:

Q2a: Describe your experiences.

Q2b: Were you able to identify the influences of other composers or pieces?

Q2c: Do you know other pieces by Stravinsky?

If NO:

Q2d: What is your knowledge of early 20<sup>th</sup> century piano music? If you have not played Stravinsky before, have you ever played other Russian music from this period or have you played other music from this period?

### **Performance Notation:**

Q3: Could you tell me how you approached learning these three pieces?

Follow up questions:

Q3a: Do you research any historical and performance background in order to complement your personal interpretation?

Q3b: What sources of analysis do you tend to use? (for example, books, specialised magazines and reviews, audio and video recordings, etc.) How useful are they?

Q3c: Do you follow your own intuition about how a piece should be played or do you rely more on your background knowledge of the piece?

Q4: Do you often listen to recordings of other pianists' performances?

Q4a: Do you think it is important to play particular pieces in a similar way to recorded versions? Or do you consider it more important to interpret the work in a new way?

Q4b: How important is your own role as a 're-creator' when interpreting Stravinsky's works? In other words, how many responsibilities do you take as performer?

### **Latitude in Interpreting Stravinsky's Piano Works:**

Q5: What is your understanding of the notion of 'freedom' in interpreting piano works?

Q5a: Do you use it differently according to different historical time periods?

Q5b: How important is keeping to the notation in the music scores?

Q6: In your opinion, which period of Stravinsky's piano repertoire allows more freedom or latitude for interpretation? Why do you think so? And what are the main factors involved?

Q7: How would you go about interpreting them? [*performing music excerpts from Russian, Neoclassical and Serial periods*]

The researcher then asks questions regarding interviewees' interpretations based on musical elements. For example: Why did you play in this tempo? Why do you feel it should be played like that?

- Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer's works?
- What do you consider the most important element when you interpret it?
- Which elements allow you more freedom or latitude? And Why?

- Where do you feel there is freedom or latitude (i.e., room for interpretation) built into the notation?

**Comparing Stravinsky's recordings:**

*[The researcher plays three-minute recordings of different versions of Firebird Scherzo to interviewees in the middle section of the interview]*

Q8: Here are three recordings made in different time of *Firebird Scherzo*, what do you think of them?

Q8a: That is how they played in the 1920s, 1940s and 1960s. I didn't tell you but were you aware that Stravinsky actually conducted this piece? Now, how strictly do you think Stravinsky played the music?

Q8b: What would you say are the main differences between the three recordings?

Q9: Do you think the way music was performed in 1920s should be the way we should play it now?

Q10: Do you think you should bear in mind Stravinsky's orchestration while performing his piano music? In other words, are you looking for orchestral colour in the piano works?

Q11: Have you read what Stravinsky said about performance?

Q11a: Do you think Stravinsky did what he said in these quotation?

Q11b: Do you think what he says would actually hold you back from your own inclinations?

Q12: After a careful consideration of performance issues, you have any final advice to pianists who intend to study and play Stravinsky's piano music in the future?

## Appendix II: Interview Transcripts

### Interview with P1:

#### General Questions

Q1: How would you define a 'good' pianist?

I think the pianist has to be the servant of the composer and communicate the composer's wishes to the audience, to the listener. So, if he succeeds in doing that, then he can say he is a very good pianist. Because it is not easy to comprehend all the composers' wishes, feelings and thoughts about the piece. And it is not easy to project those feelings to the audience they understand. The old idea is that the performer being the middle man. I have already subscribed to that.

Q2: Have you ever played Stravinsky's piano works?

If YES:

Q2a: Describe your experiences.

I have played collaborative of his piano works, I haven't really played his solo piano works, I have played *The Rite of Spring*, *Petrushka*, *Concerto for Two Pianos*, *Les Noces*, *L'Histoire du soldat*, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, I played these pieces and enjoyed them very much. I have neglected to solo works, probably I just didn't have the time to do it, not because I wanted to neglect them.

Q2b: Were you able to identify the influences of other composers or pieces?

Sometimes, in the early ballets, Rimsky Korsakov influences in the fifth in the *Petrushka*; Sometimes, beautiful Debussy in evocative harmonies in *Petrushka* too.

There always interesting with Neoclassical period you get much more kind of Baroque influence in the concerto for two pianos, which is great fun! I mean you much have kaleidoscopic approach, from various areas and composers.

#### Performance Notation

Q3: Could you tell me how you approached learning these three pieces?

Typically, 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian, full pedal, emotional, 'big boned', same approach to Tchaikovsky sonata, I am not thinking it is by Stravinsky: very romantic, very traditional, I am thinking of 19<sup>th</sup> century sound. The second subject very romantic, lyrical, Schumann-esque, spiritual bond. Rich warm sound. The second piece is more precious, pure in style, beautiful neat legato, no big bass, no left hand beat, more classical in style, more refined, less exaggerated, the pedal is the soul of the piano in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, not always in 20<sup>th</sup> century, softer sound.

Follow up questions:

Q3a: Do you research any historical and performance background in order to complement your personal interpretation?

When I was working with Peter Hill: *Petrushka* for four hands. It is very helpful listening to the recordings, it helped to understand the whole atmosphere for interpretation.

It is interesting to see how a piano score is developed, especially there are two editions of the score and how they change certain things. You can have very different ideas of the same piece. The composer may like both of them.

Q3b: What sources of analysis do you tend to use? (for example, books, specialised magazines and reviews, audio and video recordings, etc.) How useful are they?

Knowing in details about the background of the composer may not necessarily improve the interpretation of the piece. Its value is that it can offer a fascinating insight to the world of the composer.

Q3c: Do you follow your own intuition about how a piece should be played or do you rely more on your background knowledge of the piece?

First, I go for accuracy, the notes should leap out at you. It is a combination of going for an accuracy of the score and music. And letting the music speak to you in a certain way. For example, this is such as mode, gesture, character. You might slightly exaggerate and project to the audience. It is useful to study the score away from the piano. You notice all the marks when you play, you don't always notice them. Do you show all the notation to the audience? Some of the notations are for the performer not for the audience. They do not need to know them. Not everything is black and white for the listener, but it is for the performer to know the details of the score. Again, you are the middle man, your aim is to make an exciting performance.

Q4: Do you often listen to recordings of other pianists' performances?

Yes, not so much now, as before, when I was younger. Now, I don't think I listen enough. But I am against just copying. If you take the best of each recording is just a collage. The score comes first, and when you have learned it, there is no harm listening around to other versions. Listening live performances is even more valuable. Because they are more immediate, the live experience seems to be valued by audiences. Performers can get a real 'buzz' from performing live; even although the performance may not be perfect. Given the perfection of recording, it has been argued, justifiably, that there is no need for live concerts as predicted by Glenn Gould in the 1990s. But there is clearly something important about live performances. They are focused events where performers can engage with audiences who want to listen to live music.

Q4a: Do you think it is important to play particular pieces in a similar way to recorded versions? Or do you consider it more important to interpret the work in a new way?

If you feel there is an established norm which you don't feel is right, I would break away from it. But I would not be original for the sake of it. For example, slight differences and changes in rhythm, dynamics can be important details.

Q4b: How important is your own role as a 're-creator' when interpreting Stravinsky's works? In other words, how many responsibilities do you take as performer?

Stravinsky is very famous for not wanting the performer to get in the way, although he did great virtuosi like Rubinstein's three pieces, because he knew you could do it.

Having said that, if you are not in the real zone, in the mood of these wonderful pieces, and if you are just accurate you can't deliver it properly. Like Peter Hill is saying in his programme notes for a new CD, you have all the smells all the atmosphere, you have to put yourself in that imagine, all the things that happen. So your imagination despite very precise. Your imagination is fired up by all these images.

There is also the story line, you very much emotionally evolved, even if Stravinsky said he does not want performers getting in the way, you just do what he is saying. Debussy said similar things: "four semiquavers means four semiquavers." Someone asked him: "can this be free?" He just looked at the carpet": he was clearly very angry. They don't want it to be interpreted. If you don't understand what is behind the music, you are not just playing the notes. That won't do.

### **Latitude in Interpreting Stravinsky's Piano Works**

Q5: What is your understanding of the notion of 'freedom' in interpreting piano works?

When we talk about freedom, we often firstly think about the rubato. With Stravinsky, this is rare. Not absolutely never. Because he has cantabile lines, but he is rarer than the other composers, certainly rarer than the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Also, with the text, there is staccato legato, but in between staccato and legato there are many different lengths. So you have to decide for yourself what are the lengths for staccato. (The length of the notes, when it's staccato, it can be longer, shorter, varied). Freedom and Stravinsky are a little bit an oxymoron.

Q5a: Do you use it differently according to different historical time periods?

Yes, with harpsichord, they use more rubato, because they needed it to shape the music, more a pagination of chords. It is a stylistic thing you tend to feel what can be freer, and what cannot be. Sometimes when I've done chamber music, one of another musician suggested I would be free in this passage, I feel absolutely wonderful I have no idea I would be that free. She said "Taking new tempo here" I have no idea I could do that. From outside somebody listening in, if it is too strict! I have been grateful for suggestions from my colleagues many times, just loosening up a passage which I probably fencing down too much.

I tend to think a movement, unless the composer says it is in one tempo, it can fluctuate, but it is basically around one tempo, I don't like to hear performers where the tempo for every single subject is a different tempo. I think it has to relate. You have to trying find a tempo. But there are some pieces which is very difficult because the composer saying 'a little bit more here, a little less here' he is fluctuating. The very difficult fluctuating of tempo, which probably the romantic composers introduced, maybe they played classical composer like that. There are report of Beethoven changing the tempi (G major sonata Op.14 No.2), which is very interesting, doesn't have to say we have to copy that, it is worth bearing in mind.

Q6: In your opinion, which period of Stravinsky's piano repertoire allows more freedom or latitude for interpretation? Why do you think so? And what are the main factors involved?

The early period, because of strength of emotions, they just seem more emotional music. But even then, it is not really free. You got these kind of Oriento, like Debussy moments. Which have that Russian favor, so it is left over from more rubato age, so I would say probably early works. I think balance between the voices, tempo rubato, how much exaggerate the moods, how much exaggerate the dynamics.

Q7: How would you go about interpreting them?

Q7a: Russian excerpt

Q: Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer's works?

It's an interesting question, probably the second subject is more Rachmaninov and Glazunov. The beginning is more Tchaikovsky to get the contrast of different sections.

Q: Which elements allow you more freedom or latitude?

Pedal, there is a certain amount of freedom, and Phrasing.

Q7b: Neoclassical excerpt

Q: Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer's works?

Slightly Debussy in floating thirds. A little bit Faire, continues lines, nocturnes, impromptu, barcaroles, but of course it is in different harmonic language. French composers like Lasix, I have slightly French feel. It is not hard hitting Russian music. Poulenc, he loves the pedal.

Q: What do you consider the most important element when you interpret it?

Phrasing. Getting the calm mood, the peaceful mood. You're actually putting listener in a kind of sleepy frame of mind.

Q7c: Serial excerpts.

Q: Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer's works?

Any of the serial composers, even more aggressive than that. It's more angular. Although it very different from his other pieces, it still feels like Stravinsky.

Q: What do you consider the most important element when you interpret it?

Rhythm

Q: Which elements allow you more freedom or latitude? And Why?

A lightly change of character in bar 8, you might feel is slightly less, pp is different things to different people. The slur there might influence you. Beginning of the bar 7, you have a rest there, I don't think you could do much on that, it is coming from previous bar strictly.

Q: Do you think we can still have emotion in serial music?

Yes, I don't see why you can't have emotions in serial music. In Schoenberg there are certainly emotions. Serial music seems less emotional, but it certainly has 'attitude' in the modern sense of the word; and that is the main thing.

### **Comparing Stravinsky's recordings**

Q8: Here are three recordings made in different time of *Firebird Scherzo*, what do you think of them?

The first one is probably an old recording, it sounded like an old recording, it was not that clear but it was very beautiful. The second one sounds like more modern recording, more immediate, slightly quicker tempo, I think I enjoyed that the most of the three. It had a lot of life, was not quite together when the clarinet came in with solo. The third one is more lyrical, it made more of the slurs, the expressive moment. I enjoyed all three, maybe the first is Stravinsky...I don't know.

Q8a: That is how they played in the 1920s, 1940s and 1960s. I didn't tell you but were you aware that Stravinsky actually conducted this piece? Now, how strictly do you think Stravinsky played the music?

It almost like three different conductors, very interesting.

Here is always reinventing his music, he is adjusting the tempi, he is making some of the slurs, accents, more expressive, the 1960s is more romantic. It just shows how you can come to the same score with fresh eyes and ears. I really did think there are three different conductors. Stravinsky was a pianist, and this influenced the way he conducted. That is absolutely fascinating. I like the 1940s the best: the strictest one. When he was formulating his ideas on performance and perhaps how he should not be quite so wayward.

Q8b: What would you say are the main differences between the three recordings?

The tempo and the heightened expression of the third one. 1960s one is too 'soupy' of what we usually think of Stravinsky. The lively tempo of the second, make the music jump out of the page more. The first one is slightly sleepier, but of course in those days, the music was less familiar to the musicians. People could do in 1920s, by the time, when they get to the 1940s, they are much more familiar with it. It is about familiarity.

Q9: Do you think the way music was performed in 1920s should be the way we should play it now?

No, not necessarily. There is familiarity with the style now. For those dancers who danced the rite of spring back then, they must have been absolutely horrified of what they had to do! And perhaps even now, to perform the rite of spring is a nerve wracking experience. Music has been written in all the styles since Stravinsky has become like the neoclassicism.

Q: Why do we play, if we just going to play the same? Why do we play at all, you might as well give up?

If you play an instrument, you're doing something individual. Nowadays, we are very much stylistically aware of we hear Mozart, too much rubato. When you play his Russian pieces, you can refer to these 'healthy' staccato, more classical, Haydn-esque, and also Tchaikovsky. There are similar techniques, but in the end, we all have a preconception of a composer's style and sound (the completion judge said: it's just not Brahms!). One of my hobbies is finding out the influences from other pieces when was first written.

Q10: Do you think you should bear in mind Stravinsky's orchestration while performing his piano music? In other words, are you looking for orchestral colour in the piano works?

Stravinsky was writing at the piano, but he must have heard these orchestra sounds in his head. I do not think of the piano of a poor substitute for the orchestra. The evocative orchestration of early ballets, you must with the aid of the pedal when necessary. It is a character thing as well. I think whenever you play a music by composer who did not just write for piano like Chopin, you have to think of orchestra works. That what is fun about being a pianist: we have all the orchestra here. Many pianists become conductors, we are quicker because we have whole of the music. It is not poor substitute, we can hear some of the rhythms more clearly on the piano, but we must also think about the timbre and power of the orchestra.

Q11: Have you read what Stravinsky said about performance?

I remember he did not want any interpretation.

Q11a: Do you think what he says would actually hold you back from your own inclinations? No, because you express a lot in his music, but I suppose composing is very intellectual process. We can attribute all sort of things to passages and phrases of music. Stravinsky is saying expression is an extra thing, the extra on top of the extra music. I don't think people would go to concert if there is never expression in music. Regarding the piano concerto for woodwind, He said he'd rather play it himself and risk playing the wrong notes than giving to some romantic pianist. Because he wanted to have that baroque character, rather than romanticising it. He was certainly against the romanticism of the music. This, I think he is absolutely right. I heard Richter said he was against the interpretation of his performance. His sound, pacing and rhythm spacing is so wonderful. You don't need to do much with the music.

It is very striking and surprising but as I said, I think he is talking about he does not want. I think he is exaggerating; I think he likes to shock. I would certainly think twice about my inclinations, because it is a very outspoken statement. Yes, I would be influenced but it would be bound by it. I would know people who completely go against it, it is a very interesting statement.

Q12: After a careful consideration of performance issues, you have any final advice to pianists who intend to study and play Stravinsky's piano music in the future?

I think you should try to recreate for the present, certainly study the old recordings. I would try to present the work dynamically and accessibly to modern audiences because Stravinsky's piano music deserves to be heard. Moreover, enjoy it, because it is neoclassicism.

In my day, when I was young, orchestras used to start with a Haydn then a piano concerto, then you'd get Tchaikovsky symphonies. But now we hear in the first half Bartok, Prokofiev, Stravinsky very often. They are not exceptions; this is the new classicism. They are the norm composers; you now have to have period orchestra to hear Mozart: things have changed a lot.

To enjoy it, because Stravinsky's time is coming. The solo works have not been played enough. If I had my time over again, I'd try to do more of these. The first thing I did with Peter Hill was The Rite of Spring in 1986.

## Interview with P2:

### General Questions

Q1: How would you define a 'good' pianist?

A Good Pianist.....someone who can convince you that their way is best. Even though afterwards you may well change your view!!!! Also a performer that looks completely at ease.

Q2: Have you ever played Stravinsky's piano works?

If YES:

Q2a: Describe your experiences

Yes, I have played a lot of Stravinsky in concert. I love the *Capriccio for Piano & Orchestra* and although I have played the *Concerto* I don't like it so much.

The duet version of *the Rite of Spring* I have played a lot. It is most exciting and works better than one imagines. Also played Agosti's version of the *Firebird* which is very popular with audiences but very difficult to play. I was a student of Agosti but sadly didn't know his transcription at the time so never got to play it to him. The *Septet* and the *Duo Concertante* have cropped up in the past.

Q2b: Were you able to identify the influences of other composers or pieces?

He (Stravinsky) was certainly influenced by the Russian school early on in his pieces and using folk melodies and in the way he wrote his earlier piano pieces. The *Sonata in F sharp Minor & Etudes* were very traditional in style compared the later *Piano Sonata* or the *Piano Rag Music*.

Q2c: Do you know other pieces by Stravinsky?

I have certainly listened to virtually all his works when I was involved in the recordings.

Q: When did you play them?

1982. I played Stravinsky's piano works many times, but you change every piece. So I would not play it now in the same way. It would be quite different with a different type of sound. I think I played the sonata so fast, it felt right then. But you change your view of a piece as a performer you keep on changing. When you listen to a large amount of Stravinsky's music, your internal and mental library gets bigger. Stravinsky often changed his tempo accordingly (moderato, metronome). Stravinsky was an awkward customer. He like to be difficult and upset norms specially in regard to speed and sound. He was an experimenter but he made art out of everything. Even it was not comfortable or performer friendly. Music often looks better on paper before you actually play it.

Q: How closely should you follow the score in Stravinsky's piano works?

You start with the score, then you have to decide how literally you are going to take it. For example, do you keep strictly to metronome? Probably not. I think you have to play within regions, range or limits. In regard to historical tradition, with Bach for example, but not his keyboard music, you can have plenty of freedom within the markings. In my experience, many composers could not care less in regard to keeping very stickily to the score. For example, you may play it and ask a composer 'is that ok?' even though they wrote that mark, their view might change, so interpreting a written score is not a precise science. Take moderato or allegro for example, they are all within a range so we have got amount of choice. In addition, presto in a hall full of wood panelling would be better in order to enhance the projection of musical resonance. So you have to consider many factors.

Q: If you were on a panel in the international piano competition and all the percipients play Stravinsky, how would you decide on the 'best' performance? How do you define the 'norm'? What would you look for?

I think we all have preconceived ideas of how any composers' music should sound. I believe it is the person who convinces you at the time that this is the best way to play the piece. Clearly

stylistic features are important. For instance, if I played something half speed, I would want to convince you within these margins. There is not one right way, that is the magic of it all. In other words, who is right?

Q: What is the best or most convincing recording of Stravinsky's piano works you have ever heard?

Have you ever listen to 1971 Pollini's *Petrushka*? It was brilliant, he can play all the notes it is very difficult. All the speeds and rhythms and notes in a bar. He convinced me that this recording was brilliant. However, you do not hear much Stravinsky's music. If I recorded the piano sonata again, I will change it a lot just to try it more from a composer's point of view. I think I went too far I should have held back in my last recording, and make it a bit more classical, a bit like Bach's gigue not like Beethoven. In the piano sonata, there are two lines and rhythms like the Bach did, very few notations, very odd ones. Actually, I do not like listening to my recordings, I feel I would change it the next day, things like pedalling, balance anything. It depends on your mood, there is staccato, legato and pedal. It is a fine line, and often the notes are hard to find, too far to stretch. Often you can hear the sound in your head, but on the piano reproducing the sound is not easy.

Q: Was Stravinsky more pianistic or orchestral in his approach to composition?

I think he thought orchestrally: he did not think pianistically. In the *Serenade*, there is obviously a bassoon, winds and strings and legato line with chattering going on underneath. You have to get as near to that as you can. He composed everything on the piano, and worked it out on the piano. I think he did not really like the piano, Stravinsky called it a mechanical 'device'? (Martin refers to his CD notes). He told Rubenstein regarding his piano-rag-music in the 1919 that the piano was a 'utility instrument' used only for percussion. Actually, other composers thought the same, such as Bartok.

Q: In what way was Stravinsky different compare to other composers?

He broke away. He got rid of all the old traditions in regard to rhythm, melody, sound, dynamic everything which he expected the orchestra to play even after a hundred years there is incredible power to the works. What were the other composers writing in 1914? For example, Rachmaninov probably been on his etudes tableaux by then, but still composing in a lyrical style; still very much governed by being a pianist composer rather a composer being a sort of pianist. Stravinsky never mastered the piano, the *Serenade* shows you how confident he was playing the piano [i.e. lacking confident or conviction?]. In a sense, he was terrific innovator like Beethoven. Example [Beethoven *Eroica*- the Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major] We forget how new music sounded when it was new. [Audience reaction to innovation] [e.g. Berlioz *Symphonie Fantastique*]. Can you imagine? For audiences, it must have sounded a complete gibberish. (It may have been initially unintelligible, meaningless or difficult to understand.) At any time, it is difficult to know what is modern music and what is good modern music. It is very hard to know in your own age. What is going to survive and what is not. [What contemporary modern music did not survive in for example, 1920s?

### **Performance Notation**

Q3: Could you tell me how you approached learning these three pieces.

I do not like to listen to other performances of pieces which I am learning; I hope it helps me find my own view without influence from another performer.

Once you learn it, it becomes apparent how it should go. It becomes obvious after learning the piece what speed it should go. In other piano works at that time, there was a much wider scope regarding how to play it, but this is very strict and has very narrow margins. Stravinsky's most representative works would include sonata, the four studies, neoclassical dance ones: ragtime, tango of the 1940s but there isn't a serial work. In Stravinsky's 1905 symphony, the idea and scale are symphonic.

Follow up questions:

Q3a: Do you research any historical and performance background in order to complement your personal interpretation?

I read the odd magazine more for information about a composer rather than performance & to keep up with the latest recordings (not piano).

Q3b: What sources of analysis do you tend to use?

There is a lot of difference in the way music from different eras are played. I play very little music written before 1800, it doesn't seem to suite me or excite me much either!!! But, of course I would approach Beethoven differently from Rachmaninov.

Q3c: Do you follow your own intuition about how a piece should be played or do you rely more on your background knowledge of the piece?

I don't do much historical research. I rely more on my intuition through listening to hopefully find the right style & interpretation.

Q4: Do you often listen to recordings of other pianists' performances?

Yes, I like to listen to lots of music (not often piano, I find I have listened to enough piano with practicing) and I have a large collection of music so I will look at other pieces by the composer of the work I am studying. Chamber, orchestral if possible.

Q: How did you approach each piece in your recording? Did you have a general approach?

It depends on the individual and also the respective period. For example, you tend to have a 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian tradition at the back of your mind. Basically, different styles require different approaches. But most of us find serial music difficult. In Stravinsky's later work there can be so little freedom in *Movements*. It's best to go with the different styles he is trying: there are types of styles which reflect changes in his musical language; more so than with other composers. You have to follow your intuition.

But keep in mind he wasn't really a pianist. He generated a huge output of works but with few piano works. His *Serenade* and Sonata are not standard repertoire works. He wrote *Petrushka* for Rubinstein-who was a very big name but Rubinstein found it too hard so he never performed it!

Q4b: How important is your own role as a 're-creator' when interpreting Stravinsky's works? In other words, how many responsibilities do you take as performer?

You have a responsibility to persuade somebody to enjoy and get involved in it. Stravinsky's music is not also comfortable but trying to get it across to audiences is a big responsibility. When, there is more freedom of speed you can colour it tempo has more to do with expression. Looking at the page (*Serenade*? Sonata?), we see '*allegro*' but only a few markings so it's up to you to shape and make it. You must make the decisions; and there are lots of them. But with serial music it's different: it's just there in front of you so you must be precise. And with new music you often don't know where to start.

### **Latitude in Interpreting Stravinsky's Piano Works**

Q5: What is your understanding of the notion of 'freedom' in interpreting piano works?

Freedom is very personal. I find some players use freedom (too much rubato) instead of expression for my taste. I think the music speaks best is not pulled about too much.

Q5a: Do you use it differently according to different historical time periods?

Yes. If there were no instructions, it could go at any speed, any dynamic. You are at a loss, whereas this, (*Serenade*) when you play it, it becomes evident where it is going to go and develop. It has a built-in logic to the speed. And even regarding the dynamic, you are never going to play that quietly and slowly.

Q6: In your opinion, which period of Stravinsky's piano repertoire allows more freedom or latitude for interpretation? Why do you think so? And what are the main factors involved?  
The early pieces can be played in a very romantic way as fits the music but as soon as rhythm becomes important then it is less appropriate. There is also less long melodic line in the later works.

Q: In this case, how would you approach or treat the scores of Stravinsky's piano music? Do you think you can play with more freedom or latitude when interpreting them? What elements in the score can allow you freedom or latitude?

A lot of his music does not want much freedom, in fact just the opposite, Rhythm so such an important part of his language that it ruins it if distorted. He was not a gifted pianist or a comfortable performer at the piano. Gordon Green (one of my teachers said that he turned pages for Stravinsky in Liverpool and Stravinsky was shaking so much Gordon thought he might have to play instead.) As it turned out Stravinsky calmed after a few minutes and managed to finish the piece (I don't know what it was).

The fact that he wasn't a brilliant player like Rachmaninov or Prokofiev shows in the way he wrote his piano works. They are not really great show pieces in the traditional sense so it makes them harder to programme. They were what he could manage when asked to play the piano.

Q7: Do you use a different approach according to different time periods?  
Definitely.

Q: When you find the tempo you want you to set the tempo for the whole piece?  
But with that type, you can have more freedom to keep it sounding 'allegro'. But if you put the metronome on it, you would find it would vary quite a bit and more that you think (to camera, [jokingly]: and more than I would admit on tape!!)

Q: What about the character of this piece (Piano Sonata, 'Russian' Period, 1904); do you use the pedal much?

Character? Martial...the Russian army! Pedalling? It has got to be clear. Once people know it is going to be the feature of the piece you do not have to be so worried about being clear then.

Q: So the way you use the pedal depends on the change of the dynamic?

Always...as in any piece. Regarding the *Serenade in A*, it's not a harmonic piece so how would you use the pedal? Just touching it here and there to keep it smooth. When the hand position is not comfortable, you can cheat it a bit by using the pedal to make it sound smooth because it must not sound as though it is being pedalled all the time. Just touch it to help you play legato. Maybe a quarter pedal, but just a touch.

Q: Regarding the Piano Sonata, what would you estimate the percentage of freedom or latitude in the piece?

Not much. It is early in the piece. You want to make a clear statement about what's going to happen. You don't want it to be a mess early on!

Q: What do you consider the most important element when you interpret it?

Phrasing and dynamic. Pedal is the soul of the piano, is part of this music's DNA. Composers had more and more knowledge of history as music has goes on into modern era.

Q: How about in the middle?

It does not actually do much. But there is a clear statement at the beginning. The material you are going to something with. The beginning of the piece is often the most important in piano pieces. If you take something like this (plays Liszt, Chopin). You know it has got to be played

as it is. You cannot mess about with it. It serves as the statement of what's coming. It is like: 'this is what I'm going to tell you'. It is a clear statement right from the word 'go'.

Q: Which of the 6 elements can allow more freedom or latitude?

Well, in the 1904, Chopin-like stuff. There are rubato sound and pedal in the Chopin-like pieces because of the way he's written it. It's hard to answer. You can tell by the look of the music. (indicating score) You can just see how this (indicating and comparing scores) will never be played the same way as that. The rhythm has gone and the florid writing and harmony-it has got to be sustained with a quieter dynamic. Everything has changed but you can spot it immediately when you open the copy. That page is so different to that one, although they are in the same piece. The problem is that they must sound from the same piece, they don't sound from completely different piece. But you know sometimes, it goes back to that.

Q: Do you think you strictly follow the phrasing on the score?

(While he listened to the music) Yes, that's not bad. I would probably do more now such as longer phrasing. You really want to listen to the phrasing. I thought it was a much longer line just going on. I did it more here (Cadenza 1<sup>st</sup> page, 1<sup>st</sup> line), which is more clear than here (Cadenza 1<sup>st</sup> page, 3<sup>rd</sup> line), and maybe it was a mistake. I should've done one of the other, but I think I would now, to be honest. The left is pretty smooth all the time. The left is alright, and it is the right that you are going to hear. (So are you going play the right hand legato?) I think I probably overdid it a little bit. (Do you think you played the left hand quite detached in order to show the right hand?) Well, the left is just getting to the really long phrase. It just keeps on going. And I think the phrasing would be like a bassoon player taking a quick breath. (Do you mean between each slur?) Yeah. Exactly. From bar 12 to bar 19. I think I would do it a little bit slower now as well. I would do it a little bit more andante. (Why?) Because I think that (the recording) is just a little bit quick, a little bit too fast. Because then there will be more reason to have short phrases.

Q: In the Serial excerpt, do certain phrases remind you of other composers' works?

I'm not familiar with his type of music. I don't know to be honest. Schoenberg's music is more lyrical than this; maybe Webern but it is more broken up, fragmented, than Schoenberg's. It still has more traditional phrasing in it even the suites and dances. It looks like more traditional music whereas this, the Movements, is definitely different.

Q: What do you think is the most important element in *Movements*?

I think you have to be incredibly exact because it relies on rhythms and patterns. So every note got to be exactly in the right place so precision is absolutely crucial.

Q: What would you estimate the percentage of freedom or latitude allowed in this piece?

It is attention to detail: every single detail with very little freedom allowed only when you interpret forte

Only how loud or soft it is. Within the dynamics you can vary it a bit, you may play it much louder than the next.

Q: Which works by Stravinsky would you consider the most demanding?

*Petrushka* is the hardest. The Four Studies would also be difficult because of the older traditional technique like the Chopin studies, that sort of technique. It is completely different.

Q: What motivated you to record so many of Stravinsky's works?

It was my choice at the time. there was not a complete recording in one box. And I like Stravinsky's music. But I'm not sure about this (Serial work). So it seemed a good idea. Why do I like Stravinsky's work? Well, I couldn't be without *Oedipus Rex*, *The Rite of Spring*, *Firebird* and *Petrushka*. The orchestral work is brilliant to play. I like lots of it, especially the early works. He was a brilliant orchestrator. I'm not keen on the symphonies: they're not fully developed. Three notes and then it stops. If you got rid of these-how much would be played

now? Very little. Even for orchestras: how often are they going to play Symphony in C? People will come to hear Rite of Spring and Firebird. The piano transcription of the latter is easier to listen to as it is in a traditional musical language but there is enough Stravinsky in it with these harmonic excitements. But the tunes are all Russian traditional ones. They are not his own melodies. But the sound is a familiar language. Regarding the Movement, it would only be played in a festival of 20<sup>th</sup> century music. But in an ordinary season it would unlikely be played but the Rite of Spring would. It is just familiar and unfamiliar enough to be brilliant to listen to.

### **Comparing Stravinsky's recordings**

Q: Have you even listened to different versions of Stravinsky's own conducting?

Yes, I have heard Stravinsky conducting but not playing his own works. I have never listened to him play the piano. I don't think it would help me much either because he wasn't a very good pianist.

Q8: Here are three recordings made in different time of *Firebird Scherzo*, what do you think of them?

The first is much older—a dry recording so that was probably an older American recording (1928). I can't help noticing how much orchestral playing has changed. The woodwind playing that solo was quite different, wasn't it? The middle recording (1947) is brilliant as it is very clear and not too fast. The last one (1958) seems almost too quick. You can hardly hear all the details. You can just make it out whereas I very clear in the middle one. We now hear a much more vivid, live performance.

Q8a: That is how they played in the 1920s, 1940s and 1960s. I didn't tell you but were you aware that Stravinsky actually conducted this piece? Now, how strictly do you think Stravinsky played the music?

No, he did all three? They got quicker, didn't they. The more familiar it is, the quicker things will get. And by the third time the orchestra knows the music. They know the stuff. They are used to it so they can play it. In the 1920's, it would have been much more uncomfortable to play. It can also depend on developing technical skill of the orchestra over time. This is really virtuoso stuff for the orchestra to play. It is very exposed.

He did the best he could at that time. He was a very 'exact' person, very precise. His views changed obviously. One gets the feeling that the first one was a private recording. It doesn't sound like a professional orchestra (MO: it wasn't).

Q: Would you say that the main factor that Stravinsky did not follow the scores was because of the technical level of the orchestra and how he perceived his music at that time?

Yes, and as we said earlier his view changes even if he has written it himself. As Ravel said, (when Enescu played his violin sonata to him [it was in manuscript]), 'It was not what I imagined but that's fine. I like it'. With most music there is room for us to have ways of playing it. Thank goodness, otherwise there would be just one performance. How boring that would be.

Q: Do you think that Stravinsky was a good conductor?

Yes, He was good enough as a conductor to be fussy and know what he wanted and get it out of the orchestra. Some composers know what they want but they cannot physically conduct it in order to get what they want out of the orchestra. He knew what he was doing he had a lot of experience. The quality of the players can make a big difference to any performance. Sometimes they do not need a conductor (gives example)! There can be better, if not different performances, but who is to know? I would interpret it differently but it may not be better.

Q9: Do you think the way music was performed in 1920s should be the way we should play it now?

Performing style has changed since the 1920s with much more care taken about playing exactly what is written, so lots less freedom. No changing notes or chords or adding octaves on the spur of the moment.

Q10: Do you think you should bear in mind Stravinsky's orchestration while performing his piano music? In other words, are you looking for orchestral colour in the piano works?

I think he always had an orchestral sound in his mind even when writing for the piano, so I find it helps a lot to have listened to his orchestral works.

Q11: Have you read what Stravinsky said about performance?

Yes.

Q11a: How do you react about this quotation from Stravinsky about performance?

'Expression has never been an inherent property of music'. I think he just wanted to stir it up a lot of the time. What does that mean? I think in 1936 he wanted to get rid of all this romantic feeling but it doesn't mean this music didn't have musical expression for other people. His comments are crazy.

Q11b: Do you think what he says would actually hold you back from your own inclinations?

I wouldn't take any notice.

Q12: After a careful consideration of performance issues, you have any final advice to pianists who intend to study and play Stravinsky's piano music in the future?

Listen to the all the other recordings of his music, not just the piano music: the whole lot. Just listen to it: soak up that sound and then play it. It has a particular sound and style.

## Interview with P3:

### General Questions

Q1: How would you define a 'good' pianist?

The pianist who can convince and move the people. I do not think it is someone who can move everyone, because that is not possible even you are a well-known pianist... of course people have different ideas and opinions, but for me, if you made a difference in that person's life even it is just one person. I think it is still something you should be proud of, and a successful pianist is someone who can do that.

Q2: Have you ever played Stravinsky's piano works?

If NO:

Q2c: What is your knowledge of early 20<sup>th</sup> century piano music? If you have not played Stravinsky before, have you ever played other Russian music from this period or have you played other music from this period?

Most early 20<sup>th</sup> century music still has late-romantic style inside. Like early Rachmaninov, Tchaikovsky, even early Stravinsky's music can be romantic as well. I played Rachmaninov preludes, Shostakovich preludes and fugues, I am currently learning Prokofiev second sonata, very intense music. I find them very 'passionate', maybe because all the pieces I have played have been very passionate.

### Performance Notation

Q3: Could you tell me how you approached learning these three pieces.

I approach them pretty much the same way. Initially like I learn the notes, look at the harmonies... when I come to do my own interpretation, I think that is where the differences come in... the Serial period requires least amount of interpretation, because it is very instructed. Thus, it almost gives you no room for interpretation, you have to follow exactly what is written on the score, especially the rhythm... for the first Piano Sonata, you can do your own interpretation definitely, but you still need to follow that instruction... for example, if you pull tempo too much, you will lose the sense of his dotted rhythms, and his dynamics markings also give you guidance... for the second one, there is less instruction in it, and there are a lot of repetition, then, you can do different things in the repeated sections.

Follow up questions:

Q3a: Do you research any historical and performance background in order to complement your personal interpretation?

I definitely do. For example, in *Chopin Ballade no.1*, the code section was written during French Revolution... of course it is a very intense section in the music, but knowing that angle; knowing his emotion; having this French Revolution in mind, helps with interpretation... so, definitely knowing the composer, composer's background, what is the environment like when he composed the piece, such as what events were happening around the time he composed the piece... some composers might be completely happy and no worries about their life; some composers might be in poverty, like Schubert and Mozart; some composer might gone through illness as well... music is such a powerful devise to show you emotion, it is important to know these events to understand composer's emotion at that time.

When you interpret the piece, it is important to have your own feeling. Personally, I think if a composer's piece may sound absolutely happy, but if he was going through difficult time. This piece is not going to be happy, although when you initially look at it, it sounds happy... for example, if you listen to *Piano Sonata in A minor* by Mozart, it sounds one of the happiest piece in the world. It was actually written for his mother when her died. Therefore, you cannot be happy... your initially perception of the music does not always match the composer's intention. It is not right to perceive differently to what the composer might want you to express. Our job is not to create a completely new work from composer has written on the paper. It is to carry the emotion he had at that time, and to combine with your own interpretation.

Q3b: What sources of analysis do you tend to use? How useful are they?

I mostly read books... I also read performer's reviews: I try to find performer reviews from the time of the composer. Sometimes they wrote reviews about the composer's performance... I also try to read letters, because it shows a lot of about the composer's personal life... if it is a living composer, I try to find documentaries and interviews of the composer.

Some sources can be very biased. I have to be careful to know whether it is a fact; what to trust them, what not to trust. Sometimes writer could easily put their own ideas into the book... the reason I do not just read one book, but try to find several different sources to find the consistency between the sources. If it is not consistency, I know it is not fact, it is an opinion.

Q3c: Do you follow your own intuition about how a piece should be played or do you rely more on your background knowledge of the piece?

Personally, I rely more on background knowledge than my intuition. My intuition of the piece might be completely different from the composer might have try to convey.

Q4: Do you often listen to recordings of other pianists' performances?

I tend to listen before I start learning a piece, just to know what it sounds like. Once I have learnt the music and I have my own ideas about it, I listen to other people's performances again in order to see the different ideas, such as what kind of phrasing they did; what kind of rubato they did; whether they do any pedaling. I sometimes change my interpretation if I feel I am more convinced about their interpretation. But most of the time, I keep my own ideas, because I do want to end up sounding like them... the reason why I mostly listen to their recordings, is just to check if I am actually doing the right thing: the right tempo or correct phrasing.

Q4a: How do you identify their playing is in right tempo or phrasing?

That is why I am listening to several different performances. I try to find out their average. And it also depends on what type of recordings. For example, Andrea Schiff, everyone knows he is Bach scholar, so I listen to a lot of his Bach recordings when I play Bach. As well as listen to Glenn Gould, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, and Martha Argerich her best *Bach Partita No.2*... I listen to different pianist's recordings. I try to find the general trend in their performance. And Then, I try to compare with my performance, in order to see where I am in this trend.

Q: Do you strictly keep to the score?

Most of the time, I do. I strictly follow the instructions, especially for those composers who write every single details... as a performer, I think our job is to play their music to the audience. So I try to follow as much instructions as I can on the score... but for Mozart, he did not write many; for Bach, he did not write any. Then, I have more freedom to do what I want to do for those composers. If I have space to do my own interpretation, I will do that, otherwise I would not go against... for example, if composer put crescendo, I would not play diminuendo.

Q: Do you study other pieces of music by the same composer?

When I learn a specific composer, I try to learn many pieces by this composer. Sometimes, I try to take pieces from the same period, and also earlier period... unless you know the composer's music, I think it is really hard to understand his intention in the piece. For example, for Chopin, his music really difficult, and I definitely understand his music better after learn so many his pieces. Therefore, it is important to learn different pieces, even it is from the same composer.

Q4c: How important is your own role as a 're-creator' when interpreting Stravinsky's works? In other words, how many responsibilities do you take as performer?

Simply putting: without performer, there would not be any music. As a performer, we have very important role in interpreting each music in a unique way. You have to play differently...

of course there is nothing wrong with interpreting the same way as other performers, if that is you convinced with. But I think having judgement and choice is important as a performer.

### **Latitude in Interpreting Stravinsky's Piano Works**

Q5: What is your understanding of the notion of 'freedom' in interpreting piano works?

We can have freedom to a certain extent in interpreting the piece. Especially in the way of rubato and pedalling. I also think there is more freedom to deal with pedalling than dynamic marking, because the piano they had at that time is different from ours. Therefore, we probably have more sustaining sound as the piano are transforming all the time.

Q5a: Do you use it differently according to different historical time periods?

Yes, definitely. I see freedom in every period, for baroque and classical music, the freedom is more rely on the dynamics and pedalling. I read so much about pedalling on baroque and classical music... for romantic and post-romantic music, is more about rubato... for example, if you play Chopin exactly as it written, it would not sound like Chopin anymore. I think rubato is the one that gives music spark... for twenty-century music, it depends on the composer, some composers still followed romantic style; some composers more followed on baroque style; some composers did not follow any styles... you put freedom in any piece of music, but it is different type of freedom.

Q6: In your opinion, which period of Stravinsky's piano repertoire allows more freedom or latitude for interpretation? Why do you think so? And what are the main factors involved?

Looking at these three pieces, personally I think it is the neoclassical period... the *Piano Sonata in F Sharp Minor* still has many instructions on the score, but the *Cadenza Finale* has less instructions. For the *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*, you have to absolutely follow what is on the score, otherwise you will be very lost, especially it is with the orchestra... I think *Cadenza Finale* is the one that give me the most freedom.

Q: Apart from this, what other elements can allow you to interpret with freedom or latitude?

Historical background definitely affecting it, and the personal feeling is a major element which affects the interpretation.

Q7: How would you go about interpreting them? [*performing music excerpts from Russian, Neoclassical and Serial periods*]

Q7a: Russian excerpt:

Q: Why did you phrase in every four crochets? Why did you start with quietly and went louder (bb.7-10)?

I did one bar phrase because of the sequence... I started with quietly and built it up, because as the tone shifts up, the intensity builds up.

Q: Why did you accent the first beat of each bar (bb.11-14)?

It has the highest note, and this is the biggest gap between both hands. Also, the right hand goes down, even the left hand goes up, I feel the right hand is more important due to the melodic line. I tried to do a diminuendo in each bar, and I tried to phrasing every two bars, the dynamics is like *f* (bb.11) - *p* (bb.12) - *f* (bb.13) - *p* (bb.14).

Q: Why did you phrase in every two bars (bb.11-14)?

It is mainly because of the different register; it goes higher (bb.13). I feel it is more intense, therefore, I do more effective diminuendo ready for the crescendo... I think this is where the freedom comes in.

Q: In our precious discussion, you said if there is notation on the score, you will follow the notation. There is one crescendo mark in bar 15, and you did crescendo in your performance, but you did two crescendos, one in each beat, why is that (bb.15)?

I think it because of the shape. Personally, I feel it is not a right sharp if I do the crescendo as it was written. As there are two phrase marks, then, I can do smaller crescendos, but the second time is stronger than the first time: starting a bit louder and end up louder at the end of crescendo. I thought that has better sharp than just do one crescendo... notation has a lot of limitations.

Q: Why did you make nuance changes in dynamics on left hand (bb.16-17)?

Actually, it is not about dynamics changes, is the sharp within that dynamics. Even if you have forte, you can have different intensity of forte... for example, in Mozart, everything is written in [piano], there is no sharp in the music unless I put the inflection, it sounds totally different in the same piano... the different intensity gives the shape.

Q: Why did you do two bar phrases (bb.16-21)?

Because of repeated patterns. This is how I found phrases: two bar phrases repeat three times with different harmony each time... I am sure different pianists have different way of phrasing it.

Q: Why did you accent A nature octave (bb.21)?

If you look at my score, I have actually written crescendo mark here. I wanted to do a crescendo to the bottom F sharp... that is why I played louder, I want to build up to that fortissimo (bb.22) ... and I also took a bit of time to give this octave a "push".

Q: Why did you start slower and speed up to the top F (bb.27-28)?

Stravinsky wrote *a piacere*, so I can do whatever I want... maybe speed up; maybe slow down, I think it depends... but here, I definitely start slower.

Q: Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer's works?

Initially, I thought of Rachmaninov when I was playing this... the second page reminds me the lyrical section in *Rachmaninov G minor prelude*, the left hand arpeggio with the chord on top... also, the structure is very similar... I think Chopin as well, especially the second page reminds me nocturnes... Chopin wrote a lot of this type of left hand figuration and right hand melody.

Q: What do you consider the most important element when you interpret it? Why did you select this element?

Harmony, this sonata has a lot of intrinsic harmony. Analysing the harmony will give me a clear idea of what to do with colours... it also helps me with the phrasing, I probably go more intense or less intense depending on the harmony... for example, Stravinsky wrote very interesting harmony (bb.33-36), knowing the harmony helps with the sharp of the phrase and peak of the phrase: each phrase has its "mini peak" that the note you want to reach for... I think knowing the harmony can help you to find those peaks. I think it is also because of its late-romantic style... from all the late-romantic pieces I have played, I feel the harmony really give something "special" to the piece more than anything else. The harmonic language got more and more complicated since classical period, and got more colourful with additional notes.

Q: Where do you feel there is freedom or latitude (i.e., room for interpretation) built into the notation?

For example, one phrase in the second page of *Sonata in F Sharp Minor* (bb.33-34). There are so many different ways of playing this melody. You can choose to play with very metronomic rhythm, or you can choose to play it with very detailed intervals between the notes and where to find the places to play rubato.

Q7b: Neoclassical excerpt:

Q: Why did you play it very rubato?

Yes, it was intentional. There are a lot of patterns in this piece... especially, (bb.3-6), and repeat (bb.7-10), and repeat again (bb.11-14): but this time it goes a bit farther, and I wanted to exaggerate that.

Q: Why did you play a lot quieter after the comma (bb.13)?

I did *ritardando* towards the comma [,] because I wanted to show this little pause... then, I started again but it is something different, another beginning, I wanted to show this new beginning... therefore, I played a lot quieter, also because the harmony changes in the third bar (bb.15), I wanted to show this change.

Q: Do you prefer to use pedal than the figure legato?

I use pedal for connecting the notes because of the legato... here, I choose to use figure legato with a little bit of float pedalling... and deeper pedal as it gets more intense; for example, if there is crescendo, I do a deeper pedalling.

Q: Why did you play with inflection on the left hand?

I wanted to show the sharp of the left hand, because of arpeggio. The left hand has its own line, but not as much as right hand, the right hand is more important part.

Q: How do you define the right hand is more important the left hand?

Because the right hand has more interesting line and variety, that is why I played lighter in the left hand to try to bring the melody out.

Q: What kind of character do you feel while you interpret it?

I struggled a lot, as it starts from off beat, I feel very calm and quiet.

Q: Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer's works?

French style, like Debussy... something impressionistic, not about the harmony or anything, about the music itself, because it is flowing, and it is quite "free".

Q: What do you consider the most important element when you interpret it?

There is not much direction on the score, especially in terms of dynamics... the pattern can help with the shape, this is the same approach I take with Bach. Bach did not write any dynamic markings; therefore, I try to find patterns... if there is sequence, I try to do something about it, if there is repeat pattern, I try to do more at the first time, less at the second time.

Q: Where do you feel there is freedom or latitude (i.e., room for interpretation) built into the notation?

Tempo, Stravinsky tells you that one crochet is 92 at the top. He does not say you cannot slow down; you cannot speed up. I was practicing with the metronome, to get the feel of 92 for the whole piece. After I get the feel I try to pull the tempo, because there are so many repetitions, I intend to change things when I do the second time. This is one thing I change a lot for every single composer. Many composers, especially the work from romantic period, I do rubato in the second time or I do a different sort of rubato in the second time, and also I do different dynamics... the lack of the notation gives me more room to interpret. When the composer clearly states fortissimo, you have no choice but to do fortissimo.

Q7c: Serial excerpt:

Q: Why did you play in this tempo?

Most of the time, I did not follow the tempo marking, because I think it is just a guideline. It depends on my perception of the piece, it would not go too slow or too fast, but playing a bit faster will help with the musical imports, especially because of the rhythm.

Q: Why did not you change the dynamics in your interpretation?

Yes, it is my intention, and I would keep the same intention.

The only thing I will change is to accent more on these top notes (bb.6) and staccato more as exactly as the score present... I think this is not about performer's interpretation, it is more about playing what the composer written on the score.

Q: Why did not you use pedal on this page?

Because I did not want to blur between the notes, because they are not in harmony. The only place I would use pedal is the top of second page (bb.12) to sustaining the notes... especially if the orchestra is playing a tremolo, I will put the pedal down.

Q: What kind of character do you feel while you interpret it?

The only thing I feel is the intense feeling... every time I listen to serialism music, I always feel this intense emotion, it might be because of different registers going all over the places.

Q: Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer's works?

Schonberg, Webern, Berg... mostly Schonberg, he uses different register just like Stravinsky has done, and very interesting rhythm.

### **Comparing Stravinsky's recordings**

Q8: Here are three recordings made in different time of *Firebird Scherzo*, what do you think of them?

I think the third one had more freedom... I was following the score, I found the first and second recordings are much earlier to follow, because it is strictly in time. I have noticed mainly in the solo section, when the clarinet solo came in, they did not do any rubato, in third one, they did noticeable rubato. They did "pull" time here in there...

Q8a: That is how they played in the 1920s, 1940s and 1960s. I didn't tell you but were you aware that Stravinsky actually conducted this piece?

No, I thought they were different conductors.

Q8b: Now, how strictly do you think Stravinsky played the music?

When you have the top orchestra and top conductor, it is quite possible to do the rubato he did there, which was amazing... but it is really hard to play on time when you do rubato... for example, if you perform symphonies by classical composers, it is earlier to do rubato, because everyone moves in the same way, same rhythm, same divisional rhythm... here, they do not always have the same division, and it is hard to come in together if you are not in time. If I were to conduct this, I probably would be strict in time, just for practical reasons, because it is very hard to play together... I think the way they did rubato is amazing!

Q9: Do you think the way music was performed in 1920s should be the way we should play it now?

Not really... of course we need to try and follow what they did back then, but the piano has transformed so many times over the past few years... I think if you have an instrument that more keepable of what they had back then, you have the right to try that, even if they did not have that facility... for example, I believe if you play the piano exactly as how you would play on the harpsichord, it would not sound nice as all, you need to adapt the new instrument... and I think it is the same for pianos: although they had pianos in 1920s, it is a completely different instrument to what we have now... one thing for sure that has been improved is that the tension in the strings, because it has better technology to do that these days, then, it allows you to do so many more things... I think you should not limit yourself to those little facilities they had back then. When you play in modern Steinway, you would not limit yourself, you would try to use as much facilities as you can provide... so, I would say no, because of these reasons.

Q10: Do you think you should bear in mind Stravinsky's orchestration while performing his piano music? In other words, are you looking for orchestral colour in the piano works?

Many composers composed before orchestra and piano. Although piano when you play it, it has the same piano sound, you can produce so many different colours. And one way to produce different colours is to imagine any orchestra sound... Stravinsky has down a lot of transcriptions, one thing for sure I know he did was orchestra transcription of *The Rite of Spring*

for piano. I believe there are two versions, one for four hands, one for two pianos. I think it definitely helps to look at these transcriptions, and see where he has induced and what way he induces. The voicing in the chord will be different instruments rather than try to do voicing. I think if you think of different colours as well, it tells you voicing anyway. So I think it is important to look at the orchestra work of Stravinsky, and compare it with the piano work. Fatefully, he has done the transcription for us, so we can do analysis on that, and see how historical induced it.

Q11: Have you read what Stravinsky said about performance? Do you think Stravinsky actually did what he said in this quotation?

I think people's perception can change. And from the date I have just seen, this Russian excerpt was written in 1903-4; this Neoclassical excerpt was written in 1925; this Serial excerpt was written in 1958-59. I feel it depends on which periods of music you look at. If you play this piano sonata without any emotions, is going to be very blinds, because this is highly romantic piece of music. Therefore, there would not have any meaning without emotions. Same for the *Cadenza Finale*, I think this music is dead without any emotions. For *Movements*, this still works as a piece of music, even without any emotions. You need to feel yourself from the music, involved yourself from the music, emotionally... I do not go to concert to listen to music without emotions, knowing that you would not have any emotions in your playing.

We need to think about time periods, even we have those text... I think to a certain extent, you need to have a sense of mount emotion, maybe not as many variety of emotions as romantic period piece of music. The initial emotion I feel from the *Movements* is something very intense, has a certain tension inside. If you do not have tension, this will be just notes after notes. Therefore, even in *Movements*, you need a certain amount of emotion... I do not agree with him on that, and I do not agree with people who follow that literally, and say you cannot have emotions on Stravinsky's music. The *Piano Sonata in f Sharp Minor* will definitely sounds horrible without emotions in it. The *Movements* will sound like a messy muddy music without that tension, because this music is based on tension.

Probably, as you go to the later period of his music, you have less emotions to convey, but you still have emotion inside you. I think no music can be performed without any emotion, you need a certain amount of emotion inside you to perform... this is why when I listen to a girl, 11 years old, fantastic pianist, and technique she plays the Chopin Concerto is perfect, but I did not enjoy it. I was just amazed by her technique at her age, but I was not into the music, because there was no emotion. She is just too young to understand that intensity of music.

Q: What is your understanding of emotion?

I think each piece of music has some sort of emotion constant within it, regardless with the performer's interpretation. My emotion is based on the composer's emotion. It is built on harmony and structure, and everything written down in the music, and also the historical background aspect, everything all together. I think the best source you never have is to know what kind of emotion the composer was feeling at the time he was writing.

Q11b: Do you think what he says would actually hold you back from your own inclinations?

If I am being very honest, I probably ignore that. Because sometimes, composers can say nonsense, they are also human beings. I do not think we need to take anything they says very literally. To a certain extent, I agree with him on that point, because as you go through different period, you can tell that... it is a very interesting viewpoint, but it just a viewpoint. I would not take it seriously and literally.

Q12: After a careful consideration of performance issues, you have any final advice to pianists who intend to study and play Stravinsky's piano music in the future?

Definitely research about him enough... he is not a very well-known composer, unfortunately. He is an amazing composer, but not many people know about him... we all know Stravinsky

because of *the Rite of Spring* and *the Firebird*, I have only heard one conservatory student, he plays Stravinsky *Piano Sonata*, everyone else they go for the famous Liszt, Chopin, Schumann from romantic, and Beethoven, Schubert... they did not go for Stravinsky, even in the professional world, not many pianists performed Stravinsky's piano music as much as other composers... I think there is a limitation on what you can find out just by listening to these performers. Definitely do research about his life, also be aware of difference between his periods... try to study about his style to get familiar with it. I think it is worth knowing how it came out as well, read about that too.

Lots of research; lots of analysis; and lots of practice.

## Interview with P4:

### General Questions

Q1: How would you define a 'good' pianist?

It is when they can create a beautiful musical notes in a very complex way. There are often layers in the music they are playing, there can be also imagination in the music they are playing. They are not only playing the notes, but playing the notes beyond the notes, to create an acoustic story. The composition has a strong expression: they are not just musical notes. For me, the expression of complexity and imagination are very important elements which can create a good performance.

Another aspect is that audiences can enjoy a very rich experience. They may feel touched while they listen to the performance. I have listened to some concerts but I really did not like the performers. But you know, British audiences tend to be are very polite; for example, when they say "Yea I think they produced a good performance", I definitely do not think the listeners enjoyed the performance. If it is a beautiful piece of music, you should feel so very touched that you cannot even clearly express your emotions. If you do not feel this way, I think it is not a really good performance.

Q2: Have you ever played Stravinsky's piano works?

If YES:

Q2a: Describe your experiences

I played his four hands for *The Rite of Spring*. It was very complicated to play, because there are lots of hand moving movements between the hands. The rhythm is the most difficult element in *The Rite of Spring*. The solution is to learn how to make these rhythms 'organically' instead of basing the rhythm on the notes. I always feel that phrasing helps the rhythm. It took me a long time to find out the relationship between phrasing and rhythm.

Obviously, studying the orchestra version does help my understanding of the music. It is not about studying the orchestra part which can affect the way I interpret it. But it can help ways to understand the piece. For example, why does the phrasing go this way? What is the relationship between the parts? In this case, the orchestra version is much clearer, and it helps me a lot in my understanding. So, I know the orchestra version inside out of *The Rite of Spring*.

Q2b: Were you able to identify the influences of other composers or pieces?

Yes. Surprisingly, the first thing which came to mind was Mozart. This was perhaps due to the phrasing and the dedicated music which remind me of his works. And also, there is some rich Russian music; for example, in the style of Scriabin and Rachmaninov. Actually, *The Rite of Spring* is quite unique, it does remind me of Russian composers, but Mozart seems to be always there. The texture in the piece is very complex, but it is also quite clearly organised. And it needs to be more precise to perform in lots of ways. That is why I am talking about Mozart. The pianist cannot mix the whole sound, the music is really neat and precise in each section.

Q: Do you know other pieces by Stravinsky?

Yes, mainly his ballet music, like *Petrushka*, *Firebird*, *The Soldier's Tale*. And also, *Suite Italienne* for cello and piano.

### Performance Notation

Q3: Could you tell me how you approached learning these three pieces.

The first step, I will just sight-read it. I sight-read the whole thing until I see the overall structure. Knowing the structure is very important as the first step. I will start to analyse and work on each section after I find out the form of the piece, such as A, B, A, C, A. After that, I will think about what kind of sound I want to have and what the music is like. The imaginary sounds that go through these music notes, is, in principle, a very important thing. The music notes are the backbone for the whole interpretation.

For music notes: First, I look at the details, I definitely have a thorough look into what kind of material it is. Then, I imagine what kind of sound it could be, and what kind of interpretation tools I can use, such as dynamics and articulation. In this case, the music notes are written on the score, but its rhythm can be played in a very different way. So I will also find out what kind of rhythm I want in this music. This process takes about one or two days, and during this time, I gradually work on more details. After a while working on it, I can discover more about the music.

Follow up questions:

Q3a: Do you research any historical and performance background in order to complement your personal interpretation?

Yes. I think the more knowledge we have, the more tools we can find in our head. Also, the different imagination can inspire me in playing the same music. For example, when I am learning Chopin's Polonaise, I read about the way Chopin taught his students, in order to have a better perspective in understanding his ideas. This is very important in regard to performance practice. Beyond this, I do not do so much about the performance background.

Q3b: What sources of analysis do you tend to use?

For historical background, I will also use secondary sources. However, the first thing is always the music.

Q3c: Do you follow your own intuition about how a piece should be played or do you rely more on your background knowledge of the piece?

Intuition... the background knowledge is for me, a secondary source. The first thing, I think about is music notes. I need to understand the music in order to have intuition about how to play. I try my best to understand the music, and then, the way I want the sound to be. This is an intuition thing.

Q4: Do you often listen to recordings of other pianists' performances?

Yes, I do. But not when I am learning a piece. Normally, I listen to other pianists' performances as a reference after I know the music very well and have considered certain interpretation. For example, I am currently learning Schumann, I have listened to different recordings after that I then have some clear ideas.

Q4b: How important is your own role as a 're-creator' when interpreting Stravinsky's works? In other words, how many responsibilities do you take as performer?

I think is very important. The important factor is how I should take the whole responsibility about how audiences may receive this composition. I always believe if they do not think this composition sounds good; that is a performer's problem, instead of composition's problem. I can choose not to play this composition, but since I play it, I have to make it effective. I will take the responsibility of how people are likely to respond and evaluate the work.

### **Latitude in Interpreting Stravinsky's Piano Works**

Q5: What is your understanding of the notion of 'freedom' in interpreting piano works?

The music notes are the barebones of the piece. They are very important. I look for the composer's intention in the music notes. And based on them, I think I can do whatever I want. This is the freedom I have.

For example, I am trying to understand the way the composer does the phrasing and dynamic marks. Then, I am going to consider the reasons why he wrote these marks. After I understand "Why", I can explore a lot more about how I want to play, like articulation. Because there may be so many other things that the composer has not said in the music. This is where I can discover possible interpretations. This is my idea of freedom in regard to interpreting music, but it is

based on an understanding of the music, instead of just having lots of freedom to play whatever I want.

Q5a: Do you use it differently according to different historical time periods?

I do not think I am responding to historical time periods exactly, but I am responding more to the music. Music material is the most important fact. For me, the differences between each work is about their music notes, which can be written in a very different way. For example, in Mozart, it is not about how Mozart has to be played in this way, it is more about the music sounds and how to play them better or in a certain way which we might refer to as “stylistic”. It is not because of the style or the period, but it is because of the music which requires a certain kind of sound. It can make it more effective than other ways of producing sounds. So the logic is different for me.

Q6: In your opinion, which period of Stravinsky’s piano repertoire allows more freedom for interpretation? Why do you think so? And what are the main factors involved?

Both the Russian and Neoclassical periods compared with the Serial period. The rhythm in the Serial piece is very detailed and complicated. Especially if you don’t play in a metronomic rhythm, it is very difficult to keep track and count it. But in the Russian piece, there are a thousand ways of playing the rhythm. The Neoclassical piece as well, because they are all quavers, you definitely cannot play every quaver evenly from the beginning to the end. I do not believe anybody can do that, because to play with completely metronomic rhythm is impossible for any pianist to do. So you have to find another way to make these quavers work. Then, there is more room for interpretation and more space for freedom.

Q7: How would you go about interpreting them? [*performing music excerpts from Russian, Neoclassical and Serial periods*]

Q7a: Russian excerpt:

Why did you play in this tempo?

I feel the rhythm is in this speed. Because the semiquavers do not sound clear if you play too fast, or the music does not sound active or rapid enough if you play too slowly. There are lots of terms in this music, if you play in a very fast speed, there is not enough nuance in the shape of this music. The speed I played can work, because it does not drag along.

Q: Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer’s works?

Yes, I think this can be any Russian composer, with even elements of Brahms.

Q: What do you consider the most important element when you interpret it? Why did you select these elements?

Harmony and rhythm. The changes of harmony help me to create the different sounds. The rhythm is very important because it has dotted rhythm, and it should be played very steady. The very brilliant and strong opening significantly affected my overall interpretation.

How do you choose which element you really want when you giving a concert?

I think both can work, but I will have my preferences. I was talking about the melody. How the music goes with the underlying sections; how much I want to allow freedom in the left hand and how it may affect the way I think the melody should be played. In other words, the best way to play it. I think playing the piano is also very a physical activity. My hands are different from other pianists’ hands. I know I can use my hands to play the best way possible. But I do really believe there are different ways to play the music very effectively.

When I play a concert, I choose the best way I feel I should play the piece. But I can also play it in different way. For example, perhaps after six months, I will play it in different way. It is not necessary that one way is better than another: they might be equally good. The most

important factor is my interpretation based on the understanding of the music, rather than playing music with 'randomly'; with very little forethought, analysis or preparation. For example, the music is not very effective if I just use the freedom very randomly, instead of considering the direction of the music in order to express my freedom.

Q7b: Neoclassical excerpt:

Q: Did you look at the tempo marking?

Normally for me I would not check the tempo by metronome. I feel I have enough knowledge to know what kind of speed it should be, unless I am really not sure about the music. Sometimes, I do check with the metronome, just to get a feeling about the speed. But normally, I feel I have quite a good instinct about how the speed should be effectively played... I think the tempo marking is only a suggestion. The composer does change the tempo from time to time. There are lot of actual accounts which suggest that composers often changed their tempo marking. Because there are different ways for music to work, rather than just play exactly the tempo written on the score. I really do not believe there is just one speed that can work.

Q: What sort of thing you based on in choosing your tempo?

It is all based on the musical notes. The speed is just an interpretation, but the musical notes are composers' language which is very important. Such as these quavers, they can be played in different speeds.

Q: What kind of character do you feel while you interpret the piece?

This one is a bit tricky, the music is very mysterious... like it is difficult to choose the direction while I am 'walking on the road'. There are so many different ways to choose, and I am not exactly sure about where I am going. Then, I might go this way and change to that way... during this time, my emotion changes as I am expecting to reach my destination while 'walking on the road'.

Q: Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer's works?

*The Rite of Spring* reminds me so much in the way of phrasing. But for other composer, I definitely think about Mozart.

Q: What do you consider the most important element when you interpret it?

Phrasing.

Q7c: Serial excerpt:

Q: Why did you play in this tempo?

It is very important to keep it rhythmical, it has a very strictly written rhythm which makes the rhythm very strong. And it needs to be played very carefully and accurately. Once you follow the rhythm he wrote, there is very little room for you to change anything.

Q: Did you consider the phrasing and dynamics while you are playing?

I will consider them more carefully after I understand the rhythm very well. I will consider the dynamics based on the phrasing. The articulation mark in this music is also important, as it is part of the real musical material. For the other two periods, the articulation mark is not as important as this period.

Q: Why do you think articulation is important?

The articulation is very important. This is because it is very detailed in the way it is marked. So it has become the principle and central elements of the music.

Q: Did you try to follow all the notations?

Normally, the notations are the interpretation tools, such as dynamics and phrasing. The reason we do not have lots of freedom in this music because the notation becomes the music itself. All of the markings are the central of the music. It is very difficult to give freedom while

interpretation when there are so many central things on the score. Obviously, it is difficult enough to follow all the notations on the score in interpreting this music.

Q: Did certain phrases in the selected music remind you of any other composer's works?  
Yes, Webern and Schoenberg... mainly because of the rhythm.

Q: What do you consider the most important element when you interpret it?  
The rhythm is the most important element. There is no room for changing the rhythm because you have to play with orchestra. I have listen a lot of serialism music, the nature of the music is not about note itself, because it is very hard to have harmonic language in the serialism music... it is more about pattern, and most of the pieces have rhythmic instructs; therefore, the rhythm is very important.

### **Comparing Stravinsky's recordings**

Q8: Here are three recordings made in different time of *Firebird Scherzo*, what do you think of them?

I like the last one more because I feel the dynamics in the third one is much richer. And the dynamics are more in pause within the rhythm in order to drive the rhythm in a certain direction. The first and second one are very accurate, more accurate in regard to demisemiquavers; but in the last one, there are more dynamic changes within this rhythm.

Q8a: That is how they played in the 1920s, 1940s and 1960s. I didn't tell you but were you aware that Stravinsky actually conducted this piece?

Oh really? That is very interesting to know they are conducted by him. I did not realise they were Stravinsky's own conducted works as they are very different. I think the first and second one are stricter than the third one. That's very, very interesting: they are good examples to show that Stravinsky himself changed his feeling about the tempo. The speed is really different. The third one is much slower compared to the second one: it is definitely slower. The transformation in his music in these years is striking.

Q8b: Now, how strictly do you think Stravinsky played the music?

The quality of the rhythm is similar. It sounds more complex in the last recording, because there are a lot of things going on in regard to their interpretation.

Q8c: What would you say are the main differences between the three recordings?

I think the really different feature is how he interprets the notations. His playing seems to allow more freedom in his later years. In fact, the recordings appear to contradict each other. This means we do not need to follow his speed or dynamic marks, because it sounds so different in his recordings.

Q9: Do you think the way music was performed in 1920s should be the way we should play it now?

No, because the instruments are quite different, but there is definitely something we take into account. Either Stravinsky or contemporary composers' interpretation, and the way we interpret the music, is different in regards to the basic inspirational spirit of performance. At the beginning of twentieth-century, there were many great pianists, such as Josef Hoffman and Alfred Cortot.

Q10: Do you think you should bear in mind Stravinsky's orchestration while performing his piano music? In other words, are you looking for orchestral colour in the piano works?

It is more about our understanding of the music, less about the piano sound or orchestral sound... but to use the orchestral sound can be the way to understand the music. I would not think so much about the exact sound transcribed from orchestra to piano. The orchestral sound

is just to help me understand the music, such as the way in which the texture works or how the different parts work together. Another factor is the quality of the sound.

Q: Do you mean tone colour when you talk about the quality of the sound?

No, the way I make tone colour effective depends on so many more factors. Because I cannot just say this sound is like trumpet or whatever instrument. The sound transcribing to the piano is completely different system in tone colour. But to see how much it changed from note to note, and from part to part in the orchestral version can help me perceive and structure the music into many layers.

Q11: Have you read what Stravinsky said about performance? How do you react about this quotation from Stravinsky about performance?

The three times he played differently, which shows there can be more freedom than he claims. For example, he ignored the tempo mark, and he added a lot of more dynamics between these three recordings.

Q11b: Do you think what he says would actually hold you back from your own inclinations?

I am fine with whatever he is talking about the approach of the music. I do think I will follow what he says when his music has a lot of restrictions. In this case, I might have less freedom. But all I want is to express beautiful music, my imagination and interpretation is based on the music material I am looking at. Although the music materials are very strict, we have lots of freedom on understanding the music in order to perform in most effective way.

Q12: After a careful consideration of performance issues, you have any final advice to pianists who intend to study and play Stravinsky's piano music in the future?

I have no general advice. His music is so unique and different. Each piece of the music needs to be studied very carefully. I think it is great to know his different periods of music.

## Interview with P5:

### General Questions

Q1: How would you define a 'good' pianist?

It's a tricky question! It's got to do with one's ability to play the instrument. It is to do with sound basically. What attracts me to a particular pianist is a certain sound and a certain orchestration of what is on the page.

With the piano, we do not actually have a physical connection with the instrument. When you play a string instrument it is attached of you; or for singers, the voice is part of them. We as piano players we try to produce sounds from something separate. The instrument is there; we are here. It is important to be able to project via the instrument and produce an emotional landscape. A good pianist is a performer who can go from style to style comfortably so that Stravinsky sounds like Stravinsky and Beethoven sounds like Beethoven and can achieve this with a certain energy.

I think analysis is important but it should not be an end in its self. It has to be a means to an end. To just analyse and present the performance of something as an example of an analysis is not enough. The analysis needs to help you to connect emotionally with the music. So that what you project is not just something structural but is actually connects different types of structure. This involves the architecture of the piece and the emotional, dynamic structure of the piece. I think all of these things are important.

Q2: Have you ever played Stravinsky's piano works?

Yes.

Q2a: Describe your experiences.

I played Concerto for Piano and Wind Instrument quite a few times. I have also played Piano-Rag Music. I also played a little chorale from his Symphony for Wind Instrument, he (Stravinsky) did a piano arrangement. The Concerto is an amazing and fantastic piece, but very difficult.

Q2b: Were you able to identify the influences of other composers or pieces?

In the Concerto, Bach, especially the opening section. Also, the influence of popular music styles in the piano rag music. Jazz was in its very early stages; Ragtime was already there. Piano-Rag Music is an ingenious 'take' of ragtime. He mixed up various elements but it is still very Stravinskyian. I think it is a great piece in its genre. It is very short: three and a half minutes but very inventive, quirky and a little bit humorous.

There were composers in America at the same time doing similar things such as George Antheil who was clearly influenced by Stravinsky. The pieces he wrote were pure Stravinsky in character. In the 1920's, there was much influence from popular music at that time. Other influences included early Baroque, Pergolesi or Bach themes and even circus-type styles as well as in Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra, which I think is a quite entertaining and lively piece. I also think that because he was viewed as a neo-classical composer under the influence of earlier composers, such as Beethoven and Pergolesi. Therefore, his musical influences are through early baroque and classical but there is also an also a Haydn-esque lightness.

I also think Debussy influenced him. For example, in this Cadenza Finale the beginning reminds me of Debussy for some reason. People sometimes criticise his solo piano music for being a bit dry and complex but this is actually quite sonorous. This is why I can hear a bit of Debussy. Another aspect is that in the Serial music, in *Movements*, you can hear Schonberg and Webern. Actually on the page, it is very complex: the rhythm and time signatures are more adventurous than Schonberg and Webern. It sounds very much like the second the Second Viennese School.

Q: When you interpret Stravinsky work, is there anything you should really avoid? Is it different in each period?

Probably rubato. In that Sonata, it is more appropriate, I would have thought because it is very romantic. You could play this with a lot of rubato. For someone who did not know his style, they may think that rubato could make it more interesting. But that is not part of the style. It is to do with a certain sound and being expressive through the sound, not with the tempo. If you think of sections even in Firebird, they are very, very expressive. There are also tunes in The Rite of Spring, at the opening of the piece. It is incredibly expressive. But if heard someone play it in a more romantic way, it would not be very appropriate. Stravinsky had this idea that music was incapable of expressing anything outside itself.

There is a certain Russian expressiveness in the quality of the sound in the second movement of the Piano Concerto for Wind Instruments. The chords are thickly scored for the piano. It is very deeply expressive but not romantic. Because later on in the movement, there are these cadenzas that come. But particularly when he has something melodic, it is expressive in sound. Sound is a powerful thing that is what attracts us to any piece of music and instrument. When you hear someone playing with a amazing sound, that seems completely appropriate to the music, it touches you in some way. For me, that is the difference between a great performance and an 'okay' performance.

Q3a: Do you research any historical and performance background in order to complement your personal interpretation?

I probably do, but in regard to performance practice, it is difficult to say. For example, if we play Bach on the harpsichord, it is much different from how we play it on the piano. I think it is important to take what you think are the most important aspects of a composer's style. And then consider these elements in terms of the projection of the music. In Bach, I would generally not use the pedal very much. I think that sometime on the piano, just touching the pedal can underline a certain harmonic moment. I would also work within stylistic boundaries. So whilst I would use the pedal in Bach, I would not use it that much. I would probably not use it at all in faster pieces of music. So that we can get this sense of lightness, energy and sound.

With 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century music, there is not so much of performance history. For example, if you were to go back to the first recording of Debussy, they are wonderful in many ways. At that time, they thought that anyone should use lots of pedal. So there are a lot of pedal than recent pianists would use. Sometimes, there is a rhythmic flexibility but at other times it is not such a great idea. I think it should be clear to what is on the page. When I am studying Debussy for instance, he thought very orchestrally to create new type of sound on the piano. There can be so many lines and layers when composers think orchestrally. Understanding how composers think at the piano when they compose a piece is probably more important than some great analyses. For example, Chopin's piano music is clearly pianistic, and it would be really hard to orchestrate his music, because it is so idiomatic writtern for the piano. He and Rachmaninoff could make the piano sound fantastic, they knew how to get the best sound out of the piano, for a melody they knew how to support melodic lines in accompaniment parts to make them really sing, not many composers can do this. I think that one needs to understand the mind of the composer and how they conceived writing their piano music. I do not know if you necessarily get that from researching performance practice.

The background information does help; for example, reading composer's letters and other documents can be very revealing. Brahms piano sonatas are really different. I was wondering that if you did not know about the background, would it affect the way you performed the piece. We know he wrote pieces for Clara Schumann, as a result, the works are more intimate reflective and personal than his earlier works. With Chopin, for instance, he was a very fragile and often emotionally vulnerable. You can see it in his music very clearly. Another example, Prokofiev for me is confusing character, he said that Mozart and Chopin were a load of rubbish. He did not like romantic music, nevertheless, he wrote some great melodies which are quite romantic. If you think of some of melodies in his piano concertos; for example, the last movement of his third concerto, you should not necessarily play it like romantic music. So for

me, Prokofiev is a confusing character because he denounced romantic music but at the same time he wrote very emotional music.

Q3b: What sources of analysis do you tend to use?

When I first start to learn a piece of music, I avoid listening to recordings, I want to make my mind up a little bit first. Listening to a piece can influence you; it can get stuck in your mind. It is really difficult to get rid of it to some extent. I try to encourage my students not to listen to recordings when they are first learning pieces. But when you get near to a performance, when you have learnt it to some extent, then I think it can be quite interesting to listen to a piece. For example, sometimes you may listen to things you do not like very much or you might think why he or she played like this. It can make you firmer in your own decisions. I think that to be able to see and hear what is on the page is important and you have to be exposed to all varieties of approaches. There is never one way of playing anything.

When I am examine here, I am listening to people playing pieces I know very well. However, it would be very easy to just dismiss someone who does not play in the way others play it. I may say to myself 'Personally, would not play it like that'. But after looking at what is on the page, it could be a valid and connected way of playing the music. So I think it is important to be objective with how you approach the music and how you approach other performances.

Q: How do you know which approach is the most convincing?

I do not think there is one. I mean not one single approach. If you sit down and play something you know very well. You may play it differently to how I would play it, as long as I feel you believe in it.

Q: What if you think my approach is more convincing, would you be influenced enough or change your approach?

Ah, a tricky question!! Yes, it might make me want to go back to the score and think about it. For example, if I hear something you play and I think it is much better at that tempo to bring out a certain quality in music, and a certain sound or sense of line whatever it is. I might then think: 'Okay, I might see what it is like if I play a little slower'.

Another reason is that why it is not a good idea to listen to recordings at the beginning of learning something. The danger is that is that you might just start to copy it. I find that when students try to do that, I know exactly who they have copied. For instance, when you listen to Rubinstein play Chopin, it is wonderful. But he has a certain type of rubato. If you try to copy his rubato, you are going to sound as if you have no rhythm at all. I cannot copy, I mean really copy, someone else's rubato. It must be something really individual to you. So, the rubato comes from your personal interpretation, and your sense of where you feel the music naturally seems to flow to go forwards or to go back. Or where it does not need any rubato at all. Sometimes people play with so much rubato that just distorts the music completely. Actually, it can end up not being emotionally connected. It can sound a little bit empty in certain cases.

I really try to make my students take the decisions first, because so many of them want to go on to teach. So I think it is vital to explain to your students how to decode what is on the page to understand what is on the page. You have to ask yourself: 'What exactly does it mean?' 'Why does he write rubato or whatever it is'? I think that to be able to explain that it is vital so you should not just say to your student go away and listen to recordings.

Another issue is that we tend to lapse into certain habits when learning certain pieces. For example, the Second Rachmaninov Concerto, if you look at the first movement, in the development section, it gradually gets faster. There is a progression. But we do not hear people play it like that anymore. It tends to go up and down in some performances. People criticise that movement for being very weak structurally. I really do not think it is weak structurally. I

think it is very strong. The performance practice has been to play it as romantic in style as possible. Because there is a perceived way of playing the piece, therefore music ends up sounding the same. It becomes like a musical cliché. However, if you actually go back to what he actually wrote, there are differences in what one can make in just about everything! If you do not look for these kind of elements for yourself at the beginning, if you just learn it from listening recordings, the piece will be sounding the same because it is what you are used to and what you expect. I think it is bad practice but it is really hard to try to break this down. So it is one thing to see what Rachmaninov was doing, but the performance has to engage with the emotional structure that comes with the piece. In this work, the emotional temperature rises as the piece progresses. So in a sense, the structure is a musical journey as each chapter in a good book is part of its overall structural unity.

Q3c: Do you follow your own intuition about how a piece should be played or do you rely more on your background knowledge of the piece?

Both. Hopefully my intuition will tell me if I am doing too much rubato, or the sound is too thick. In everything I try to do, I try to project what I interpret from the composer's instructions. So that can, in some cases, be quite wide.

Q: Would you agree that intuition comes from experience?

Yes. I think experience. If something has happened in your life, which deeply affected you positively or negatively, and you sense that a composer has had a similar journey, I believe it sharpens or accentuates your intuition. But you must be really careful of it so that you do not just paste it on to a piece of music. For example, this sounds tragic and I had this great tragedy in my life. So I will put my tragedy on this page. You should not transfer your own feelings onto a piece of music as it would just sound false. If you allow an awareness of what is inside you to inform the music, it can actually end up sounding empty. Everything which happens to you in your life changes you as a person and how you think but it should not impinge on how you interpret and perform music.

Q4: Do you often listen to recordings of other pianists' performance?

(See above)

Q: Have you ever heard other performance of Stravinsky which you considered a bad performance? Is so, why?

I remember *Petrushka* which is technically very difficult. People think just playing very fast and 'flushy' that is enough. But it is not, there is so much character in the music. I have heard a couple of performances which have been very impressive technically but completely empty: there was a complete lack of character.

Q: So do you have any favourite Stravinsky's recordings?

Not many people have recorded his piano music, have they? Stravinsky's own recording of *The Rite of Spring* is amazing. I have played the piano duet version of it. It works but it is really hard. I have played it about 40 times, I even played it with a ballet company. They could not afford an orchestra. And Boulez's recording of *The Rite of Spring*, they are very clear with fantastic sound. Lots of Stravinsky's recordings on his late pieces, like *Les Noces*.

Q: What are the challenges to play his music well?

In the solo piano pieces, if you take the *Serenade*, it can be a bit dry. I think it is finding a balance between not being too dry and not being too 'wet'. It is important to achieve the correct balance of the sound.

Q4a: Do you ever question the way they interpret the work?

(See above)

Q4b: Do you think is it important to play particular pieces in a similar way to recorded versions? Or do you consider it more important to interpret the work in a new way?

As long as your way is a new approach. Sometimes people want to play things differently for the sake of being different. But sometimes it has no relevance to what the composer wrote. But by studying the scores very deeply, you should bring an individual interpretation which you would not get from listening to a copy of recording. Moreover, neither would not get anything authentic by just being different for the sake of it.

Q4c: How many responsibilities do you consider as a performer?

Same as any others. I think it is vital to understand the important ingredients that go into making up a composer's music. I think we have a huge responsibility as re-creative artists. I am aware that if I do not understand or project what composers have tried to create, particularly if they done a good job and it is very clear, I am not really representing them, I am just representing me. The important factor is that I have to be able to represent the composer accurately. So for me, with Stravinsky, if I decide I want to play romantically. I do not think I am taking my responsibility as a creator very seriously. I am just being a bit vain. As a performing re-creator have to project a strong voice. Your voice has to come from the information on the page.

Q5: What is your understanding of the notion of 'freedom' in interpreting piano works?

I mentioned earlier about having certain boundaries within a style. If I really understand them clearly, that should still give me plenty of space or freedom. A certain freedom of expression would mean that it is not restricting me musically. I think sometimes people can become so duty bound to what is on the page so that becomes terribly tight and restrictive. I think part of the learning process of a piece is to exaggerate. I mean to allow yourself, when practicing, to perhaps too far in one direction just to try it out. But you have to refine this. So in terms of my preparation, I actually allow myself a little bit of freedom in order to know what I need to control. But then, once I have identified what it is: what I am trying to project. As long as I know I am going beyond that point, (or below that one) this should give me a plenty of room. In this way, the music sounds more spontaneous.

Q5: In your opinion, what is the difference between freedom and expression?

Freedom for me, is the ability to 'let go'. Expression is the ability to express what you feel. It is a difficult balancing act. What you see written on the score should not be like a 'prison'. For example, in notation, what does 'piano' mean until it is in the context of a piece. So the term 'piano' here in Stravinsky's *Serenade* is very different from 'piano' in Beethoven. There still a variety of colour. So that is how I understand 'freedom' but I am not going to use it to stop me from actually saying something. I think sometimes people can get obsessed with just the analysis. For example, how the notes fit together on the paper; how this note relates to that note. It sounds very restrictive. The other way is not very good either. This is when people just play very or over-emotively. The balance is crucial and requires a deeper level of thought. If you aware of that, there are times you can just let go in certain music.

Q: In order to know this balance, do you think the changing of styles and characteristics in piano music are the most important factors for pianists to perform?

Yes, it is a very important factor. Everyone has their individual way of writing. You can listen to some composers who are not so well-known but sound like Bartok or a bit like Liszt, but nevertheless, there still have their own voice. So if we are trying to respect that voice as a creative artist, I think to understand how to express their music is really important.

Q5a: Do you use it differently according to different historical time periods?

No. I think in some ways, when I am playing Haydn or playing Bach, for instance, the Second Partita of Bach in C minor, the opening especially, you can play a bit like Beethoven if you are not careful. But is there anything wrong with it if it is like Beethoven? It just a bit too big for the piece, it is not the keyboard he was writing for. So I guess, there are fewer restrictions when you are playing much older music.

In a sense, you can make it sound like Haydn rather than Beethoven, once you get to a certain point, the freedom can increase it widens. Chopin's music is very informed by Bach, Scarlatti,

and Mozart but it was also very new. His harmonic language is amazing. The pianistic figurations are incredible. The difference between playing Chopin and Liszt is that there is a certain 'classicalness'. With Chopin there is certain lightness, but with Liszt it is much more of its time, he influenced Wagner, the operatic melodrama was so much like Liszt. It is hard to separate the two. These are extraordinary pieces. So that, in a sense, we are influenced by a wide range of factors. One of them is that we have two hundred years of musical writing and therefore there are both historical and traditional restrictions.

Q5b. How important is keeping to the notation in the music scores?

A: Do you mean being accurate about rhythm and dynamics? (Yes). I think it is really important but understanding within the context is also crucial. There are different ways of projecting. For example, 'fortissimo' in Brahms can be different from that of Liszt. So it is important not to see things as a clear case of black and white.

Q: So can the composer's approach then change your own approach to the music?

A: I might try it out but the short answer is 'No!' If I try to play it the way he (Rachmaninov) played it, it would sound as if I could not play the piano properly. If I try to strictly copy something so particular to him, the way he played it and the sound he had, I think it would not work for me at all.

Q: But if it is what he wanted?

Well, it is what was in his mind when he composed the work. This is where the understanding of him as a person comes in. He tended to be very dismissive and negative of his own music and abilities. His personality was also very dark. Moreover, he also thought he was not a very good composer. It is strange that he also felt embarrassed by his own music. For example, I read that when he performed his Corelli Variations and he thought the audience was getting bored, he would miss out sections to shorten it! But I think the piece is a masterpiece. He often changed things from the score. It is important to understand why he did these things the way he did. Simply put: you cannot ignore these traits of personality. When he played in his own recordings, you can see changes in nearly everything. Nothing corresponds to the metronome, marks and instructions, the dynamics in everything you hear. We have to ask ourselves: 'Why did he do that?' He was one of the greatest composers and pianist who ever lived.

Q: Do you think it is necessary to listen to his own performances?

It may be interesting but we may not actually learn anything.

Q: So do you think that the composer's written or widely published score is the most important source? Or is it the recordings? Which should be considered the composer's approach to the music?

Difficult to answer. I've given one reason: having dismissive attitude to the score. Another reason is that the composer may not bring himself to believe that this is the final version. So, he becomes a re-creative artist himself.

Here's an example, I played a work by a Danish composer but I changed the dynamics-only 1-2 bars and waited for a response. He said: 'I wrote this, but you did this. But I really liked what you did there, even though it is different from my score.' So, how does that affect how I play very other pieces of music? In sense, it means you have become a composer yourself! What I'm saying is that you have to be faithful to what is on the page, but at the same time, consider options and possibilities based on your own experience, tuition and knowledge of the composer and the way the composer created the work. It is a complex and sometimes subjective process. Take, for example, Rachmaninov: it was a very Russian thing to play with great freedom and flexibility. It was part of Russian culture and thinking.

Q: It is important therefore to bring the score to life and inject new life at times and ask yourself what is the point of these instructions?

If you listen to Prokofiev's own recordings, they are often very free and romantic as well as Gershwin's recordings Rhapsody in Blue which are very fast and free with a bit of jazz. It is much faster than his tempo markings he certainly gives performers courage if they wanted to play it faster. In a way, it is a circular argument with no right or wrong. But if you trivialize music, it is wrong. However, it is interesting in regard to Stravinsky. In my view, what is on the page is vital compared with Rachmaninov as it is a very different style of music. If you applied that principle of freedom to Stravinsky it would not work as he has his own rules and discipline as well as his own statements about his work.

Here's a case in point: a composer friend of mine wanted no deviation in his work or flexibility in some phrases. But the problem is that I, as a performer, cannot actually recreate what he wanted. I can only give a sense of how I would play it. But it is maybe different from he has it in his head. Tippett once said something interesting. He realised that once he had completed a piece he had to 'let go' or release it. It is almost like having children at certain age, eventually they have to leave home and look after themselves. So for Tippett, his original conceptions had to be 'let go'. For composers, it is important ability to know when to let go. No one will play it exactly how the composer would play it or hear it. When teaching, I say to students that they have got to understand the essence of pieces, for example, Chopin. This may include the emotional core, the important elements of the piece and how to project something artistic for example, a student performance maybe unique or unusual but it is still a Chopin fantasy. So it is like a journey, you have to include all these factors.

Q6: In your opinion, which period of Stravinsky's piano repertoire allows more freedom or latitude for interpretation? Why do you think so?

The serial has to be very precise otherwise it would sound like nonsense. Another thing is that you are playing with other instruments. So if you are not rhythmic, it will sound like a big mess as you will not be playing together with orchestra.

Q: How about if it is a solo piece?

Yes, it is different. You can identify the spirit of what the composer is writing. Even if you are not completely accurate. Schonberg's Piano Piece op.11 is the most romantic piece he wrote. But they are not romantic in harmony. But they have a real sensuality and you can sense he was influenced, to a extent by some late piano pieces by Brahms. Then, going forward to his very complex Five Piano Pieces op.23. They are extraordinary complex with elements of darkness. If you try to play both the pieces in the same way, and if you try to infuse some sense of romantic sound into the op.23, it would not sound great. So in terms of the spirit of what the composer writes 4/8 and 4/16, the spirit is that the pace is much quicker, and therefore getting closer together.

You can see this in Beethoven where this fore shorting is used to create an increase in tension. It is important for performers to play rhythmically and accurately in order to achieve a sense of what is happening. In this context, the music tension is tightening. It is possible that Stravinsky might do the same. If you are not accurate, it does not sound appropriate or precise. In my own experience, I performed a piece by a Korean composer. The tension is created by 5/16 you have to be as accurate as possible in a solo piece and understand the rhythmic processes. For example, 4/8 and 4/16 feels rational but 5/16 feels unbalanced and the audience can feel the difference.

Russian:

Q7a1: Did certain phrases in selected piece remind you of any other composers' work?

Yes, Glazunov's First Piano Sonata, especially at the beginning; also Chopin, although the chords are a bit clunky or thick.

Q7a2: What are the most important elements in Piano Sonata F sharp minor?

They are all important. Character will definitely exist if everything else is in place. Because if I play fortissimo at the beginning, and if I decide to play much less, then I am not projecting the character. It should feel very strong and heroic at the beginning on the page. If I decide to play that mezzo piano, then it is a completely different character. Therefore, I need to be accurate with the dynamic. I need to realise the dynamic marking on the page and the rhythm and phrases in order to convey the character. Because if I ignore dynamic markings, or phrase markings or articulation, I may have got across a type of character but not necessarily the character expressed in the score.

Q: Which elements allow you more freedom or latitude?

In some ways, all of them. Dynamic? You might find there is a range in which there is some flexibility.

Q: Did certain phrases in Cadenza Finale reminds you of any other composer's works?

It is not like Debussy on the page but it sounds like it. There is a certain atmosphere which is close to Debussy.

Q: Did certain phrases in *Movements for piano and orchestra* reminds you of any other composer's works?

It could be Webern. That is all I can think of, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there are a number of Russian composers who wrote in the serial style. This looks very similar to these.

Q: In *Movements*, which element would allow you more freedom or latitude?

I do not think there is much which allows you much freedom, I do not think it is that kind of piece which allows much freedom.

Q9: Do you think the way music was performed in the 1920s should be the way we should play it now?

My immediate, instinctive answer is 'No'. Only because the difference is that people were much freer then with what they saw on the page. It depends on the piece and the composer you are playing. The emotional journey of the piece has to be expressed. Generally, there has been a movement towards keeping to the written score, being faithful to what is on the page. This is fine as long as it comes with emotional context and expressivity and a sense of style.

Q10: Do you think you should bear in mind Stravinsky's orchestration while performing his piano music? Are you looking for orchestral colour in the piano works?

Yes.

Q11: Have you read what Stravinsky said about performance?

Yes.

Q11a: What is your reaction to this quotation from Stravinsky regarding performance?

If you take what he said literally, he is probably right. Well, if I play a piece of music, and follow all the notes on the page with nothing behind it, it would express nothing beyond itself. Once I make a decision of what I feel is behind this phrase. For example, it is so emotional fragility, then as long as I put that across, hopefully you would pick that off. So it is kind of like a play on words. It is not until I make an interpretive decision that it starts to suggest expression or emotion.

Q11b: Do you think what he says would actually hold back from your own inclination?

No, it would not hold me back. He is being provocative. There are so many questions which can come out of this about the very nature of music itself. For a performer who does not understand the Rite of Spring which is very complex music, they can be turned off by it and means nothing to them. But what I hear is something very powerful on so many levels. We all hear different things, we read different interpretations to what he means. Not all art has to be

beautiful, it can be challenging, difficult, disturbing, dark and uncomfortable, the power to shock us is an intrinsic element of any art form. It is important to question things.

When we listen to the Rite of Spring now, we can understand how it shocked the first audience who heard it. It is still that powerful. But we can still hear things which are very beautiful in it as well. We now hear so many levels and layers in there but still has shocking element in it. We must question why are we shocked. This goes with nothing until it is played and then creates a reaction. So the music should make us question things and stimulate our curiosity to listen to a composer's work. If you take Stravinsky's statement too literally it can be harmful. But I think he is trying to be provocative in order to get a response.

Q12: After a careful consideration of performance issues, you have any final advice to pianists who intend to study and play Stravinsky's piano music in the future?

I think it is important to discover and explore it for yourself. Many people do not think Stravinsky's piano music is very good, there is a lot of critical commentary about his piano music, much more than his orchestra music. Is that fair to say? Furthermore, not many pianists actually play it.

Q: Do you encourage your students to learn Stravinsky's piano works? If no, why not?

*Serenade*, Yes. Sometimes *Piano-Rag-Music*, but I do like the later Sonata. It is a difficult work for pianists to bring off. I think it takes certain level of maturity. The Concerto I probably would encourage student if they can play it but the rhythm is very difficult.

Q: Do you think the nature of their educational background has an influence?

Yes, I think it is the culture of concerts and concert venues. The organisers would still want you to play traditional repertoire even the major concert series around the world.

Q: Why don't you encourage a wider repertoire?

I try to. For example, I send a programme with some unusual pieces. They then write back and say: 'Well, it is a really good programme but we cannot sell it'. Other words, they would not get enough people to come and hear it.

If it is a major music festival, and I send a programme that has one or two pieces we are not unusual, the audience just cannot accept it. It can be the pieces from the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are some festivals which are much more open but very few. Most venues treat the concerts purely as a business. So they try to get many people to come to all the concert as they can. So they are actually never going hear these new works.

It is a terrible state of affairs, isn't it? Consequently, people's hearing actually never changes. When I get a chance to play something a bit more unusual, however, the reaction is invariably so positive: people always say: 'That is great' please play something we do not hear very often'!

In my view, I think people who run the venues in the concert series, i.e., the organisers, seriously underestimate the curiosity of the public. I think that if you can show that an unusual program is very interesting, audiences would respond. I think it is important to introduce new elements and learn more about new music. I think that playing Stravinsky next to Debussy would be fantastic. For example, *Serenade* is a attractive piece. However, the Piano Sonata 1924 is difficult to listen to: it is a more challenging piece due to the dryer sound created by Stravinsky. What I would love to do is to play great music from the past with great the music from present.

## Interview with P6:

### General Questions

Q1: How would you define a 'good' pianist?

Someone who creates meaning through sound.

Q2: Have you ever played Stravinsky's piano works?

If \*YES:

Q2a: Describe your experiences – I recorded all the solo piano music (except the early Studies and Sonata) for *Naxos*; also the Concerto for Two Pianos, Sonata for Two Piano and *The Rite of Spring* (also *Naxos*). More recently I've recorded the 1947 piano duet version of *Petrushka* (*Delphian*).

Q2b: Were you able to identify the influences of other composers or pieces?

Clearly, there are stylistic references in the neoclassical works (and see below my comments on the excerpt from the *Serenade*) but I've loved Stravinsky's music since my teens and I can't say that spotting influences was uppermost in my mind! You only have to look at Stravinsky's use of folksong (e.g. in the sketches for *The Rite*): even as he's copying a tune out he's making it Stravinsky!

Q2c: Do you know other pieces by Stravinsky?

Yes, pretty much all Stravinsky.

### Performance Notation

Q3: Could you tell me how you approached learning these three pieces.

The Russian piece: The Sonata is a very early work dedicated to a virtuoso at the time Nicolas Richter. It has this big obvious gestures which are rhetorical. It is almost a fight between melodies. So you have these syncopations fighting amongst each other. Stylistically, it obviously goes back to 19<sup>th</sup> century and with the little kind of Cadenza there. The second subject is more lyrical with that kind of broken chordal. It is very accomplished. It is not very like later Stravinsky; it is nothing like the 1924 Sonata. But that was what going on when Stravinsky was 22. This is kind of music he was familiar with and you have got to start somewhere. It does have that heroic energy and impulsiveness, whereas Cadenza Finale (1925) is quite different. You have this flowing andante, always a little pedal to create a warmth of sound, the fact that it is all in 2/4. It is not like the Rite of Spring where the time signature changes every bar. Here, we have a kind of teasing play across 2/4. I also think the phrase mark are very important. Here is harmony and here is scale which goes all the way to here and then changes but he very perfectly does not mark this like that. Although there is a change of harmony, this phrase line very specifically contradicts the nature tendency to isolate that, because of the harmony changes.

But there is a change in the right hand, first because the phrase changes, and also we have D natural, we have C natural here and here. This is telling me something about how I am going to play it. So we have various ideas: we have the scale and these little phrases. It is like these Beethoven slow movements which an actually very strict.

On the other hand, it is also like a counterpoint between the RH (right hand) and LH (left hand). But these form an interesting sharp too, because the tendency of the ear is to hear this note as beginning something. It is as if the right hand is in 2/4 but for the left the bar line has moved. I do not think you should emphasis that, but you should be aware of it. You certainly do not want to do that. The left hand has a kind of flexibility built into it. Because it is going across. The right hand bounces off the first beat, if you are conducting it, you can image that the left hand has no bar line. On the right hand, there is a bar line. The right hand uses the bar line: not the left hand. For the tie over the bar line, you would naturally do a breath. He does not say do that, but you might. But ever so slightly. So what we are finding is: this looks very strict, but there

are possibilities in it. I am deducing from the music, two different characters in the two hands. From the changes in harmony, from the melodic shapes, and partly from Stravinsky's own phrasing which is very different from right hand and left hand.

In this way, if you try it out, you may then realise you understand it. There is this beautiful flowing aspect so you would want to play it tenderly, almost little bit like bells. I would not do a lot of rubato just a very small amount. I would not want to feel the beats. The left hand is very long line; the right hand plays little gestures. You can image it like Symphony and Wind where the wind player has to breathe. You can imagine that the right hand played by winds: oboes and flutes. I would then go through the whole movement, seeing how he develops these ideas into a whole shape. It seems to me important that he is using the rhythm of the opening but with the C natural. You can see why the harmony is changing. We can go back to the original harmony there, but we do not keep it for very long. Stravinsky has given you another clue, he has deliberately use the Ds in such a way that they go in parallel across the bar line. I am sure that is deliberate. He is using these little patterns. You could call them 'rhythmic cells'. Each of them are like individual cells, and we can also see them in the Rite of Spring. So we can see where it come from. They are in a very long line.

There is a kind of argument between those two types. I think this is a fascinating movement; a very interesting choice. I would form from your own analysis a way how you would want to play it. After that, I would listen to lots of good pianists and see what they see in it. It comes back to how much latitude and freedom can be identified. You have to think about how much you can do, remember you are not a robot! Music which is very close to this would be his music for wind instruments in the 1920s, like Symphony for Wind and the Octet. Wind players automatically phrase because they have to breathe. Stravinsky uses this by using a 2/4 rhythm which goes across it. This 2/4 is regular like an ostinato, and then he is going to change it. The left hand states in 2/4 and the right hand changes to  $\frac{3}{4}$ . It is very interesting, and then he is pulling them apart. That is what I would do. I would form your own ideas of the music implications in regard to the harmony and patterns.

There is idea of rhythmic cells and how the whole piece works. Another important, but very subtle aspect, is the balance in the chords. For example, you could play this with a very equal balance and more melody. It looks very simple but there is so much going on. It is like playing with shapes. If you are asking yourself is there enough for interpreter to interpret? I would say: 'Yes'. Crucially, there is an enormous amount of decisions to take. You cannot just play it. You have think carefully about it. There are lots of slightly different things you can do which can have slightly different affect. The best performances of this piece is where I get the most going on within however a very serene flow. I have got to reconcile the design for this tender flowing beautiful with the fact there are lots of little bits of playfulness going on. I am imagining this scoring for wind instruments. In fact, I think the left hand is a wind instrument. It could be for bass clarinet or lower clarinet. That is how I hear it. It is always good to orchestrate your piano music. It is a kind of basic thing really.

In the Cadenza Finale I see them more as cutting across, or cells. I see them as gestures or as blocks in Stravinsky. You have a form of tension in the music between these little gestures, these cells and this long serene flow. If I had to conduct it, I would not want to go like this... maybe I will do it one in a bar because I want the shapes. His phrasing implies and that I am correct. So he has gone back to using minimum markings.

If you compare this with Romantic composers, for example, Elgar. There are thousands of markings all over their scores. Stravinsky has gone right back to classical style using few markings. As we mentioned about Bach, there are no crescendos or diminuendos but does not mean that you just play in an unvaried way. I think, historically, this is rather simple approach. We would have to consider how notation was perceived and used by composers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The problem is we are viewing it from the viewpoint of 2018. There are certain things

we understand but we do not really know what they meant to people 300 years ago. It was a quite different world after all.

But this is fascinating stuff! What is interesting looking at this, is that there are very few marks. When was Piano Sonata in f Sharp Minor published? If you got published in 1904 the publisher may have said you cannot do that. You have got to add lots of phrases, accents and other markings. I think the publisher would have insisted on more detailed marking.

Q: Why should they say that?

That is what music looked like at that time. It would have many more instructions. I find it interesting that Stravinsky just wrote only one dynamic until the fourth line. He must mean less between two fortes, unless that is forte; and this is fortissimo and this is suddenly less. This is another interpretation. But I think it is unlikely because there is a change of chord here with the G natural, so that is in F sharp minor. That is a Neapolitan chord, would you agree? That is an important chromaticism so that would certainly be played less. You have got a G sharp here, and then a natural there. I would assume that Stravinsky would want me to play it less there. Because the change of harmony. This is pure Stravinsky, marvelous stuff!

To summaries, I would say that I am looking at what the ideas are in the music, and I am trying to communicate these ideas. This means that if I do little things, if I slightly bring out that phrase and less here, I am going to rely on myself to do that. I am trying to see what the composition is and what the composer's imagination is using. Basically, I am trying to understand what is going on in Stravinsky's mind. So you play the work on the piano you almost like a painter or sculptor, here is this shape in sound, and it is going to have tiny little liberties. You could image it been played by a wind player or just make this gesture or that gesture clear, there is a tiny gap in between, almost like a space to breathe. Anyway that is what I do. I mean I would also experiment within this overall feeling of this big long lines and simplicity, marking it more beautiful and tender. My ideal performance would be when there is a lot of variety. But it should not lose its simplicity at the same time. It should not become too fussy.

Follow up questions:

Q3a: Do you research any historical and performance background in order to complement your personal interpretation? What sources of analysis do you tend to use?

In answer to your first question, I never study other performances when learning. I prefer to work things out for myself and to form my own view. Later on. It is certainly interesting to compare what one does with other people. For example, I certainly know and admire Stravinsky's conducting of his own music. As to the second question, I try to work out how a piece of music 'works': the aim is to understand its logic, and figure out why things are as they are. This a more intellectual approach in that it balances one's instinctive and intuitive responses.

Q4: Do you often listen to recordings of other pianists' performances? Do you ever question the way they interpret the work?

Occasionally, but not at the beginning. I often admire, sometimes dislike, but rarely imitate, what other pianists do. I have to work it out for myself and you should too, otherwise you will just end up imitating other pianists. I might ideas from other pianists later, but I want to be able to be in a position to say: 'I do not like that'. If you start by listening to someone else, you may be influenced too much. It is important to have the strength and confidence to reject them.

Q3c: Do you rely more on the score or your own intuition?

Both. I rely on what I discover in the piece. So in the *Serenade*, we have talked a lot about harmony. I first 'explore' the piece. Of course, my intuition comes to it: it must do because I have my own personal taste and imagination. I am trying to see what this piece saying. So I try to be true to the piece. Stravinsky did not like performers changing any aspect of his works, he

was reacting against this romantic style virtuoso. If you are going to play Stravinsky well, you have to be a very good pianist. And you are going to have your own ideas. It almost like a partnership between you and Stravinsky. It is like a creative relationship between you and Stravinsky. Again, you are not a robot. We all have different ways of touching the piano.

Q: Have you consider other performance played Stravinsky which you consider a bad performance?

Yes, of course. Not bad, but maybe of lower quality. When Ben and I recorded *Petrushka*, we played several times in the past and we worked at it in our own way, but I must admit that I was influenced by Stravinsky's own orchestral recording of *Petrushka*. I think it is marvelous impossibly his best recording of any of his orchestra works. It is a stunning performance, much better than his recordings of the Rite of Spring, in my opinion. It has something which none of other recordings have. It has a particular ruthlessness and excitement which the other conductors do not get in *Petrushka*.

Boulez, for example, his version just not as exciting. I must admit I was influence by Stravinsky's recording. I did not attend to copy it or anything like that and anyway we are playing it on piano which is quite different than with an orchestra. It is rare for me to say that. I have never heard any conductor come close to how Stravinsky performed *Petrushka* in 1960s. Another fantastic recording, my favorite is that of Les Noces which I think was conducted by Robert Craft. Although the performers were American they still managed to achieve this Russian sound.

Q: What are the challenges to playing his music well?

Technically, they are enormously difficult to play in a very awkward way. I know that Stravinsky composed at the piano but we know he had a very unusual keyboard technique. It can be very physically awkward for the hand. The technique is highly individual. Everything is re-imagined for the piano. There are no kind of clichés piano-wise. It is important to find this variety and playfulness between the different elements. It is like making a jigsaw. Putting all the different small pieces together into one form.

Q4b: Do you think is it important to play particular pieces in a similar way to recorded versions? Or do you consider it more important to interpret the work in a new way?

I do not begin with the idea that I must do this in a new way. I know that that if I learn the work myself and worked out for myself. It is bound to be a new way. I am not trying to be original. As I mentioned before, I would never copy the CDs. Absolutely, I never listen to anyone else until I have worked out for myself. I have to arrive at my own vision. I might consider ideas from other people but I must be in a positon to choose what I like and reject what I do not like.

Q4c: How important is your own role as a 're-creator' when interpreting Stravinsky's works?

It is difficult to answer. In any score, there are two things. It can be seen as a set of instructions. It is also a whole set of implications. For example, we have looked the implications in the *Serenade*. In the changes of harmony. The implications of the phrase marks; the patterns in the left hand; the beaming in the left hand; the changes of time signature. It is full of implications. So as a performer, I must attempt to create in sound these implications. I try to play the meaning of the music. For example, if you take a play by Shakespeare it consists of just words, but the whole piece together generates dramatic meaning. The score is a set of instructions but the really interesting bit is where you see the implications and possibilities. All these can be realised and communicated in many little ways. The important thing is what the listener actually receives and hears.

### **Latitude in Interpreting Stravinsky's Piano Works**

Q5: What is your understanding of the notion of 'freedom' in interpreting piano works?

I suppose any performance of notated music is a partnership between the composer and the performer. Fortunately, the writing down of music is not an exact science, and there is an enormous amount that a composer cannot specify, and perhaps would be wise not to specify.

Composers differ enormously in the 'control' they exercise (or seek to exercise) over performers of their music. I've worked with composers all my life, and can never remember any one of them accusing me of taking too much 'freedom'. Messiaen, for example, who notates his rhythms with such minute exactness, always wanted me to play with greater rhythmic freedom. So one cannot necessarily be guided by what the score looks like. We know that Webern wanted his piano Variation op 27 played with enormous amount of rubato, but nowhere is it indicated in the score.

Q5a: Do you use it differently according to different historical time periods?

Yes. For example, if I am learning a piece by Bach, clearly there are lots of experts out there who can help me, with the ornamentation, gestures, articulation and all kinds of other elements. I do not have to do exactly what they say but it can be very helpful. I think that it is important to study the performance practice of the day. Does music mean different things in different historical time periods? Yes, clearly. Knowing the context of a work like *Serenade* and other works around it written in 1920s would be very useful. As well as reading the literature of Stravinsky. So it is important to work around a piece and find out more about it.

Q: In your opinion, what is the different between freedom and expression?

Most people would think they are closely linked in order to communicate your expression. It involves emphasis and highlighting certain aspects. You could see that adding something is a form of freedom. Then, both concepts are closely related. But a performance of Stravinsky which is very inexpressive would be very boring. If there is no raise and fall in dynamics, or changes in articulation, or slightly changes here and there. I think that you have to be true to the implications of the music so it is not actually a form of 'freedom': there are specific boundaries. Stravinsky did not want performers to betray the music. So if you use 'freedom' to perform Stravinsky as you wish it is no longer Stravinsky's work. You have to give a sense that you are indeed communicating Stravinsky's piece. But there are numerous ways of doing that with Stravinsky. I do not approach Stravinsky any differently than say, Chopin. My relationship with all composers is fundamentally the same. I play the composers very differently. But I do not think that with Stravinsky, I should be particularly obedient. I do not really think that. I think intuition can be developed and refined. So that through this process of education, the analysis informs your intuition. It is a case of wanting to get across a certain idea. And this is all about your craft as a pianist which involves knowing the possibilities of the piano. That is why I have difficulties with the whole notion of so-called liberty, freedom and so on. It is not uppermost in my mind.

Q6: In your opinion, which period of Stravinsky's piano repertoire allows more freedom or latitude for interpretation?

I cannot really answer that. I think each piece is different. I might say in the earlier Sonata. That one could have more of a grand manner, a more romantic approach and perhaps much less rubato in the Cadenza Finale. It is all to do with how you interpret for example, the apostrophes in the score and how it affects the piece. In my case, it could be because the wind players need to breathe, it could be a tiny silence. But a definite silence. The metronome could not go on through that. I am being true to the music because I am find it is implications and its possibilities. Another thing, it is difficult to define the term strictly and regard to following the score as well as all the other descriptors. They all have a qualitative value or aspect. It is all a matter of judgement, taste, imagination, understanding, realising the implications. It is all deep stuff!

Q: How strictly is the notation described in Stravinsky's piano music?

I would not use the word 'strict'. I would use 'interesting' and 'very detailed'. Particularly in the terms of phrasing, he is telling you a lot about how Stravinsky imagines the melody to be played and all sorts of little things with little implications for the left hand too. I would obviously look at the notation very carefully, seeking to understand it and try to feel what all

these things mean. In the end, they all have to come together as a feeling. It is quite difficult, however, to put into words.

Q: When you listen to your own performance, how critical are you?

I do not listen to them. Though I must say that when I listen to them many years afterwards, it is a pleasant surprise. They sound better than what I remember. A year ago, I heard my performance of the Piano Sonata (1924) and I thought it is very good. It is much better than what I imagined. I do not like to listen to my own work very much because a piece of music that is inside you is kind of changing all the time. So that if I listen to something I played a month ago on a recording. It may sound wrong to me. This is because I have moved to a different place. It is no longer part of me. There is often a sense of detachment. I may think I could have done something differently or a bit better because there is no such thing as perfect recording. Sometimes you have to choose whether to do something like this or like that. It is like a photograph: it shows where you were at a particular point in time.

Q7: How would you go about interpreting them?

Q7a: The 'Russian' period

Q: If you had to teach students to play this piece, what aspects would you emphasise?

A similar to what I used in *Serenade*. They should study the music very carefully before they play it on the piano. My advice would be to treat it as if it were a work for an orchestra and they were the conductor. We would discover various things inside the music and how they can be developed; what the relationships are; how the beats work and what is significant of the G nature and so forth. So that is how I would approach it. You might think about the character of the music, the harmony, the phrasing, the overall form, and the purpose of the little cadenza there. There are all designed to help us arrive at an understanding. I would do that as much as possible before they practice on the piano at all. There is no practising something before you know how it should go.

And even your fingering would be different. For example, would I play these two chords slightly detached? What is not in the score can be just as important as what is. Stravinsky sometimes keeps things open with no instructions. You could see he left the piece somewhat unfinished. Sometimes it can depend on the published versions, as they can differ from the original manuscripts. Another thing is that many composers used more notation in detail in order to explain the new musical features such as Beethoven and Bartok. I think Stravinsky is reacting against that in the 1920s. He seems to have simplified things in order to get back to a much purer type of notation. He only put the things that really mattered. For example, obviously, this phrasing here really matters. But what a composer leaves out can be very important. We have to use our judgement about that.

Q: Looking at the Russian example: Roughly speaking, what would you estimate the percentage of freedom or latitude allowed when you look at this work? Which elements allow you more freedom or latitude? And Why?

To be honest, I have no idea! I couldn't possibly estimate a percentage. Common sense would indicate that this is in late-romantic Russian style so that one would expect to have a certain amount of rhetorical shaping. Or, alternatively, one might be looking for elements in this music of the later Stravinsky, but I must admit I don't see many!

Q: Looking at the Neoclassical example: What would you estimate the percentage of freedom or latitude allowed when you look at this work? Which elements allow you more freedom or latitude? And why?

Well, I have played this, and love this beautiful music. I'm interested in the 'counterpoint' between Stravinsky's phrasing of the right hand and the left hand, and how one might shape the phrases and allow them to breathe naturally. It certainly doesn't want to sound metronomic. Curiously, it reminds me of Ravel (*Mother Goose*). Here I must say that the great quality in

Stravinsky's own performances of his music is that he manages to be beautiful but never sentimental! So, this needs to be very finely judged. The tempo is difficult, too: it needs to flow but in my view, it must not be rushed or facile.

Q: In regard to the six elements. Which elements are the most important?  
I think there are all equally important and you need a balance between the voices.

Q: Which period is the most demanding?  
It is difficult to say. This 'Russian' period interest me the most. The Neoclassical example looks simple. You could almost sight-read it but I think there could be weeks and weeks of work, just to realise it. It is very challenging. I think *Serenade* is a wonderful piece. Compulsively, I am more interested in the neoclassical works.

### **Comparing Stravinsky's recordings:**

Q8: Here are three recordings made in different time of Firebird Scherzo, what do you think of them?

I assume the first recording is the earliest. Were they all conducted by Stravinsky? (-Yes.) The second one is exciting but in the recordings a lot can be attributed to changes in orchestras and conductors. It is clear that Stravinsky was a better conductor in 1958 than in 1928. He was simply more experienced.

Q9: Do you think the way music was performed in 1920s should be the way we should play it now?

No, but it's interesting all the same.

Q10: Do you think you should bear in mind Stravinsky's orchestration while performing his piano music? In other words, are you looking for orchestral colour in the piano works?

Of course.

Q11: Have you read what Stravinsky said about performance?

Yes. I love his diatribes against self-indulgent virtuosi! The spoof record review of *The Rite of*

*Spring* is priceless!

In my own personal way, I got to know Stravinsky's music for the first time when I was a student. Since then, I have played a lot of Stravinsky performing solo and with orchestras. For me, it was something very new, fresh and exciting. In regard to his quotation, I can sense what he is getting at, but it is very difficult to cope with this type of philosophy of music. It is not, however, my natural inclination. I think that he was trying to express his rejection of self-indulgent virtuosity as typified in the romantic movement. I would agree with him here on this point. But when he says music does not express anything. It is difficult to agree because his own performances are so full of character and there always exhibit fantastic personality, even when they are not played well. Always remember that he was an accomplished composer of dramatic music specially in his operas and ballet works so how can he say music is not expressive?

On the other hand, I know what he means and what he is implying. In fact, other composers such as Mendelssohn said something similar. Another problem is that equating or expressing music through words and comments is not always a good idea and often impossible to express effectively. When I was a student, I felt I understood his music and always loved it. In some ways, I am on his side as I do not like Mozart for instance, playing in a very 'gushy' style with too much emotion. It seems over indulgent, and personally, I consider myself a more classical musician than romantic musician.

Q11a: Do you think what he says would actually hold you back from your own inclinations?

This is an interesting point, but again quite difficult to express. Again, I would emphasize what I think is the best approach for performers. First, get 'right inside' the music and try to confirm and understand the ideas underpinning the music. Second, look carefully at the score and see what is not written. Think to yourself: what are the implications of the marks or the lack of marks? Say to yourself: 'Why did he write these phrasing marks like this; what are the implications?'

Finally, do not look at the score in a one-dimensional way. In other words, do not consider it merely as a set of strict instructions. In a sense, it is only the beginning: there is much more to it than that just markings on a score. As the interpreter and performer, you have to discover the music through your own imagination and analysis. The next stage is to listen to other pianists and see how they differ from one another. The aim here is to try and identify the variety of approaches but keep in mind, your own image of the score. That is what I would do.

As a researcher, your subject area has the potential to become a philosophical or theoretically-centred work. However, I do think of your idea of having examples is really great. This approach, doing it through direct reference to the music, is a valid one. To be honest, I am not comfortable with this type of philosophical or theoretical analysis in music. Your emphasis on performance practice as a practical aim is far more interesting because it is a very complex process.

For example, what does Stravinsky actually mean for instance, in his *Dumbarton Oaks*: what is he trying to say? What are the implications for the performers? I also think there is a clear and strong sense of objectivity in Stravinsky work. I think this is crucial. He will often produce something which is very stylised but it is calculated and deliberate: the work does not suddenly appear through spontaneous inspiration! It is carefully and precisely constructed. Just like a piece of architecture which expresses its own unique character. There is not a sudden great 'whoosh' of emotional inspiration. It does not appear from nowhere. This character is something you often cannot fully express in words in order to express the full depth and range of Stravinsky's music.

Q12: After a careful consideration of performance issues, you have any final advice to pianists who intend to study and play Stravinsky's piano music in the future?

I think that if you haven't played much or any Stravinsky a good way in would be to really connect with a particular work, not necessarily a piano work. In my case it was two works that I played and conducted when I was a student: *Les Noces* – which is all the more moving because of its austerity. Before I conducted the latter I shared Messiaen's view that Stravinsky's neoclassical works were a complete aberration from the composer of *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*. But when I worked on it, I completely 'got it', and found it incredibly exciting and full of life. Any pianist, with any work or any composer, has to find somehow a 'total identification' with the music. There's no one way of going about reaching this state, but I certainly found in the case of Stravinsky that I was helped by falling crazily in love with *Les Noces* and *Dumbarton Oaks*!