

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Classical Musicianship Versus Classical Editing: The Case of Friedrich Grützmacher

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Abstract

Now mostly derided as a musical vandal, the cellist Friedrich Grützmacher (1832–1903) was seen during his lifetime as a noble and serious artist, highly respected as a performer and sought-after as a teacher. His numerous and heavily annotated performing editions – and in particular his pedagogical editions of older works – represent his attempt to preserve and disseminate a style of playing that was referred to at the time as ‘classical’ (classisch or klassisch). While the concept of classic works, as it developed in the nineteenth century, has been studied in depth by Lydia Goehr, William Weber and others, the related yet distinct concept of classical musicianship is relatively unexplored. This chapter traces the cultural resonances of the term ‘classisch’ as it was used in the German-speaking press over the course of Grützmacher’s lifetime, arguing that it represents a complement or parallel to the idea of classic works, with an independent connection to Romantic Idealism and Hellenism. The chapter then examines the performance practice implications of classical musicianship through the lens of Grützmacher’s editions, with a particular focus on a disciplined sense of tempo, a grand and tranquil physical presence, and a highly nuanced use of the bow in the service of musical character. Viewing classical musicianship in this way clears Grützmacher’s editions of the charge of vandalism by challenging us to reconsider the ideal relationship between composer and performer, as well as the fundamental purpose of an edition.

In 1886, Friedrich Grützmacher’s main publisher, Max Abraham from the Peters-Verlag, looked over the editions his old friend had already made of works for cello by Mendelssohn, Schumann and Chopin, and was horrified to see a thick patina of performance advice obscuring the composers’ texts. ‘There exists a great misunderstanding between us,’ he wrote,

and I blame myself, that I did not take the initiative sooner to confirm this by comparing your manuscripts with the original editions. I consider it a sacred duty, indeed my life’s work, to impart the classic works to the modern and future world exactly as they are composed, and to make them more accessible to players only through modern notation and the addition of fingerings; on the other hand, I am convinced that a change of notes, performance markings, an addition of any kind, in order to make the work more ‘effective’, is entirely inadmissible. The virtuoso can allow himself

something like this when need be; the teacher, when he feels he can take responsibility for it and sees the works only as studies, can allow it for his students; but to publish it for the entire world – neither the editor nor the publisher has the right.¹

At first glance, this seems like a straightforward case of a conscientious publisher restraining a wayward editor – an interpretation that is especially seductive, given Grützmacher's current reputation among cellists and musicologists. Margaret Campbell speaks of his editions as 'vandalism',² 'unforgiveable contributions',³ and 'a travesty of the composer's work'.⁴ Dmitry Markevitch's tone even approaches the language of sexual assault, in which the editions 'defile our ears',⁵ including one particular 'ravishing Adagio, ravaged by Grützmacher'.⁶ This accusation of violence, both to the score and to the listener, is echoed in Robin Stowell and David Wynn Jones' discussion of a Boccherini concerto which Grützmacher had 'mutilated'.⁷ While the substance of these criticisms is focused on Grützmacher's most extreme paraphrases – his 'concert editions' of the Bach Cello Suites and the works of Boccherini – the tones of moral outrage point to an underlying vote of no confidence in Grützmacher's artistic integrity.

The wayward vandal of today's imagination could not be further from Grützmacher's public persona while he was alive. In his 1888 history of the cello, the violinist Joseph Wilhelm von Wasielewski praised Grützmacher's 'delicate manner of expression, more especially in the rendering of Cantilena', declaring him 'not only a virtuoso of the first rank, but also an excellent interpreter of classical chamber music'.⁸ In concert reviews, Grützmacher was hailed as a 'sterling musician and champion of serious art',⁹ with an 'extraordinary spiritual commitment to deep immersion in the full substance of our great classic composers such as Beethoven'.¹⁰ An 1866 review in *Signale für die musikalische Welt* sums up his artistic persona in terms that would appear again and again throughout his career:

¹ 'Es besteht also ein großes Misverständnis zwischen uns und ich mache mir Vorwürfe, daß ich nicht schon früher, durch Vergleichung Ihrer Manuscripte mit der Original-Ausgabe, Veranlassung genommen habe dies zu constatiren. Ich halte es für eine heilige Pflicht, ja für meine Lebensaufgabe, die klassische Werke der Mit- und Nachwelt genau so zu übermitteln, wie sie komponirt sind und dieselben nur durch moderne Schreibweise und Hinzufügung des Fingersatzes den Spielern zugänglicher zu machen; dagegen ist eine Aenderung der Noten Vortragszeichen, ein Zusatz irgend welcher Art, um die Werke 'wirkungsvoller' zu machen, meiner Ueberzeugung ganz und gar unstatthaft. So etwas kann sich der Virtuose allenfalls für den öffentlichen Vortrag, der Lehrer, wenn er es verantworten zu können glaubt, und die Werke nur als Studien betrachtet, für seine Schüler erlauben, aber es für die ganze Welt veröffentlichen – dazu hat weder der Herausgeber noch der Verleger das Recht'; Peters [Max Abraham] letter to Grützmacher, 16 February 188[6], Kopierbuch F (5 January 1882–15 March 1892), Bestand 20170, Nr. 5030, Sächsische Staatsarchiv Leipzig.

² Margaret Campbell, *The Great Cellists* (London: Gollancz, 1988): 36.

³ Margaret Campbell, 'Nineteenth-century virtuosos', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cello*, ed. Robin Stowell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 68.

⁴ Campbell, 'Nineteenth-century virtuosos', 68.

⁵ Campbell, 'Nineteenth-century virtuosos', 62.

⁶ Dmitry Markevitch, trans. Florence W. Seder, *Cello Story* (New Jersey: Alfred, 1984): 131.

⁷ 'The Concerto', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cello*, 93.

⁸ Joseph Wilhelm von Wasielewski, *The Violoncello and its History*, trans. Isobella S.E. Stigand (New York: Novello, 1894): 127.

⁹ 'den gediegenen, der ernsten Kunst huldigenden Musiker'; G. Bernsdorf, 'Dur und Moll', *Signale für die musikalische Welt* 27 (1869): 134.

¹⁰ 'ungewöhnliche geistige Beanlagung für eingehende Vertiefung in den vollgültigen Gehalt unserer großen Klassiker wie Beethoven'; Heinrich Schulz-Beuthen, 'Das 25jährige Tonkünstlerfest des "Allgemeinen Deutschen Musikvereins" zu Weimar 1884', *Die Lyra* 7/20 (15 July 1884): 5a.

Equalling the most famous and significant cello virtuosos of the present day in technical mastery, he exceeds them in the nobility and beauty of his tone and in that thoughtful playing style that distinguishes the true artist from the virtuoso as such.¹¹

The phrase, ‘that thoughtful playing style’, perhaps holds the power to close the gap between these two almost comically incompatible images of Grützmacher. His editions record a playing style that fell out of favour in the twentieth century but was once widely recognized as an artistic orientation shared by a subset of composers, performers and audiences, and known at the time as ‘classical’. While the concept of classic works, as it emerged in the nineteenth century, has already been studied from a variety of angles,¹² the related yet distinct concept of classical musicianship is still largely unexplored.¹³ By examining some of the cultural resonances of the German term ‘classisch’ during Grützmacher’s lifetime, this essay puts forward the idea of classical musicianship as both a parallel and a complement to the august image of classic works. It then re-examines Grützmacher’s editions, not as products of outdated personal caprice but as a primer in nineteenth-century classical musicianship.

Abraham’s Sacred Duty

Before we can make sense of Grützmacher’s perspective as an editor, it is worth examining a few details in Abraham’s letter. First, Abraham applies his editorial ideal specifically to ‘the classic works’. While he does not offer a definition here, we can see from the context of this letter that the classics include the works of Schumann, Mendelssohn and Chopin. In another letter, he supports Grützmacher’s decision to abridge the tutti sections in his edition of concertos by Bernhard Romberg (1767–1841), because ‘Romberg is not a classical author [Klassiker], with whom every note is sacrosanct’.¹⁴ Even this small sample makes it clear that Abraham’s conception of the ‘classic works’ is not dependent on the time period in which the composers lived, but rather on some mutually understood quality within their work. For works without this quality, his moral imperatives as an editor were more relaxed.

¹¹ ‘Den bedeutenden und berühmtesten Violoncellovirtuosen der Gegenwart an technischer Ausbildung nicht nachstehend, übertrifft er sie durch Adel und Schönheit seines Tons und jenen durchgeistigten Vortrag, der den wahren Künstler von dem Virtuosen als solchen unterscheidet’; *Signale für die musikalische Welt* 24 (1866): 86.

¹² See in particular Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music*, Second Revised Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), for the philosophical implications of the idea of an authoritative work, as well as William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), for the wider cultural significance of concert programmes that either embrace or eschew classic works.

¹³ Notable exceptions here include individual studies of performers known to have had an especially close relationship to classic works, such as the violinist Joseph Joachim (1831–1907) and the pianist Clara Schumann (1819–1896). See for example Johannes Gebauer, *Der ‘Klassikervortrag’: Joseph Joachims Bach- und Beethovenvortrag und die Interpretationspraxis des 19. Jahrhunderts*, edited by Christine Siegert, forthcoming, and Alexander Stefaniak, *Becoming Clara Schumann: Performance Strategies and Aesthetics in the Culture of the Musical Canon* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021).

¹⁴ ‘Romberg ist kein Klaßiker, bei dem jede Note heilig sein soll’; Peters [Abraham], letter to Grützmacher, 26 May 1887. Not everyone agreed with Abraham that Romberg could safely be excluded from the classics. When the publisher Senff brought out Grützmacher’s edition of the Boccherini Cello Sonatas, with the title page inscription ‘edited for public performance’ (zum öffentlichen Vortrage bearbeitet), a review in *Signale für die musikalische Welt* calls them a good preparation for learning the Romberg Concertos, which are ‘the only classicity of the cello repertoire’ (und können diese Sonaten daher mit Vortheil auch als Vorstudien zu den grösseren Romberg’schen Concertstücken (dieser einzigen Classicität der Violoncell-Literatur) dienen). A.H., review in *Signale für die musikalische Welt* 28 (1870):850.

Second, he couches his ideal of strict textual fidelity in personal terms: ‘a sacred duty, indeed my life’s work’. While this ideal was not unique to Abraham, it was by no means universal in the nineteenth century. Mendelssohn’s correspondence with the London Handel Society about his edition of Handel’s *Israel in Egypt* in the 1840s reads like an inverse of the Grützmacher–Peters correspondence, with the editor insisting on perfect fidelity to the original and the publisher advocating a more hands-on guide to current performing practice.¹⁵ This ideological divide must have been widespread enough that the groundbreaking Bach-Gesellschaft, formed in 1850 to publish critical editions of the complete works of J.S. Bach, felt the need to include in their mission statement that ‘any arbitrary changes, omissions or additions are excluded’.¹⁶ When Breitkopf & Härtel published its complete edition of Beethoven’s works in the following decade, its commitment to textual fidelity was loudly proclaimed on the title page: ‘Ludwig van Beethoven’s Works, complete edition, critically reviewed, justified throughout’.¹⁷ However, alongside its line of textually chaste collected editions, Breitkopf & Härtel continued to publish editions of the classics enriched with performance advice for students and amateurs, marked by respected performers such as Ferdinand David (1810–1873) and Friedrich Hermann (1828–1907). These appeared within a jungle of competition among music publishers, each with their own line of annotated classics.¹⁸ Even after the turn of the century, the cellist and historian Edmund van der Straeten could defend Grützmacher’s editions by claiming that most editorial intervention was instigated by greedy publishers ‘who, by deliberate falsification, seek to establish a new copyright for ancient compositions’.¹⁹

A third detail worth considering is Abraham’s acknowledgement that an edition needs to be adjusted in certain ways to be more accessible to musicians. As purist as it sounds, his ideal of reproducing the classics ‘exactly as they are composed’ is tempered from the outset by the practical needs of his intended readers. This balancing act between the ideal (text-facing) and the practical (reader-facing) persists in modern editing, leaving the editor much more interpretive space than the word ‘Urtext’ tends to imply.

The fourth and perhaps most significant detail is the distinction Abraham draws between the duties of an editor and those of a performer or teacher. In this view, the laws of artistic integrity apply differently to the same person working in different contexts. As we might expect in a letter about editing, Abraham does not shed any light here on the type of artistic integrity proper to a performer or teacher. However, in a letter from 1887, he gives a list of influential musicians who share his view of editing, in the hopes of winning Grützmacher over to his perspective: ‘Brahms, Joachim, Frau Schumann, Davidoff, Klengel, Schröder, Cossmann, Hausmann and many other authorities and cellists have declared themselves decidedly against any changes, and I still hold out hope that you too will convert at last to the common view’.²⁰

¹⁵ Mendelssohn’s debate with the London Handel Society is quoted at length in Clive Brown, *A Portrait of Mendelssohn* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008): 40–46.

¹⁶ ‘Jede Willkür in Aenderungen, Weglassungen und Zusätzen ist ausgeschlossen’. See the introduction to *Joh. Seb. Bach’s Werke, Erster Jahrgang, Zehn Kirchenkantaten* (Leipzig: Bach-Gesellschaft, 1851), iv.

¹⁷ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Ludwig van Beethoven’s Werke, Vollständige kritisch durchgesehene überall berechnete Ausgabe* (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1862–65).

¹⁸ For an overview of the publication of annotated editions in the nineteenth century, see Clive Brown, ‘The Evolution of Annotated String Editions’, *CHASE: Collection of Historical Annotated String Editions*, ed. Clive Brown et al, 15 August 2020, available at Internet Archive, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200918223811/http://mhm.hud.ac.uk/chase/article/the-evolution-of-annotated-string-editions-clive-brown/> (accessed 17 March 2025).

¹⁹ Edmund van der Straeten, *History of the Violoncello, the Viol de Gamba, Their Precursors and Collateral Instruments with Biographies of All the Most Eminent Players of Every Country* (London: William Reeves, 1914): 432.

²⁰ ‘Brahms, Joachim, Frau Schumann, Davidoff, Klengel, Schröder, Cossmann, Hausmann u. viele andere Autoritäten u. Cellisten haben sich entschieden gegen jede Aenderung ausgesprochen und ich gebe mich noch

Abraham's list of commendable editors – let us call them 'classical editors' – provides a window onto the type of artistic integrity he is invoking in order to persuade Grützmacher. Of these, the violinist Joseph Joachim (1831–1907) provides a particularly rich illustration of what this ideal looked like in practice. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Joachim's name was synonymous with all that was deepest, richest and loftiest in music-making.²¹ His performances of classic works carried such authority that a cultural historian at the end of the century could speak of his playing as 'Klassikervortrag', the playing style for the classics.²²

Joachim's editions tend to stay extremely close to the composers' texts, with no changes of notes, slurs, accentuation, or nuancing.²³ In the violin treatise he wrote together with his student, Andreas Moser, 'modern editing' practices of textual intervention are condemned in the same emotionally charged language that today is aimed at Grützmacher, with words like 'vandalism' and 'sacrilege'.²⁴ However, this condemnation is immediately followed by a lengthy discussion of the extra-textual knowledge a performer needs to bring to the score in order to read it properly, especially for music written before the mid-nineteenth century, and music by composers whose main instrument was not the violin.

In performance, Joachim found such flexibility in the text that one of his students remarked that he 'never played the same Bach composition twice in the same way'.²⁵ While we cannot test this assertion by listening to the tiny handful of acoustic recordings he made in 1903, the divergence between the text and the sounds he has left us – especially in the recording of his own Romance in C Major – makes it possible to reconstruct something of Joachim's elastic treatment of notation.²⁶ It may even be that the neutrality of the text was essential to Joachim as a backdrop or a springboard for his creativity on stage. When the publisher Alfred Dörrfel asked him to make an edition of the Bach Chaconne, showing his treatment of the long stretch of arpeggiated chords in the middle section, he replied that his approach could not be written down: his arpeggiation was a response to the pacing of the crescendo, which worked out differently in every performance.²⁷

In teaching, Joachim and his closest disciples at the Berlin Hochschule not only allowed but demanded a flexible treatment of notation. The violinist Marion Bruce Ranken, who studied at the Hochschule at the turn of the last century, gives a detailed account of the so-called 'Joachim school', with particular attention to the essential difference between notated and sounding rhythm, sometimes called 'Freispielen' (free playing) and sometimes 'Gestaltungskraft' (the power of shaping). 'Not only were you "allowed" this freedom from

immer der Hoffnung hin, daß auch Sie sich schließlich zu der allgemeinen Ansicht bekehren werden'; Peters [Abraham], letter to Grützmacher 21 May 1887.

²¹ For a thorough exploration of the cultural significance of Joachim's public image, see Robert Eschbach, 'Der Geigerkönig: Joseph Joachim as Performer', in *Die Tonkunst*, 1/3 (2007): 205–17.

²² Hans Kraemer, *Das XIX. Jahrhundert in Wort und Bild. Politische und Kultur-Geschichte*, vol. 3 (Berlin: Haus Bong, 1900), quoted in Gebauer, *Der 'Klassikervortrag'*, 1. Gebauer applies this concept backwards over Joachim's entire career, arguing that it captures something essential, both about Joachim's relationship to music and about the public's response to Joachim.

²³ For a comprehensive study of Joachim's editions, see Gebauer, *Der 'Klassikervortrag'*.

²⁴ Joachim and Moser, *Violinschule* (Berlin: Simrock, 1902–5):3:10.

²⁵ Frederick H. Martens, ed. *Violin Mastery: Interviews with Heifetz, Auer, Kreisler and Others* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1919): 165–6.

²⁶ Joseph Joachim, Complete 1903 Recordings (Gramophone & Typewriter, 1903) reissued on Symposium 1071. The Romance in particular has been a particular focal point for recent studies of Joachim's style, with various combinations of transcription, analysis, and embodiment studies by Johannes Gebauer, David Milsom, Jungyoon Cho, Clive Brown and others.

²⁷ Joseph Joachim, letter to Alfred Dörrfel, 6 May 1879, reproduced in Arnold Schering (ed.), *Bach-Jahrbuch*, vol. 18 (1921): 98–100 and available online with a facsimile of the original at josephjoachim.com, accessed 22 September 2017, <https://josephjoachim.com/2013/12/16/a-letter-of-joseph-joachim-on-editing-the-chaconne-of-bach>.

the beat,' she reports, 'but if you did not take it, you were at first looked upon as a novice who required instruction and later on as an unmusical person whom it was not worth instructing.'²⁸ The metaphors she uses to explain this art are nearly always biological: an unwritten melody is like a bird, caged by the notation to keep it from flying away;²⁹ composers' additions of performance markings are like the panicked instructions of parents trying to save their dying baby;³⁰ the beat and the note are like two friends who have determined to stay in touch with one another by checking in from time to time.³¹ The essence of her description shows that the craft of music-making, as it was taught by Joachim and his disciples at the end of the nineteenth century, was still firmly rooted in the Romantic Idealism that Mary Hunter and others have pointed to in early nineteenth-century aesthetic philosophy and its legacy in music criticism over the following decades.³² The score, Ranken explains, is only a shadow, and the solemn duty of the interpreter is to make contact with 'the real thing that has cast the shadow', giving the audience 'not a grinning gargoyle with each feature equally hard and unnaturally marked, but a face with a guiding spirit in it'.³³

Taken together, these four clues place Abraham's letter within a very different conversation from what it appears to be. The 40-year correspondence between Grützmacher and Abraham shows the struggle of two competing ideals for music editing, which by its nature occupies a middle ground between the notion of a composition and the notion of a performance. According to the philosophy that Abraham shared with Joachim and the others on his list, the classical editor worked from a primary loyalty to the composer's text, tempered by consideration for the reader. At the same time, the performer's first loyalty was to something beyond the text: some transcendent essence of music making that could not be set down in writing, and for that reason had no place in an edition.

Grützmacher's Highest Goal

In a letter from 1884, Grützmacher gives an especially thorough defence of his own philosophy, in response to a (now lost) letter from Abraham about a draft edition of Schumann's works for cello:

it has always been my view that such great men as Schumann, Mendelssohn, etc. could not possibly have taken the time to work out all of the markings down to the smallest details, while for me it should be the highest goal and greatest honour to ponder all of the nuances arrayed before the masters' minds, and to bring their works closer to all of those people who are not capable of such a task themselves.³⁴

²⁸ M.R. [Marion Bruce Ranken], *Some Points of Violin Playing and Musical Performance as learnt in the Hochschule für Musik (Joachim School) in Berlin during the time I was a Student there, 1902–1909* (Edinburgh: privately printed, 1939): 76.

²⁹ M.R., *Some Points of Violin Playing*, 70–71.

³⁰ M.R., *Some Points of Violin Playing*, 71.

³¹ M.R., *Some Points of Violin Playing*, 119.

³² See Mary Hunter, "'To Play as if From the Soul of the Composer": The Idea of the Performer in Early Romantic Aesthetics', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 58/2 (2005): 357–98. Also see Nicholas Cook, *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013): 22.

³³ M.R., *Some Points of Violin Playing*, 72.

³⁴ 'In dieser Hinsicht ist mein von jeher vertretener Standpunkt der, daß so große Männer, wie Schumann, Mendelssohn etc., sich unmöglich die Zeit nehmen konnten, alle Bezeichnungen bis in den kleinsten Feinheiten auszuführen, während mir es höchstes Ziel und größte Ehre sein darf, allen Nuancen, welche diesen Meistern vorgeschwebt haben, nachzugrübeln und ihre Werke allen Derjenigen, welche einer solchen Arbeit nicht selbst fähig sind, näher zu bringen'; Grützmacher, letter to C.F. Peters [Max Abraham], 17 September 1884, Bestand 20170, Nr. 1178, Sächsische Staatsarchiv Leipzig.

Grützmacher's tone here is extremely close to Abraham's. He shows equal reverence for the composers in question ('such great men as Schumann, Mendelssohn, etc.'), and takes his role as editor just as seriously as Abraham takes his ('highest goal and greatest honour'). The main difference between his view and his publisher's is that for him, there is no divide between the first allegiance of an editor and that of a performer or teacher. Instead, the score is an incomplete record of a shared, living language of music making, and someone fluent in that language is in a position to 'complete' the markings (as he puts it later in the letter) for the benefit of the uninitiated.

He goes on to claim this position of privileged musical knowledge and justifies his claim in three ways. First, he alludes to 'the manifold experiences which I have had with many famous composers, who have entrusted me with the task of editing their works, and have always been full of approval.'³⁵ In other words, the confidence and trust that living composers have placed in him have given him a solid sense of what he, as a performer, has to contribute to a new musical text. This is probably the most easily verifiable claim that Grützmacher makes in this letter, since the concertos of both Joachim Raff and Carl Reinecke list Grützmacher on the title page not as the editor but as the dedicatee, even with cello parts that bear all the hallmarks of a Grützmacher edition.³⁶

Next, he points out that his interpretation of Robert Schumann's music in particular has won the approval of the composer's closest allies and guardians of his legacy, such as Clara Schumann and Woldemar Bargiel. This cements his claim to a knowledge of good musical taste relevant to the specific works he and Abraham are discussing here. Grützmacher had begun his career in Leipzig, as the principal cellist in the Gewandhausorchester, member of the Gewandhausquartett, and cello teacher at the Leipzig Conservatorium from 1848 to 1860. This brought him into especially close contact with Mendelssohn's musical circle, which included the Schumanns when they visited to make music in public and in private.³⁷

Finally, and crucially, he makes it clear that the legitimacy of his markings does not stem from the approval of any individual composer or musical authority, but rather from the residue of his long and varied musical experience.

when one has played the works so often and with the most diverse other artists, in private and in public, as I have, little by little the right way to play them emerges so clearly that there can no longer be any doubt, and I have endeavoured to set down these results of my long praxis in my editions.³⁸

In other words, Grützmacher's sense of an emergent musical truth came as much from his interactions with colleagues and listeners as from those with composers. From 1860, he was based in Dresden, where he led the cello section of the *Königlichen Hofcapelle* under Julius Rietz and held the title of solo performer to the court (*Königlicher Kammervirtuos*) of the

³⁵ 'Zu einer solchen Fähigkeit denk ich mich vor Anderen berechtigt halten, durch die vielfachen Erfahrungen, welche ich in ähnlicher Hinsicht mit vielen und namhaften Componisten gemacht habe, welche Letztere mir die Redaction ihrer Werke anvertraut haben, und stets voll Anerkennung darüber urtheilten'; Grützmacher, letter to C.F. Peters [Max Abraham], 17 September 1884, Bestand 20170, Nr. 1178, Sächsische Staatsarchiv Leipzig.

³⁶ For a fuller discussion of Grützmacher's working relationship with Joachim Raff in particular, see Kate Bennett Wadsworth, *Precisely Marked in the Tradition of the Composer: The Performing Editions of Friedrich Grützmacher* (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2018): 18–24.

³⁷ For Clara Schumann's reports of their music-making in Leipzig during this time, see Berthold Litzmann, *Clara Schumann: ein Künstlerleben, nach Tagebüchern und Briefen*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1905): 268.

³⁸ 'wenn man die betreffenden Werke so oft und mit den verschiedensten andere Künstlern, privat: u. öffentlich gespielt hat, wie ich, stellt sich nach und nach deren richtige Weise so klar heraus, daß daran ein Zweifel nicht mehr aufkommen kann, und diese Resultate meiner langen Praxis, war ich bemüht, in meinen Ausgaben niederzulagen'; Grützmacher, letter to C.F. Peters [Max Abraham], 17 September 1884.

King of Saxony. Through his membership in the Dresdner Tonkünstlerverein (of which he later became the president), as well as his busy touring schedule, Grützmaker was able to build relationships with musicians across Europe. An article in the *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* in 1870 asserts that ‘one can justifiably claim that he is the most significant cellist of his time’, referring to his reputation as both a soloist and a chamber musician, and citing ‘numerous concert tours in Germany, England, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, etc.’³⁹ His position in Dresden also involved teaching at the Conservatorium, where he occupied a central position in a line of cello pedagogy often referred to as the Dresden School.⁴⁰ The same article tells us that already in 1870, he had a reputation as ‘the foremost and most sought-after’ teacher of his instrument, ‘always surrounded by a large number of students from all countries’, many of whom went on to become ‘famous in their own right’.⁴¹

Grützmaker’s other letters to Abraham allude to a rigorous editorial process that grounded his markings within a common set of stylistic understandings and questions. He would begin by studying all previous editions of the piece and taking note of what he called ‘imprecisions’ (Ungenauigkeiten).⁴² After creating his more precise version, he would test it out, first by playing it through with a pianist (usually Carl Hess, his colleague in Dresden), and then by going over it with one of his students.⁴³ In his intentions at least, his editions were thus the opposite of the ‘vandalism’ ascribed to him by Campbell (and to unnamed ‘modern editors’ by Joachim and Moser). That word implies interference that is not only destructive but also chaotic: a crime against order. Grützmaker’s priority, by contrast, was to make the score even more orderly than it had been before, using a finely honed sense of performance style to correct any vagueness in the writing.

What Did It Mean To Be the ‘Joachim of the Cello’?

In the end, Abraham’s list of editors proved to be effective in persuading Grützmaker to adopt their more classical editing style (at least in his editions for Peters). Not only did Grützmaker consent to having his editions of Mendelssohn and Chopin’s music for cello reprinted in 1887, with his contributions reduced to bowings and fingerings, but when Abraham suggested doing the same for Grützmaker’s edition of the Beethoven Cello Sonatas in the 1890s, Grützmaker actively welcomed the idea.⁴⁴

What must have made Abraham’s list of editors especially powerful was that there was something about their musicianship, off the page, that they shared with Grützmaker as well as with each other. Four of the five cellists – Bernhard Cossmann, Karl Davydov, Robert Hausmann and Julius Klengel – share with Grützmaker the distinction of having been

³⁹ ‘Friedrich Grützmaker ist jetzt einer der gekanntesten und geschätztesten Vertreter seines Instruments (sowohl als Concert- wie als Kammermusik-Spieler), welche ehrenvolle Meinung er durch viele Kunstreisen in Deutschland, England, Holland, Dänemark, Schweden, der Schweiz etc. fest begründet hat, ja man kann wohl behaupten, dass er der bedeutendste Violoncellist seiner Zeit ist’; ‘Friedrich Grützmaker’, *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* 1/38 (16 September 1870): 599.

⁴⁰ See for example Valerie Walden, *One Hundred Years of Violoncello: A History of Technique and Performance Practice 1740–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁴¹ ‘Als Lehrer seines Instrumentes endlich gilt er gegenwärtig unbedingt als der erste und gesuchteste. Stets von einer grossen Schülerzahl aus allen Ländern umgeben, hat er auch bereits viele tüchtige und wieder amhaft gewordene Violoncellisten gebildet’; *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* (1870): 599.

⁴² See for example Grützmaker, letter to Peters [Abraham], 17 June 1869.

⁴³ See for example Grützmaker, letter to Peters [Abraham], 9 April 1874 and 21 April 1875.

⁴⁴ Grützmaker, letter to Peters [Abraham], 8 February 1894. For an online comparison of Grützmaker’s earlier and later editions of the Beethoven sonatas, see George Kennaway, ‘Grützmaker’s Editions of Beethoven’s Cello Sonatas’, in *CHASE: Collection of Historical Annotated String Editions*, ed. Clive Brown et al, 26 September 2021. Available at Internet Archive, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210926011739/https://mhm.hud.ac.uk/chase/article/gr-tzmachers-editions-of-beethovens-cello-sonatas-george-kennaway/> (accessed 17 March 2025).

called ‘the Joachim of the cello’ at least once in the press.⁴⁵ Grützmacher himself was clearly happy with this epithet, since he included a press quote with it in a letter to Hugo Bock (1848–1932), the editor of the *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung*, asking him to reprint it there in preparation for some upcoming concerts in Berlin.⁴⁶

When discussing the idea of artistic integrity as symbolized by Joachim and his musical cohort, the word ‘classical’ surfaces again and again, both in contemporary descriptions and in current scholarship. This word is so familiar within our own usage that we have perhaps not grappled fully with its otherness in a nineteenth-century context. Joachim’s leading role in what William Weber has called ‘the great transformation of musical taste’ in concert programming,⁴⁷ as well as the public image of priestly gravitas Karen Leistra-Jones has dubbed ‘Werktreue performance’,⁴⁸ can easily create the impression that this species of artistic integrity is defined by the performer’s relationship to the classic work. However, long before the term *Werktreue* was coined, there were other discourses in play that attached artistic integrity to something more subtle and diffuse.⁴⁹

Mary Hunter, weaving together the abstract discussions of the role of the performer in early Romantic aesthetics with the more practical advice in instrumental treatises, speaks of a ‘soul-merge’ of performer and composer, which in turn facilitates an elevating, ego-dissolving experience in the listener’s soul. Within this model, the composer becomes ‘an acolyte of the Absolute’, who ‘establishes the frame through which the Ideal is to be glimpsed’.⁵⁰ The performer’s own creative spirit then joins with the composer’s to form a prism that can refract the Ideal or the Absolute into specific sounds. The performer’s gaze is thus directed not so much at the work as *through* it.

Mine Doğantan-Dack isolates a very different discourse by looking at nineteenth-century treatises on musical phrasing, especially in connection with the emerging concept of absolute music. Here, the composer and the work are peripheral, and the performer’s highest loyalty is to the laws of the music itself. These laws are not dictated by any particular authority, but discovered, like the laws of physics. In the writings of Jérôme-Joseph de Momigny (1762–1842) and later Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904), for example, different scale degrees naturally attract and repel one another in various ways, creating melodic and harmonic relationships that a composer can harness when creating (or in the literal meaning of composition, ‘putting together’) a musical work. If the composer has correctly apprehended the nature of these relationships, then the performer need not be torn between the composer’s intentions for the work and the musical elements brought together to express them. When these two are misaligned, however, the theorists are fully prepared to pronounce the

⁴⁵ For Grützmacher, see ‘Vermischtes’, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 63/39 (20 September 1867): 343; for Cossmann, see C. Garnet and T. Arnold Trowell, ‘Violoncellists Past and Present’, *The Strad* 17 (1907): 332; for Davydov, see G. v. Giżycki, ‘Correspondenzen’, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 79/37 (7 September 1883): 409; for Hausmann, see Rudolf Liebisch, ‘Dessau’, *Die Musik* 1/5 (December 1901): 453; for Klengel, see Max Kalbeck, ‘Vom Leipziger Bach-Feste’, in *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* 38/279 (8 October 1904): 1.

⁴⁶ See Grützmacher, letter to H. Bock, 24 September 1867, Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Musikabteilung, Sig. Mus.ep. Grützmacher F5.

⁴⁷ Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste*.

⁴⁸ Karen Leistra-Jones, ‘Staging Authenticity: Joachim, Brahms, and the Politics of Werktreue Performance’, in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 66/2 (Summer 2013): 397–436.

⁴⁹ Woerterbuchnetz, a database drawn from over 40 historical dictionaries, has no entries for the term ‘Werktreue’ prior to 1900. In the *Digitales Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, which also tracks the frequency of words in print, the term ‘Werktreue’ first appears in 1900 and peaks in 1950. See <https://woerterbuchnetz.de> and www.dwds.de/wb/Werktreue, both accessed 28 February 2024.

⁵⁰ Hunter, ‘To Play as if From the Soul of the Composer’, 375.

notation incorrect – even in the works of highly revered composers such as Brahms and Schumann.⁵¹

The listener is also part of the equation, rather than a mere receptacle for fully formed musical experiences. George Barth characterizes Carl Czerny's advice on playing the music of Beethoven and other classical authors as 'preservation by translation' – a metaphor that grants the listener an essential role in the ideal performer's process. Once a performer has apprehended what Czerny refers to as Beethoven's 'conception' (Auffassung), the shared sense of taste between performers and their listeners can and should guide the way this conception surfaces in the world of sound. Having noted the strong moral overtones of Czerny's language, Barth attempts to locate the moral compass regulating the interactions between classic works and contemporary taste. Through a careful process of elimination, Barth concludes that it must lie not in the score, not in the sound, and not in a specific way of playing, but rather in what Czerny himself terms the performer's own 'sense of propriety', which is formed over time through 'well cultivated feelings and much experience'.⁵²

While Czerny's phrase, 'well cultivated feelings', could plausibly refer to the formal education of his day,⁵³ his reference to 'much experience' suggests something beyond education: an ongoing absorption of taste and wisdom throughout a person's life, drawn from many sources, and therefore not invested in deriving personal authority solely from other authorities.⁵⁴ George Kennaway has shown that this concept of ambient good taste, which was such a strong presence in the theoretical writing of the eighteenth century, continued to exercise an influence in nineteenth-century discussions of musicianship, even though the Romantics' addition of a metaphysical element (Hunter's 'soul-merge') changed the concept's anatomy in subtle ways.⁵⁵

The following section makes the case that when the term 'classical' was applied to nineteenth-century performers, it carried a broad range of meanings encompassing this entire ecosystem of artistry and taste.

Classical Musicianship

Granted, Chopin's playing is the most charming thing in the world, but woe unto them who would model themselves after him. Henselt, on the other hand, should be a

⁵¹ See Mine Doğantan-Dack, "'Phrasing – The Very Life of Music": Performing the Music and Nineteenth-Century Performance Theory', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 9 (2012): 7–30.

⁵² George Barth, 'Carl Czerny and Musical Authority: Locating the "Primary Vessel" of the Musical Tradition', in *Beyond the Art of Finger Dexterity: Reassessing Carl Czerny*, ed. David Gramit (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2008): 125–39.

⁵³ As late as the 1940s, C.S. Lewis traced the educational ideal of trained emotions as far back as Plato and Aristotle, and argued that his contemporaries' interest in debunking it removed a piece of our common humanity. C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man; or, Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1943). As Lydia Goehr has pointed out, it is often difficult to spot longstanding assumptions such as these within a purely musicological framework, which prefers to locate ideas within specific time periods. See Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum*, xxvii.

⁵⁴ C.f. James Parakilas' interpretation of Czerny's directives as beginning two parallel traditions of musical authority, one grounded in a 'Catholic' chain of priestly interpreters, and one grounded in a 'Protestant' devotion to the text. James Parakilas, 'Playing Beethoven His Way: Czerny and the Canonization of Performance Practice', in *Beyond the Art of Finger Dexterity*, 108–24.

⁵⁵ George Kennaway, 'The Correct, the Beautiful, Taste, Feeling, and Reason: Relationships Between Categories, or, What Can't Be Taught', paper presented at Correct, But Not Beautiful Performance II: Deciphering the Hidden Messages In 19th-Century Notation, Vienna, 23–25 September 2019. Many thanks to Dr Kennaway for sharing the text and slides from this unpublished paper.

model to everyone: there we have spirit, fire, passion, but nothing arbitrary, nothing baroque. In a word: it is classical.⁵⁶

This broad characterization of the playing of Adolf von Henselt (1814–1889) appears in an essay by his former pupil, Sophie Kaskell (later Sophie von Baudissin), who grew up in a family on intimate terms with Mendelssohn, Chopin and the Schumanns, and who penned this essay as a member of Robert Schumann's artistic alliance of 'Davidsbündler'.⁵⁷ Kaskell's use of the term 'classical' (classisch) to mean a worthy model for imitation aligns with the primary definition given in Johann Christoph Adelung's 1802 dictionary: 'Excellent in its kind, so that it can serve as an example and a guideline for others.'⁵⁸ This sense of the word – exemplary (vortrefflich/mustergültig), without any hints as to what makes it exemplary – was still present at the end of the nineteenth century. The Muret-Sanders bilingual dictionary from 1910 gives the English translation of 'Klassizität' as 'high standard, excellency', while 'klassisch' is translated as 'classical' with the clarification of 'mustergültig'.⁵⁹

The alignment of classicity with perfection tapped into a Romantic longing for the Ideal, which, as Mary Hunter has observed, had direct implications for the listener's experience of a musical performance. After quoting from Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder's famous story, 'The Remarkable Life of the Musician Joseph Berglinger' (1797), in which the young Berglinger listens to an oratorio and feels his soul soaring up into the radiant sky, while the present sinks away before him, Hunter comments that the idea of listening, here and in other early Romantic descriptions, is a 'metaphor for idealized spiritual communion'. She then makes the curious observation that the performer does not seem to figure into this listening experience.⁶⁰ A full century after the Wackenroder story, the conductor and composer Dr Friedrich von Hausegger depicts a similar listening experience, in a review of the soprano, Camilla Landi (1866–1930):

In the arts we use the word classical to depict something consummate and perfect, for which the norms of judgement no longer need to be applied. Fräulein Camilla Landi possesses a classical art of singing. To every one of her performances she brings the complete apparatus of a wonderfully even voice and a flawless art of singing. Nothing can go wrong; of that one is certain. One feels elevated above the dependence on moods, the influences of the moment, any effects of an individual nature. We also call this objective; one is not stimulated into empathic activity, but only invited to enjoyment. This is an untroubled enjoyment: the joy of the absolutely consummate.⁶¹

⁵⁶ 'Gewiß, Chopin's Spiel ist das Liebenswertigste der Welt, aber wehe denen, die sich nach ihm bilden wollen. Henselt dagegen sollte Jedem ein Vorbild sein, da ist Geist, Feuer, Leidenschaft; aber nichts Willkürliches, nichts Barockes. Mit einem Worte: es ist classisch'; 'Sara' [Sophie Kaskell], 'Adolf Henselt', in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 7/15 (22 August 1837): 2.

⁵⁷ Silke Wenzel, 'Sophie von Baudissin', *Musik und Gender im Internet*, ed. Beatrix Borchard, 2010, available at https://mugi.hfmt-hamburg.de/receive/mugi_person_00000048?XSL.back=B&lang=de (accessed 17 March 2025).

⁵⁸ 'In seiner Art vortrefflich, so daß es andern zum Muster und zur Richtschnur dienen kann'; Johann Christoph Adelung, *Grammatisch-Kritisches Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart* (Ausgabe letzter Hand, Leipzig 1793–1801), available at www.woerterbuchnetz.de/Adelung, accessed 9 October 2021.

⁵⁹ H. Baumann, *Muret-Sanders Encyclopaedic English–German and German–English Dictionary: Abridged Edition (for School and Home)*, 17th edition (Berlin-Schöneberg: Langenscheidtsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1910): 589.

⁶⁰ Hunter, 'To Play as if From the Soul of the Composer', 359–60.

⁶¹ '18. Man bedient sich in der Kunst des Ausdrucks classisch, um etwas Vollendetes, etwas Vollgiltiges, wofür die Norm des Urtheiles nicht mehr gesucht zu werden braucht, damit zu bezeichnen. Eine classische Gesangkunst besitzt Fräulein Camilla Landi. Jedem ihrer Vorträge bringt sie den vollkommenen Apparat einer wunderbar ausgeglichenen Stimme und einer tadellosen Gesangkunst entgegen. Es kann nichts mislingen; des is man sicher. Man fühlt sich auch über die Abhängigkeit von Stimmungen, von Einflüssen des Augenblickes, von Wirkungen

In Dr Hausegger's account, as in Wackenroder's, the listener experiences a feeling of elevation, covering many dimensions: the listener is elevated above moods, above the influences of the moment, and even above individual selfhood. In this version of the listening experience, however, the performer and her art are absolutely central. It is the perfection of Landi's singing that brings the listener into direct communion with the Ideal, not necessarily because she is trying to communicate the Ideal, but because in the 'complete apparatus' of a well-trained voice and a flawless art, she embodies the Ideal. Her classicity is thus a potent spiritual force, independent of the spiritual power of the works she is singing.

Also colouring this vision of the Ideal was the idea of ancient Greece, seen at the time as a perfect harmony of the aesthetic and the spiritual, of form and content.⁶² The image of a lost perfection from Classical Antiquity mostly lurked behind the concept of classicity in discussions of musicianship through recurring key words such as mind/spirit (*Geist*), cultivation (*Bildung*), objectivity (*Objectivität*), repose (*Ruhe*), clarity (*Klarheit*), and simplicity (*Einfachheit*). However, it could also be invoked as a living metaphor. An 1857 review of the violinist Edmund Singer (1830–1912) characterized his performance style as 'calm and classical, as one applies this expression to the art of the ancient Greeks, a sculptural quality firmly applied from the boldest to the finest.'⁶³ Joachim's performance of a Bach fugue in 1868 was also described as 'sculptural' (*plastisch*) in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*,⁶⁴ and Clara Schumann's performance of a Beethoven sonata in 1854 led Franz Liszt, in a remarkable essay on her playing, to depict her as a Delphic priestess.⁶⁵

The relationship between classical musicianship and the idea of the past had other layers as well. The *Meyers Großes Konversationslexikon* of 1851 makes the point that already in Antiquity, classical authors were being grouped into periods of excellence, meaning that 'classical' could also designate a literary golden age from which the classics were drawn. This sense also extended to modern literary history, so that every European country could speak of its own classical period in literature.⁶⁶ By the sixth edition of the *Konversationslexikon* in 1902, this metaphor had widened to include other local peaks of cultural achievement: 'Within Antiquity, the times of flourishing and their intellectual/spiritual products, especially of an artistic nature, were specially honoured with the name classical. In the same sense, the modern civilisations [*Kulturvölker*] have their classical periods and their classical authors.'⁶⁷

individueller Art erhaben. Objectiv nennt man dies auch; man wird nicht zur Thätigkeit des Mitempfindens angeregt, sondern nur zum Genusse eingeladen. Dieser ist ein ungetrübter; die Freude am absolut Vollendeten'; Dr Friedrich von Hausegger, 'Grazer Tagesbericht: Concert Camilla Landi und Irma Halaczy', *Grazer Tagblatt*, 8/63 (4 March 1898).

⁶² For a helpful summary of the various strands of Romantic Hellenism underlying German music and drama, see Jason Geary, *The Politics of Appropriation: German Romantic Music and the Ancient Greek Legacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁶³ '8. ... sein Vortrag ist ruhig und classisch, wenn man diesen Ausdruck der Kunst des Hellenen zuschreibt, also plastisch, namentlich auf das feinste sowol, als auch auf das kühnste fest herausgebreitet'; Albert Hahn, 'Aus Rotterdam', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 46/18 (1 May 1857).

⁶⁴ 'H ... n', 'Correspondenz: Leipzig', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 64/45 (30 October 1868): 385.

⁶⁵ Franz Liszt, 'Clara Schumann', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 41/23 (1 December 1854): 7 (254). This review is also discussed in depth in Alexander Stefaniak, 'Clara Schumann and the Imagined Revelation of Musical Works', *Music and Letters* 99/2 (2018): 194–223, especially in relation to the various feminine archetypes that were applied to Clara Schumann at different points in her career.

⁶⁶ 'Klassiker und klassisch', *Das große Conversations-Lexicon für die gebildeten Stände* (Hildburghausen: Verlag des Bibliographischen Instituts, 1840–1852): 18:8.

⁶⁷ 'Innerhalb der Antike werden die Blütezeiten und ihre geistigen Erzeugnisse, vor allem künstlerischer Art, speziell mit dem Namen klassisch beehrt. In gleichem Sinne haben die modernen Kulturvölker ihre klassischen Zeiten und ihre Klassiker'; 'Klassiker und klassisch', *Meyers Großes Konversationslexikon*, 6th ed. (1905–1909), accessed

In the ebb and flow of cultural achievement over the centuries, then, there are various high points that can be honoured with the laurel of classicity, both within a given country and within a given field. This sense of the term allows for a certain tradition or 'school' of playing to be granted classical status, although classicity in this sense can only be awarded in retrospect: a peak is only recognizable once the decline has begun. Thus an article in *Cäcilia* advertising a German translation of the younger Manuel Garcia's treatise on singing in 1843 praises Garcia's method for providing a guideline into the 'old classical Italian school' of singing, which the translator considers 'unsurpassed to this day and serving as a model for all cultivated peoples', lamenting that it 'seems almost to have disappeared'.⁶⁸ Two decades later, an AMZ article on the history of the violin names François-Antoine Habeneck (1781–1849) as the last representative of 'the classical orientation of French violin playing', with its 'noble artistic style'.⁶⁹ At the end of the century, the singer Clara Kathleen Rogers reflected on her years studying piano in the Leipzig Conservatorium in the 1850s, when 'the spirit of Mendelssohn pervaded the Conservatorium', as a time when the 'classic traditions had been developed to their highest point, and modern innovations had not yet a disturbing influence'.⁷⁰

When writers use the term 'classical' in this more nostalgic sense, it is not always possible to know whether they are referring to isolated local peaks of excellence or to a unified classical tradition. Richard Wagner writes contemptuously of what was called 'classical' playing in mid-nineteenth-century Germany, with Mendelssohn's musical circle directly in his sightlines. In his famous 1869 essay, *Über das Dirigieren*, he himself puts German 'classical' playing in scare quotes, painting it as a small-minded distaste for excess, which Romantic Hellenism was 'pressed into service' to defend.⁷¹ At the same time, he shows great admiration for what he calls the 'classical tradition' of the old Italians (no scare quotes this time), which he credits directly for the singing style of early nineteenth-century French violinists such as Habeneck.⁷² This Franco-Italian classical tradition, in Wagner's view, held the key to the proper performance of Mozart's music, not because it was dictated by Mozart, but because Mozart's compositions were the residue of the same tradition.⁷³

Writing at the turn of the century, Joachim and Moser quote Wagner's account of Franco-Italian classical musicianship as a way to show the international credentials of a style of string playing that, they complain, had increasingly come to be thought of as German. In their account, the 'classical traditions of the Italian bel canto' were translated by French violinists into 'a singing tone on the violin, free from mannerism and artificiality', with 'a supple and independent style of bowing, one serviceable to the characteristics of each

online via Wörterbuchnetz des Trier Center for Digital Humanities, Version 01/21, accessed 15 October 2021, www.woerterbuchnetz.de/Meyers?lemid=K04754.

⁶⁸ 'in einer Zeit, wo die alte classische italienische Schule, bis heute unübertroffen und allen gebildeten Völkern zum Muster dienend, fast zu verschwinden scheint'; Carl Wirth, 'Garcias Schule, oder die Kunst des Gesanges, in allen ihren Theilen vollständig abgehandelt, von Manuel Garcia Sohn. Deutsch von C. Wirth', *Cäcilia: Eine Zeitschrift für die musikalische Welt* 22/85 (1843): 39.

⁶⁹ 'Mit diesem Künstler scheint vorläufig die classische Richtung des französischen Violinspiels abgeschlossen zu sein, denn weder sein Schüler Artot noch Alard haben dazu beigetragen, der französischen Violinschule die edle künstlerische Weise zu bewahren, die ihr im Anfange eigen war, noch sind andere französische Violinspieler zu nennen, die die Virtuosität mehr als bloß zur Darlegung äusserlicher Fingerfertigkeit und Sinnesreizes benutzen und die classische Verwendung der Technik erkennen lassen'; Julius Rühlmann, 'Die Kunst des Violinspiels: eine historische Studie', *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, n.F. 3/42 (18 October 1865): 3.

⁷⁰ Clara Kathleen Rogers, *Memories of a Musical Career* (privately printed at the Plympton Press, 1919): 130.

⁷¹ Richard Wagner, 'On Conducting (Über das Dirigieren): A Treatise on Style in the Execution of Classical Music', trans. Edward Dannreuther (Project Gutenberg, 2003): 113.

⁷² Wagner, 'On Conducting', 44.

⁷³ 'Bericht an Seine Majestät den König Ludwig II., von Bayern über eine in München zu errichtende Deutsche Musik-schule' (1865), excerpted in 'On Conducting' (Gutenberg): 158.

variety of stroke'. Their *Violinschule* aims to preserve this style, pointing out that 'the method of treatment accorded to the violin by all masters of instrumental music, from Haydn to Mendelssohn, has its roots in the teaching and the technical acquirements of that school.'⁷⁴ While their mention of Mendelssohn departs sharply from Wagner's view that mid-century German classicity was an outlier, they are in full agreement with him about the relationship between classical musicianship and classic works. The classical tradition of music making, born of Italian singing, was a stream that flowed through the great classical compositions, as well as through German and (earlier) French string playing. To be acquainted with it, therefore, was the surest way to grasp the conception behind the works.

These three senses of the word 'classisch', as applied to musicianship, allow for a more complex and symbiotic relationship with classic works than mere audible *Werktreue*. When it was used in the sense of exemplary, it referred to musicianship that could provide a model of excellence to musicians, while delivering an experience of the Ideal to listeners. When the word was invoked as a reference to the ancient world, it drew specifically on a Romantic longing for the lost perfection of ancient Greece. In both of these contexts, a classic work could be either absent from the programme or brought in as an aid to this abstracted experience of classicity. This effectively turns the usual relationship of composer, performer, and listener on its head: the listener's longing for classicity could be the prime mover of musical experience, served by the performer with the help of the composer. When the word 'classisch' referred to a tradition of excellence in music making – whether this tradition was understood as a local peak or a longer, international arc – classic compositions could nestle into the surrounding musical tradition, rather than commanding work-centred traditions of their own. This meant that to be true to the spirit, or even the intentions, of the composer, meant simply to breathe the same air of conception and expression.

Within this thicket of meanings, a particular type of historical document was allowed to flourish: heavily annotated editions, in which a musician seeks to provide a good model for other musicians to follow, at times clarifying and at times overriding the composer's written instructions. Grützmacher may not have been a classical editor, but the critical reception of his playing portrays him as an unimpeachably classical musician. An 1870 review in the *Fränkischer Kurier*, quoted in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, pronounces Grützmacher's playing 'classical, if we understand by that [word] the development of the highest technique in every respect, but at the same time only in the service of the clearest and warmest reproduction of every single piece of music'.⁷⁵ Even his most extreme editorial sins (from today's standpoint) seem to match up with performances that met the criteria for classical musicianship. This review of his performance of a complete Bach Cello Suite, from 1867 (the year he published his now-notorious concert version), contains a litany of key words and phrases associated with classical playing, alongside an untroubled awareness that Grützmacher has made alterations in order to bring the listeners into closer contact with the spirit of the composer.

One didn't know what to admire more: the truly inexhaustible bounty of old Bach in invention and combination ... or the extremely refined, intelligent, well thought-out to the smallest detail, clear and correct delivery of the performer, who knew how to subordinate and nestle himself so completely within the spirit of Bach, and yet at the

⁷⁴ Joseph Joachim and Andreas Moser, *Violinschule/Violin School* vol. 3, trans. Alfred Moffat (Berlin: Simrock, 1902–5): 32.

⁷⁵ 'Das Spiel Grützmacher's ist classisch, wenn man darunter die Entstellung der höchsten Technik nach allen Positionen hin, zugleich aber nur als Mittel zum Zwecke der klarsten und wärmsten Reproduction jedes einzelnen Musikstückes, versteht'; Anon., 'Stimmen aus Süddeutschland über Friedrich Grützmacher', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 66/11 (11 March 1870): 111.

same time, with much skill and the finest artistic understanding, to make relevant to Bach the means obtained in modern technique, and thus, through equally soulful and tasteful treatments in every respect, to bring the whole a good deal closer to the artistic consciousness of the present.⁷⁶

Grützmacher's editorial vision, therefore, represents some essence of music-making that he has neither derived from simple formulas, nor crafted out of a desire to put his personal stamp on the material. As a performer, he has done his best to 'make contact with the thing that has cast the shadow' of the notation, and his editions represent perhaps a biological drawing of the animal, aiming not only for anatomical accuracy but also for realistic shading. A close examination of his editions can grant us access to some of the lost specifics of a playing style that was in its own way analogous to Abraham's textual fidelity.

Classical Priorities through the Lens of Grützmacher's Editions *Discipline in Tempo*

One specific feature of classical playing mentioned in written accounts is a disciplined sense of tempo. An 1868 review of the pianist Anton Rubinstein contrasts his characteristic 'idiosyncrasy' (*Eigenthümlichkeit*) with a 'metronome-bound academic quality' (*Metronome geregelten Acadämlichkeit*) that seems to be expected for a 'classical' performance of Beethoven (although it goes on to note that his performance of Beethoven's G Major Concerto was surprisingly 'classical' on this occasion).⁷⁷ In an otherwise glowing review of the pianist Mary Krebs in 1885, her performance of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 53 was criticized for 'a too obvious rushing in the last movement, as well as an exaggerated dragging in the middle theme of the first movement,' which 'distanced her too sharply from the fundamental character of the work to be called classically beautiful.'⁷⁸

At first glance, these reviews seem to support Wagner's accusation that German classicism was nothing more than a distaste for anything extreme (and indeed, a large portion of Wagner's essay is concerned with tempo modification). One great strength of annotated editions, however, is that they can offer a glimpse of these general principles as they behave 'in the wild', in an endless variety of specific musical contexts. Grützmacher's editions of Mendelssohn's works for cello and piano are explicit about setting down a style of music making directly connected to Mendelssohn's musical circle, as he explained in a letter to Abraham in 1878.

⁷⁶ 'Man wußte eben nicht, was man mehr bewundern sollte, die wahrhaft unerschöpfliche, stets Neues und Ueberraschendes zu Tage fördernde Erfindungs- und Combinationsgabe des alten Bach [...] oder die überaus feine, durchgeistigte, bis ins kleinste Detail aufs Sauberste ausgearbeitete, klare und correcte Votragsweise des Ausführenden, die sich dem Bach'schen Geiste so vollständig anzuschmiegen und unterzuordnen, dabei aber doch die in der modernen Technik gewonnenen Mittel mit vielem Geschick und feinstem Kunstverstande demselben dienstbar zu machen, und somit das Ganze durch ebenso geistvolle, wie in jeder Beziehung discrete Behandlungsweise dem künstlerischen Bewußtsein der Gegenwart um ein gut Stück näher zu rücken wußte'; O[tto] Drönewolf, 'Die Tonkünstler-Versammlung zu Meiningen: Concert-Bericht', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 63/40 (27 September 1867): 348.

⁷⁷ 'Das Rubinstein seine "berechtigte" Eigenthümlichkeit nicht bis zu jener zahmen, mit dem Metronome geregelten Acadämlichkeit herabstimmen würde, mit der man hier Beethoven's G-dur Concert zu hören gewöhnt ist, nahm ich von vornherein an, aber ich glaubte nimmer, daß er sie bis zu diesem Grade "classisch" beruhigen könne, wie er dies that'; Anon., 'Dur und Moll: Berlin', *Signale für die musikalische Welt*, 26 (1868): 1095.

⁷⁸ 'Ein zu entschieden es Eilen, wie ein übertriebenes Schleppen, Ersteres im letzten Satz, Letzteres in dem Mittelthema des ersten Satzes, entfernte Sie beide Male von dem Grundcharakter des Werkes zu auffällig, um classisch schön genannt werden zu können'; 'A.B.', 'Tagesgeschichte: Musikbrief: Dresden' *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* 16/46 (5 November 1885): 3 (559).



Example 1. Tranquillo with a dotted line in Mendelssohn Op. 58 mvt 4, bars 144–145, ed. Grützmacher 1878.

In order to pre-empt any possible sceptics you are concerned about regarding the rightness [Richtigkeit] of my markings, I would like to recommend putting on the title page:

Precisely marked according to the traditions of the composer and edited by F. Gr.

I can truly claim that no one has come to know these very works so exactly at the source as I have (and indeed through a connection to authorities such as Moscheles, David, Rietz etc.) All of my little additions to the markings (since my work does not extend beyond these) are therefore also just the fruit of this association, over many years, that I have referred to.⁷⁹

Abraham took this advice, and the resulting edition – at least in its first version – contains a wealth of performance advice, including some very specific tempo indications.⁸⁰

If we consider these markings to be a set of glosses on a classical management of tempo, they show us that a ‘metronome-bound academic quality’ does not mean a pulse that never varies. Rather, they point to an internally steady pulse that can be faster or slower depending on the character of the music. Example 1 shows a transitional moment in Op. 58 that could be performed with a *ritenuto*, but that Grützmacher marks instead with *tranquillo* plus a dotted line, ending abruptly with a caesura in the piano part (within a rest), plus *risoluto* in both parts.

⁷⁹ Um jedoch allen etwaigen, von Ihnen gefürchteten Zweiflern an der Richtigkeit meiner Bezeichnungen zuvorzukommen, möchte ich Ihnen vorschlagen, auf den Titel zu setzen: Nach den Traditionen des Componisten genau bezeichnet und herausgegeben von F. Gr. In Wahrheit darf ich behaupten, daß Niemand gerade diese Werke so genau an der Quelle hat kennen gelernt, (und zwar durch Vermittelung von Autoritäten wie Moscheles, David, Rietz etc.), als ich. Alle meine kleinen Bezeichnungs-Zusätze (denn mehr maßt sich meine Arbeit ja nicht an) sind daher auch nur die Frucht dieses eben erwähnten langjährigen Umgangs; Grützmacher letter to Peters [Abraham], 24 December 1876, Bestand 20170, Nr. 1178, Sächsische Staatsarchiv Leipzig. Curiously enough, in the published version of the title page inscription, the word ‘traditions’ has been changed to the singular: ‘Nach der Tradition des Componisten genau bezeichnet’.

⁸⁰ There is a later version of this edition, with most of the performance advice removed, apart from bowings and fingerings, although the title page inscription remained. This ‘cleaner’ version, from 1887, is often mis-catalogued as the earlier version, but can be distinguished by plate number: the earlier version has a plate number of 6034, and the later version has 6960. These excerpts are reproduced with the kind permission of the Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections, University of Birmingham.



Example 2. Pesante accents at a structural joint, Mendelssohn Op. 45 mvt 2, bars 42–51, ed. Grützmacher 1878.



Example 3. Animato leading into a structural joint, Mendelssohn Op. 45 mvt 2, bars 86–91, ed. Grützmacher 1878.

Grützmacher's student, Hugo Becker (1863–1941), who is characterized as a 'classical player' in Edmund van der Straeten's history of the cello,⁸¹ is very insistent on the distinction between a gradual change of tempo versus the internally steady pulse implied by tempo-character terms such as *animato*, *tranquillo*, and *sostenuto*.

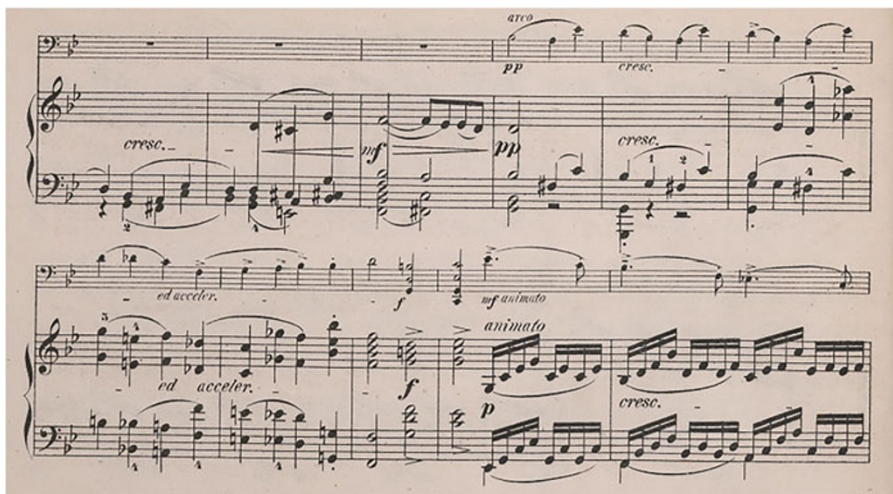
Animato is the marking for that feeling that makes us talk faster when relating events that affect us very strongly. (St. Saëns concerto 1st mvt.). *Meno* or *più tranquillo*, on the other hand, should check the flow of the narrative; it can be used either as a calming effect, or to underline the meaning of a particular place, in order to bring out something musically significant. *Sostenuto* represents a similar moment. *Sostenuto* means held back and is not to be confused with *ritardando*.⁸²

Grützmacher's tempo-character terms include all of these examples, as well as *pesante*, which appears to be a slower tempo with very pronounced accents (of which more later). He can mark these terms over a phrase, a section of a phrase, or even an individual motive, as he does at the transitions between sections in the second movement of Op. 45 (Examples 2 and 3).

Gradual changes of pulse, such as *accelerando* or *ritenuto*, are very rare in Grützmacher's editions, unless he marks them as transitions between these internally steady tempos, as in the first movement of the Sonata Op. 45, where he buttresses a *crescendo* with an *accelerando* to lead into the coda of the movement, which he has marked *animato* (see Example 4).

⁸¹ See Edmund van der Straeten, *A History of the Violoncello, the Viol da Gamba, their Precursors and Collateral Instruments* (London: William Reeves, 1914): 484.

⁸² 'Das *A n i m a t o* ist die Bezeichnung für die Belebung, mit der wir Begebenheiten, die uns innerlich stärker angehen, in rascherem Zeitmaß erzählen (St. Saëns-Konzert, I. Satz). Das *M e n o* oder *P i ù t r a n q u i l l o* soll dagegen den Fluß der Erzählung aufhalten; es kann sowohl zur Beruhigung gebraucht werden, als auch um die Bedeutung einer Stelle zu unterstreichen, um etwas musikalisch Gewichtiges hervorzuheben. Ein ähnliches Moment stellt das *Sostenuto* dar. *Sostenuto* heißt verhalten und darf nicht mit *ritardando* verwechselt werden'; Becker, Hugo, and Dr Dago Rynar, *Mechanik und Ästhetik des Violoncellspiels* (Leipzig: Universal, 1929): 159.



Example 4. Cresc. with accel. leading into animato, Mendelssohn Op. 45 mvt 3, bars 323–333, ed. Grützacher 1878.



Example 5. Senza rallentando at the end of a melodic section, Mendelssohn Op. 58 mvt 2, bars 84–90, ed. Grützacher 1878.

Words for a gradual slowing of the tempo (*ritenuto*, *rallentando*, *ritardando*) are even more rare than *accelerando* (although he is fond of *calmando* as a transition to *tranquillo* sections). In the second movement of Op. 58, he even marks *senza rallentando* at the end of a lyrical section (see [Example 5](#)).

The pattern of a steady but variable pulse even holds for the third movement of Op. 58, in which the piano's opening phrases are marked 'Chorale' and the cello's entry in bar 12 is marked 'quasi recit'. It is tempting to speculate that 'the tradition of the composer' here connects to Mendelssohn's own treatment of Bach's sacred recitative, making the cello an evangelist rather than a character in an opera – especially when we consider the marked difference between Grützacher's timing in this recitative and the open soliloquy style of his concerto cadenzas. In the cadenza to the slow movement of his edition of Romberg's Concerto No. 1, for example, nearly every bar has either an *accelerando* or a *ritenuto*, a constant fluctuation of pulse.⁸³ In the slow movement to Mendelssohn Op. 58, however, only one bar gets this treatment: a flurry of semiquavers over a static 6/4 chord in the piano. For this bar ([Example 6](#)), Grützacher recommends a small tempo arc of

⁸³ Bernhard Romberg, *Violoncell-Concert No. 1*, ed. Friedrich Grützacher (Leipzig: Peters, [1873]).



Example 6. More rhapsodic timing than usual, Mendelssohn Op. 58 mvt 3, bar 18, ed. Grützmacher 1878.

accelerando-rallentando-tranquillo, punctuated by two different types of accent (presumably with an agogic component), plus a fermata over the last beat.

This may well be a way of expressing Romantic subjectivity, in contrast to the classical objectivity of the rest of the piece. In his later, more restrained edition of the same sonata, he removes the specific advice and instead writes *a piacere* in parentheses over this bar, suggesting that the advice we see above is meant to convey a moment of ‘Willkür’: passion briefly escaping from self-control.

Physical Presence

In his memoirs of famous musicians, the pianist, conductor, and composer Carl Reinecke (1824–1910) speaks in glowing terms of the dramatic soprano, Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient (1804–1860), noting in particular the perfect embodiment of classical beauty in her physical presence and motions. ‘In Copenhagen she sang Romeo in Bellini’s *Montecchi und Capuleti* and Iphigenie and Gluck’s opera of the same name,’ he recalls. ‘Truly special was the classical grandeur and beauty with which she portrayed the Greek priestess. A painter who was sitting next to me in the theatre, exclaimed repeatedly: “One could set this whole thing down on canvass! Every pose is a perfect masterpiece of fine sculpture”’.⁸⁴ The idea of a classical performance as embodied sculpture may also lie behind recurring words such as ‘grandeur’ (Größe) and ‘repose’ (Ruhe) in descriptions of classical playing. For example, an 1889 review of the pianist Emil von Sauer (1862–1942) remarks that his ‘grand repose,’ which has a fundamental influence on the playing, is truly classical.⁸⁵

The physical component of this classical ‘große Ruhe’ is reflected in Grützmacher’s bowings and fingerings. He often sets up both hands in such a way that it is possible to be absolutely motionless between phrases, and even within phrases, extraneous motion is kept to a minimum. This aspect of his technique allows the cellist to sit very still in performance, drawing the audience in, rather than entertaining them with exaggerated poses as some of Grützmacher’s contemporaries reportedly did.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ ‘Sie sang in Kopenhagen eben den Romeo in Bellinis *Montecchi und Capuleti* und die Iphigenie in Glucks gleichnamiger Oper. Wahrhaft einzig war die classische Größe und Schönheit, mit der sie diese griechische Priesterin darstellte. Ein Maler, der im Theater neben mir saß, brach einmal über das andere in die Worte aus: “Könnte man doch das alles auf der Leinwand festhalten! jede Stellung ist ja ein vollendet schönes plastisches Meisterwerk”; Carl Reinecke, ‘Und Manche Liebe Schatten Steigen Auf’: *Gedenkbücher an berühmte Musiker* (Leipzig: Gebrüder Reinecke, 1900): 85–6.

⁸⁵ ‘Jede technische Schwierigkeit hat der Künstler überwunden, das Spiel fließt so weich dahin, als ob es sich von selbst verstünde. Seine große Ruhe, welche einen wesentlichen Einfluß auf das Spiel hat, ist wahrhaft classisch; Dr Otto Neitzel, ‘Correspondenzen: Gotha’ Jg. 56, Bd. 85, Nr. 51 (18 December 1889): 6.



⁸⁶ See in particular George Kennaway’s discussion of the cellist, Auguste van Biene, in comparison with the much more restrained Alfredo Piatti. George Kennaway, *Playing the Cello 1780–1930* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014): 14–15.



Example 7. Finger holds over upward and downward shifts: Grützmacher Op. 67 p. 5.

In the right hand, he accomplishes this by making it largely unnecessary to lift the bow from the string. First, he will often bow a motive or small phrase ‘backwards’ (meaning the strong beats fall on an up-bow), so that the time he spends on a down-bow is gradually balanced out by the time he spends on an up-bow.⁸⁷ If this balance does not occur naturally with the original slurring, he will often change the slurring so that it does. This means that he rarely needs to ‘recover’ the bow (meaning to lift the bow in order to resume bowing in the right direction and in the preferred part of the bow), a technique that both modern and baroque cellists use today.

Second, when he does need to recover the bow, he is much more likely to hook two notes together (marked by two staccato marks under a slur) than to lift the bow in the air between two consecutive down-bows (often called ‘retaking’). He very rarely marks an up-bow or down-bow sign, and it was not part of his language to mark two of these in a row, as we can see from a letter he wrote to Abraham in 1896, defending his additions of dots under slurs in an edition of Beethoven variations for cello and piano.

I have not added any dots or slurs, and your comment about these can only refer to those places where the composer has written two separate notes, e.g.  but which for the sake of practicability (the right bowing) must be played in one bow, thus: . In order to provide this direction, there is no other way than to add dots and slurs, which comes to the same effect as the composer’s separate notes.⁸⁸

As a result, it is very easy to lose track of when Grützmacher is on an up bow or a down-bow, and even in his most densely annotated editions, many lines of music can go by before he marks one of these signs.

Just as Grützmacher’s bow mostly stays on the string, so his left hand stays almost constantly grounded on the neck of the instrument. In his book of *Tägliche Übungen*, Op. 67, he makes clear through his marking of finger holds (horizontal square brackets) that fingers should be kept on the string as long as possible, even during shifts (see Example 7).

Grützmacher’s paedagogical editions of older works, particularly Romberg’s sonatas and concertos, show these finger holds in a wide variety of musical contexts. It is possible that within *dolce* and *espressivo* markings, the finger holds also represent warnings against using too much vibrato, since they often appear over the most expressive notes in the melody, when vibrato seems almost irresistible.

⁸⁷ Job ter Haar has analysed this bowing technique in depth in his study of Alfredo Piatti, another key figure in ‘classical’ cello playing. See Job ter Haar, *The Playing Style of Alfredo Piatti: Learning from a Nineteenth-Century Virtuoso Cellist* (PhD thesis, Royal Academy of Music, 2019).

⁸⁸ ‘Punkte und Bogen habe ich keine hinzugefügt, und kann Ihre darauf bezügliche Bemerkung also nur diejenigen Stellen meinen, wo der Componist einzeln gestrichene Noten hingeschrieben hat, z. B. [writes two separate crotchets] welche aber der Ausführbarkeit (richtigen Strichart) wegen auf einen Bogen gespielt werden müssen, also: [writes the same two crotchets with dots under a slur]. Um diese Bezeichnung hervorzubringen, bleibt kein anderes Mittel, als Punkte und Bogen hinzusetzen, was im Effecte aber den getrennten Noten des Componisten gleichkommt’; Grützmacher, letter to Peters [Max Abraham], 7 May 1896.



Example 8. *Restez* marking over an open string plus a rest, Romberg Op. 43, No. 2, mvt 3, cello 2, bars 99–106.



Example 9. *Gliss.* from an open string to a stopped note, Beethoven Cello Sonata Op. 5, No. 2, mvt 2, bars 277–281, ed. Grützmacher 1867.

Grützmacher also sometimes marks the word *restez*, a word which in cello music is normally used in the context of thumb position, meaning to leave the thumb in place. In Example 8, he marks it over nearly a full bar of rest in the lower positions, which must mean that the cellist needs to keep the thumb grounded on the neck so as not to lose the pitch over the rest.

From a twenty-first-century vantage point, the most salient feature of Grützmacher's editions is his use of portamento, both in *glissando* markings and in shifts under slurs implying some kind of slide.⁸⁹ In Example 9, he writes *gliss.* from an open string to a stopped note, with an expressive marking of *con grandezza*.

Since contemporary accounts of his playing do not discuss his portamento, it seems very likely that his fingerings and *glissando* markings represent an undisputed norm of string playing, rather than either a personal quirk or a particularly classical feature.⁹⁰ In his pedagogical editions, he occasionally even marks *non gliss.*, suggesting that portamento is such a normal part of cello playing that it needs to be managed rather than prescribed. Because portamento acquired such a loaded meaning for musicians in the twentieth century,⁹¹ it is a considerable challenge for twenty-first-century musicians to imagine Grützmacher's classical ethos while looking at his fingerings. If we keep the classical value of stillness in mind, though, we can see that some fingerings that look like 'effects' are actually designed to anticipate a coming shift. In Example 10, the density of implied portamento (including three slides in the first phrase alone) looks at first to be the defining characteristic of this performance. However, when we look more closely, we can see Grützmacher's commitment to the silence between phrases. First, Grützmacher invests in the silence at the end of bar 2 by shifting into position for the A in bar 3 just before the rest.

Since the second phrase begins with an implied up-bow, both hands – and therefore, the entire body – can be absolutely motionless during the rest, allowing the cellist to hold the

⁸⁹ For a complete catalogue of Grützmacher's *glissando* markings, showing that a shift between two stopped notes on the same string is an implied portamento in his fingering language, see Wadsworth, 'Precisely Marked in the Tradition of the Composer'.

⁹⁰ See also Kennaway, *Playing the Cello*, 114–21.

⁹¹ For an especially thorough and persuasive account of this change in taste, see John Potter, 'Beggar at the Door: The Rise and Fall of Portamento in Singing', *Music & Letters* 87/4 (2006): 523–50.



Example 10. Classical stillness between phrases in Beethoven Cello Sonata Op. 102, No. 2, mvt 2, bars 1–10, ed. Grützmacher 1867.

audience in a deep stillness before the second phrase. For the next two silences, the left hand needs to shift, but thanks to Grützmacher's symmetrical slurring, the bow can still remain motionless between phrases. Finally, at the *espressivo* marking in bar 10, Grützmacher marks both a shift and a new down-bow, which must have created an effect similar to a singer taking a breath before an outpouring of feeling.

Character-Led Bowing

When Joachim and Moser criticize the turn-of-the-century Franco-Belgian school of violin playing for having lost touch with the older and more international classical school, they focus their attention on the relationship of bow technique with expressive nuance and musical character. 'In [the Franco-Belgian] performance of the various bowings', Joachim and Moser complain, 'there is as little trace of the "characteristic" (a quality with which the interpretation of both German and Romance classical masterpieces is intimately bound up), as there is of that modulatory richness in variety of tone, whereby all *nuances* of expression may at once be commanded'.⁹²

The central importance of accent and nuance, expressed through the bow, was also perhaps the main point of tension between Grützmacher's and Abraham's editorial visions. Abraham's letter to Grützmacher, quoted at the beginning of this essay, goes on to give an irate list of places where Grützmacher has changed the accentuation markings in the first of Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 73.⁹³ In his own defence, Grützmacher writes:

It always seemed to me that the specific purpose of your edition (and I also believed that you shared this view) to bring the works closer to the many people who are not in a position to orient themselves sufficiently within them, through the most scrupulously precise markings – but not only through fingerings, since for masters that is the smallest matter (one can still play a piece even with the wrong fingering) but namely through guidance as to the right performance style [*richtigen Vortrag*], through the introduction of the necessary nuances and contrasts, without which no musical work in the world can be conceived and realised.⁹⁴

⁹² 'Ihre Bogenführung und Tongebung hat nur das rein Sinnliche des Klanges im Auge; von einer Charakteristik der Stricharten, die mit der Darstellung nicht nur der deutschen, sondern auch der romanischen Klassiker unlösbar verknüpft ist, ebensowenig eine Spur wie von jener modulationsreichen Art der Tongebung, die alle Nuancen des Ausdrucks auf der Palette hat!'; Joseph Joachim and Andreas Moser, *Violinschule/Violin School* v.3 English version trans. Alfred Moffat (Berlin: Simrock, 1902–5): 32.

⁹³ For a fuller discussion of this letter, see Wadsworth, *Precisely Marked in the Tradition of the Composer*, 35–40.

⁹⁴ 'Mir erschien stets der besondere Zweck Ihrer Edition, (und glaubte ich auch, daß Sie diesen Standpunkt theilten,) die Werke den Vielen, welche nicht in dem Lage sind, sich selbst darin genügend zu orientiren, durch die gewissenhaft -genauesten Bezeichnungen näher zu legen, – aber nicht nur durch Fingerangabe, denn das ist bei Meistern das Geringste, (selbst mit falscher Applicatur kann man ein Stück noch immer spielen,) sondern namentlich durch den Hinweis auf den richtigen Vortrag, durch die Herbeiführung der nöthigen Nuancen und Contraste, ohne welche kein Musikwerk der Welt zu denken ist und zur Geltung gelangen kann'; Grützmacher, letter to Peters [Max Abraham] 17 September 1884.

Grützmacher's underlined words in this passage are worth considering more closely. The statement that no musical work in the world can exist – even in thought – without 'the necessary nuances and contrasts' fits within Doğantan-Dack's framework of 'the music' as the prime mover of conscientious music-making. As far as Grützmacher is aware, no composer has ever attempted to create a work that excludes the necessary nuances and contrasts, and any composer who did attempt this would be in error. The definite article in this phrase makes Grützmacher's statement even more specific: he is not merely claiming that nuance and contrast are essential to music. Rather, he is referring to a specific set of nuances and contrasts, which he and his colleagues would immediately supply to a piece of music as a matter of common sense.⁹⁵ The *specific* purpose of his editions for Peters – his other underlined word – is to transmit this musical common sense to 'people who are not in a position to orient themselves sufficiently' when encountering a new musical work. Through exposure to good models, these cellists can develop the 'well-cultivated feelings' referred to by Czerny, so that they gradually learn how to connect specific nuances with the demands of the music, in any context. From this passage, it seems clear that Grützmacher meant his additions to the score as a model of good musical taste: classical in the sense of exemplary. His pedagogical editions – recognizable by the title page inscription, 'precisely marked for teaching' (für den Unterricht genau bezeichnet/zum Unterricht genau bezeichnet) – are particularly specific about the connections between accentuation and musical character, as well as their implications for bow distribution and articulation.

Behind all of Grützmacher's nuancing lies a basic grammar of local emphasis. In the melody, greater emphasis is given to tessitura peaks, accidentals, and notes that form part of a surprising harmony. Accompanimental figures generally mirror the emphatic notes in the melody, although they can also introduce an extra layer of metrical accents (strong beats), which are either absent in the melody or too subtle to mark. Within this basic grammar, however, the frequency of Grützmacher's emphatic notes varies considerably according to the character of the music. For example, *pesante* includes accents on nearly every note, while *brillante* (Grützmacher's favourite marking for passagework) lets many notes go by without any emphasis whatsoever.

Just as the frequency of accent varies with the character, so does the type of accent. Most of the characters within *forte* dynamics involve some combination of accent marks (<) and staccato marks (·). Since accents are thickest on the ground in *pesante*, we can think of them as an especially heavy emphasis. In an unusually pictorial marking in Mendelssohn Op. 58 (Example 11), he combines accent marks with the word 'Mitternachtsglocke' (midnight bell) over Mendelssohn's arco/pizzicato unison at the end of the third movement.

In this instance, Grützmacher has replaced Mendelssohn's original *sf* markings with accent markings, suggesting that he found them especially fit for the purpose of imitating the long decay of a giant bell. The bow distribution markings in his pedagogical editions bear this out: accents tend to require more bow than the surrounding notes, often the whole bow (marked G.B.) as in Example 12.

Staccato marks represent the opposite pole of loud emphasis: in his editions of Romberg's cello sonatas, they are the most densely marked in *energico*, while in the Romberg concertos they are the most frequent in *brillante*. In the sonata version of *brillante*, in which the cellist does not need to work as hard to project, a staccato mark appears only occasionally, to show local emphasis such as a tessitura peak (see Example 13). Since staccato marks are absent from Grützmacher's *mf* character markings (such as *sonoro* and *gioviato*) we can

⁹⁵ C.f. eighteenth-century distinctions between essential and arbitrary ornamentation, such as 'wesentliche Manieren' (essential graces) in Johann Joachim Quantz, *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (Berlin: 1752): 136, as well as essential 'ornaments of expression' in Francesco Geminiani, *A Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick*, (London: 1749): 2.



Example 11. Accents as a midnight bell in Mendelssohn Sonata Op. 58, mvt. 3, bars 41–47, ed. Grützmacher 1878.



Example 12. GB markings over accented notes in Romberg Op. 43, No. 2 mvt 1, cello I, bars 156–157, ed. Grützmacher.



Example 13. Brillante in Romberg Op. 43, No. 3 mvt 3, cello I, ed. Grützmacher.

think of them as an energetic, fiery emphasis, like a shout in *forte* or a quiet exclamation in *piano*.

Within a more lyrical context, Grützmacher's two most common markings are *dolce* and *espressivo*. In the Mendelssohn Cello Sonatas, he replaces Mendelssohn's *cantabile* markings with either *dolce* or *espressivo*, and in his six-volume transcription of Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*, nearly every section of every melody is marked with one of these. We can therefore think of them as representing the ebb and flow of a classical *cantilena*. *Espressivo* is characterized by its diversity of accent types: accent, hairpin, *sf*, *fz*, tenuto, *messa di voce* (small diamond-shaped hairpin pair), and even various combinations of these on a single note. This ties in with Muzio Clementi's advice, as far back as 1801, that within *espressivo* 'every note has its peculiar force and energy'.⁹⁶ *Dolce*, meanwhile, is the richest in hairpins pairs, allowing the bow to smooth over moments of emphasis by dwelling on the connective tissue between emphatic and unemphatic notes.

Grützmacher's pedagogical editions are especially helpful in showing how his use of the bow could change from phrase to phrase, and even from motive to motive, all within a framework he intended not as a personal interpretation, but simply as the proper response to the character of the music. This aspect of bowing technique – highlighting the correct

⁹⁶ Muzio Clementi, *Introduction to the Art of Playing the Pianoforte* (London: Clementi, Banger, Hyde, Collard & Davis, n.d. [1803]): 14.

accents, in ways that respond to musical character – lies at the very heart of the ‘richtiger Vortrag’ Grützmacher wished to set down.

It also has a crucial role in relation to the other classical performance features discussed above. If the disciplined management of time and of physical motion create a sense of sculptural repose, then character-led bowing provides an animating fire, so that music’s power to move its listeners is assured. In Grützmacher’s classicity, music exists not to be coolly admired, but rather to convey the full range of human emotions.

Conclusion: Grützmacher and Today’s Musicianship

In 2014, the charismatic celebrity-pianist, Lang Lang, published an annotated collection of piano works called *The Lang Lang Piano Book*.⁹⁷ This collection intersperses glossy photos of Lang Lang with short, personal introductions to the pieces, highlighting his own relationship to the music. The scores themselves are then lightly annotated, with occasional verbal suggestions such as ‘play from your heart’ and ‘careful with the pedal’. Sold with an accompanying CD, and marketed with a clever photo of Lang Lang sitting at a piano made to resemble a half-open book, *The Lang Lang Piano Book* steers into his celebrity status, openly inviting readers to bask in the glow of his personality. A review in *Gramophone Magazine*, dripping with urbane hostility, refers to the book as ‘Lang Lang’s latest branding exercise’, underscoring the tension between Lang Lang’s approach to a solo piano career and the high seriousness normally required by that office.⁹⁸

Diametrically opposed to Lang Lang’s public image is the cerebral gravitas of Richard Goode, one of the few musicians today whose concert reviews frequently invoke the old concept of classical musicianship (or at least, musicianly classicism). A concert review in the *Financial Times* instructs us that ‘his favoured area of the repertoire is the classical era, where he is regarded especially highly as a Beethoven interpreter, and when he ventures further afield, he takes the mantle of a serious classicist with him’.⁹⁹ The reviewer goes on to set these two pianists’ personalities side by side, since both had performed Schumann’s solo piano music in London’s enormous Royal Festival Hall.

A few years ago Lang Lang played solo Schumann in this hall and his noisy, all-out assault on the music turned it into an incomprehensible gabble. There could hardly be a pianist at a further extreme to that than Goode, who started with a performance of *Kinderszenen* so understated that he might have been playing for himself alone. In the more heated emotions of *Kreisleriana*, exactly the kind of Schumann where Lang Lang had torn passion to shreds, Goode scrupulously kept the interweaving parts clear-headed, the intellect rigorously holding off any temptation to play the virtuoso.¹⁰⁰

It can be difficult to imagine classical musicianship coexisting with annotated editions, in an age that associates the one with self-abnegation, and the other with blatant egotism. As we have seen, however, Grützmacher’s public musical persona was a great deal closer to Richard Goode’s, and he intended his editions not as celebrity exhibitionism, but as a guideline to the same serious good taste that he brought to the stage.

⁹⁷ *The Lang Lang Piano Book*, ed. Lang Lang (London: Faber Music, 2019).

⁹⁸ Michelle Assay, ‘The Lang Lang Piano Book’, *Gramophone Magazine* (June 2019), www.gramophone.co.uk/review/lang-lang-piano-book.

⁹⁹ Richard Fairman, ‘Richard Goode, Royal Festival Hall, London’, *Financial Times*, 14 February, 2012, www.ft.com/content/1238d656-5668-11e1-a328-00144feabdc0.

¹⁰⁰ Fairman, ‘Richard Goode, Royal Festival Hall, London’.

While his critical reception might speak directly across the centuries to Richard Goode's, it is also clear that Grützmacher's 'thoughtful playing style' would have sounded nothing like Goode's 'clear-headed intellect'. One reason for this is that the concept of classicity has undergone the unavoidable semantic shift born of the twentieth century's anti-Romantic movements such as Neoclassicism, Modernism, and *Neue Sachlichkeit*. Classicity, or 'classicism', comes down to us as a rebuke of the emotional excesses of late Romanticism, rather than an inherently Romantic longing for the lost perfection of Antiquity.¹⁰¹ The other reason is that elements of music-making undergo their own semantic shifts over time. Grützmacher's artful inflections of pitch and tempo, as well as his colourful delineation of character through the bow, might strike us today as more Lang-Lang-ish, due to the sentimental or melodramatic qualities these techniques took on in the twentieth century. These semantic shifts, both verbal and musical – together with a level of editorial intervention that would make Lang Lang blush – make it difficult to think ourselves back into a time when both Grützmacher's style of playing and his style of editing could exist in perfect harmony with the deep seriousness of his approach to music-making.

However, there are rich rewards to be had from taking nineteenth-century annotated editions seriously as exemplars of good taste from another time period. For those of us with an interest in historical performing practices, the advantages are obvious enough – although we will need to grapple with a different semantic shift, as the words 'classical' and 'romantic' tend to be used as a shorthand for the playing styles of music history's Classical and Romantic periods, rather than as timeless artistic abstractions drawn from our ancestors' own imagined pasts.¹⁰² Annotated editions offer certain types of musical information that are scarce or inaccessible within the more traditional study of written sources, or even through the rapidly growing field of early recording studies. There is no need to speculate, for example, whether Grützmacher's classical bowing advice aligned perfectly with the 'sculptural' playing of Edmund Singer, because Singer himself produced a large number of very detailed performing editions, which have yet to be closely studied in their own right.¹⁰³ Meanwhile, the score annotations of early Romantic French string players such as Pierre Baillot (1771–1842) can shed light on the mysterious transitions and connections between the period we now call Classical and the period that increasingly spoke of classicity.¹⁰⁴

More broadly, nineteenth-century annotations have the power to enrich our relationship with musical text. Many scholars and performers have already commented on the poverty of musical notation when it is taken as a set of strict instructions left by the composer,¹⁰⁵ rather than, as Ranken puts it, a shadow of something, to be met on its own terms

¹⁰¹ For an especially thoughtful account of the early twentieth century's anti-Romantic version of classicism in performance practice, see Robert Hill, "'Overcoming Romanticism": on the Modernization of Twentieth-Century Performance Practice', in *Music and Performance During the Weimar Republic*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, Cambridge Studies in Performance Practice 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): 37–58.

¹⁰² The titles of our reference works show this shift in action. Sandra Rosenblum's *Performance Practices in Classic Piano Music: Their Principles and Applications* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988) uses the term 'classic' to refer to the repertoire of the period she is researching, while by the time of Clive Brown's *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750–1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 'classical performing practice' has become synonymous with late eighteenth-century performing practice. This leaves the actual character of 'classical style' entirely open to debate, research, and experimentation.

¹⁰³ For an introduction to Singer's edition of Beethoven's violin sonatas within the context of other nineteenth-century editions of the same works, see Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonatas for Pianoforte and Violin*, ed. Clive Brown (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2020).

¹⁰⁴ See Fabio Morabito, 'Theatrical Marginalia: Pierre Baillot and the Prototype of the Modern Performer', in *Music and Letters* 101/2 (2020): 270–99.

¹⁰⁵ This theme appears in the work of scholars and performers as diverse as Clive Brown, Roberto Poli, Barthold Kuijken, and Nicholas Cook.

and shared between performers and listeners. Accepting the testimony of a musician like Grützmacher, rather than dismissing it as vandalism, requires that we imagine a more symbiotic relationship linking together the composer, the performer, and the listener. With his guidance, all three groups might learn again to be co-creators, translating the human experience into writing, and then back again into experience.

Cite this article: Wadsworth Kate Bennett, 'Classical Musicianship Versus Classical Editing: The Case of Friedrich Grützmacher', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* (2025): 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479409824000405>