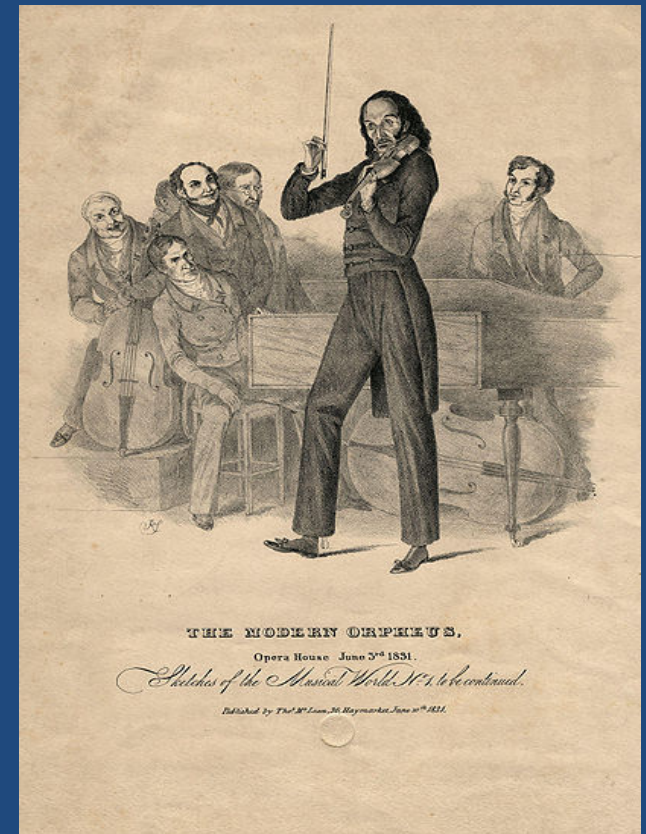


SYPHILIS' IMPACT ON LATE WORKS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC COMPOSERS

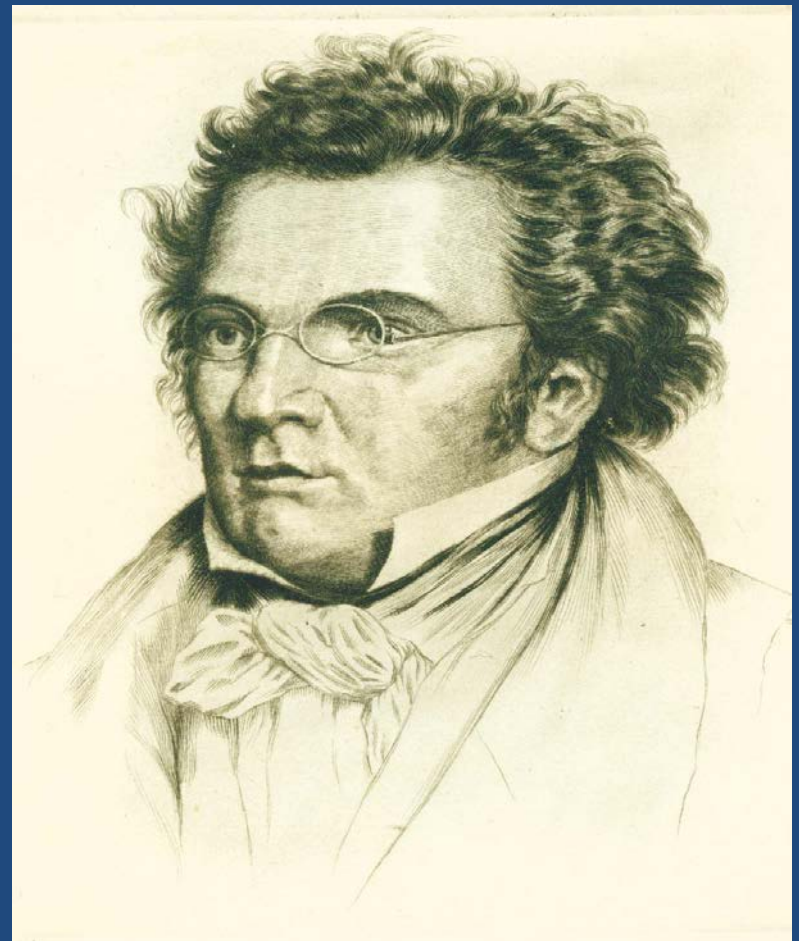
Rempelakos L, Poulakou – Rebelakou E,
Tsiamis C, Rempelakos A



- Niccolò Paganini was so famous violin virtuoso that his audiences thought that he had six fingers, because he could play pieces of extreme difficulty with incredible speed. Suffering also from Marfan syndrome and tuberculosis, he had to be treated with “murderous doses of mercury”. He decided to abandon his touring career and his involvement with music.



- The effects of syphilis on Franz Schubert can be detected in his famous *Unfinished Symphony* (1822), which reflects the changes of mood and the beginning of a dark period. Another evidence comes from the Lied *Doppelgänger*, which describes the meeting of a man with his double, a figure that appears in the tradition when somebody is about to die.



Every Note
Schubert

Schwanengesang

Der Doppelgänger
Heine
original key B Minor

F. Schubert

Sehr langsam

13. | *pp*

Still ist die Nacht, es ru-hen die Gassen,

A musical score for the song 'Der Doppelgänger' by Franz Schubert. It features a vocal line on a single staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves. The key signature is B minor and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo marking is 'Sehr langsam'. The lyrics are 'Still ist die Nacht, es ru-hen die Gassen,'. The piano part begins with a fortissimo (pp) dynamic. The score is numbered 13.

- Donizetti has composed two famous scenes of madness in opera history in his operas *Anna Bolena* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. He already had symptoms of tertiary syphilis, so it is possible that he could have projected his own dementia into music, creating autobiographical scenes and allowing the listeners to have a contact with a suffering mind.



Erholungsstunden im vierhändigen Clavierspiel für 2 Anfänger, Max Schultze, Band II - ca. 1930 Collection Litolf, Braunschweig
Preview www.quatre-mains.net
Free PDF, Primo 93 kB - Secondo 84 kB, 2 x 1 page 2007

Lucia di Lammermoor.

Allegro. **Finale.** G. DONIZETTI.

Primo. *f marcato*

The image shows the musical score for the Primo part of the finale. It is written on a grand staff with a treble clef. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' and the dynamics include 'f marcato' and 'f'. The score features complex rhythmic patterns and melodic lines.

Allegro. **Finale.** G. DONIZETTI.

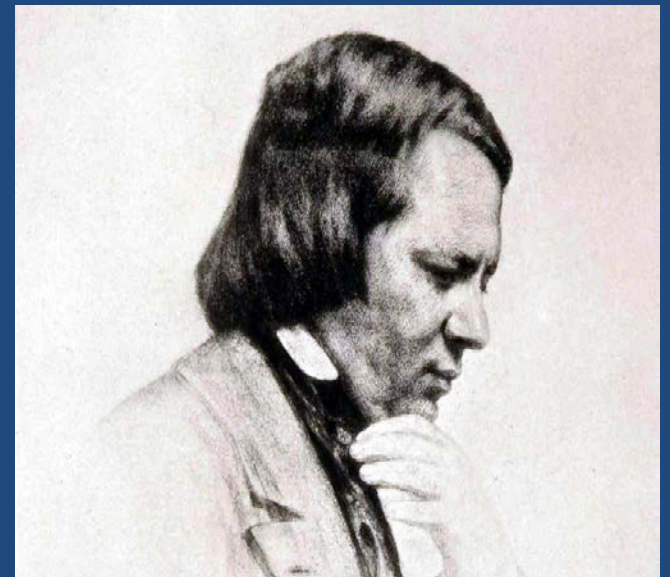
Secondo.

The image shows the musical score for the Secondo part of the finale. It is written on a grand staff with a bass clef. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' and the dynamics include 'f'. The score features complex rhythmic patterns and melodic lines.

- He claimed that voices sounded in his ear an angelical melody. One night he woke up from sleep, having dreamt that a ghost dictated him a “spirit theme” which he wrote down, and appears in the slow movement of his *Violin Concerto*, a neglected piece that had to wait almost 80 years to be performed



The image shows a page of musical notation for the slow movement of the Violin Concerto. It consists of five systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *pp* and *ppp*. At the bottom of the page, there are three small annotations: **) Siehe Vorwort.*, **.) Siehe Preface.*, and **.) Voir Préface.*



- Bedrich Smetana contracted syphilis in his youth and passed to the tertiary stage of the illness at his 50 years, when he became deaf.
- He could not compose anymore, leaving only sketches of all the works he tried to begin. Feeling that the loss of his mind was close at hand, he even noted “final page”, as he was at the middle of composing a score.



Trio g moll / Trio in G minor / Trio g-Moll

I

Bedrich Smetana
(1824-1884)

Moderato assai

molto
spres.

Violino

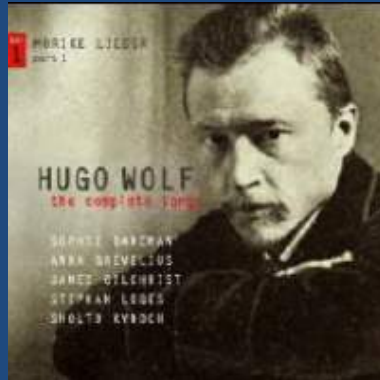
Violoncello

Pianoforte

Moderato assai

f
parlamento
crec.
ff
cresc.

- In 1897 he left his second opera unfinished and was interned to a mental asylum with symptoms of insanity and general paralysis. His lieder from Michelangelo poems are quite representative of his depression



- He passed years in the wheelchair and in the darkness of the blindness, greatly helped by the young musician Eric Fenby, who wrote down the scores that the blind master was dictating. Delius never suffered from dementia or other mental illness, but his productivity fell after the apparition of tertiary syphilis to a mere 20 works in 15 years, though the quality of his late compositions cannot be doubted.



THANK YOU