

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: SONATA DEVELOPMENT AT THE TURN
OF THE CENTURY: FROM LISZT TO
STRAVINSKY

Krishna Thiagarajan, Doctor of Musical Arts,
2006

Directed By: Professor Santiago Rodriguez
School of Music

The sonata began to lose its position of predominance among compositions in the middle of the 19th century. Having been the platform for harmonic and thematic development of music since the late baroque period the sonata entered a process of reevaluation and experimentation with form. As a result fewer sonatas were being composed with some composers dropping the genre completely. This dissertation looks at the different approaches taken by the German, French and Russian schools of composition and compares the solo and chamber music applications of the sonata form.

In the German tradition Franz Liszt's Sonata in b minor sets the standard for the revolutionary approach to form while the Berg Sonata is a very conservative application of form to an innovative use of extended chromaticism. Both composers chose to write one movement through composed pieces with Liszt working with a very expansive use of form and Berg being extremely compact and efficient.

Among the Russian composers, Prokofieff's third sonata is also a one movement sonata, but he falls between Liszt and Berg in terms of the length of the piece and the use of innovative musical language. Scriabin uses a two movement approach, but keeps the element of a through composed piece with the same important material spanning both movements. Stravinsky is the most conservative of these with a three movement sonata that uses a mix of chromaticism and baroque and classical style influences.

The French almost stopped composing true sonatas except for chamber music where Franck and Fauré write late romantic sonatas, while Debussy is very innovative within a three movement sonata. Estampes, by Debussy, are taken in almost as an afterthought to illustrate the direction Debussy takes in his piano solo music. While Estampes is by definition a set of character pieces they function like a sonata with three movements.

Sonata Development at the Turn of the Century: From Liszt to Stravinsky

By

Krishna Thiagarajan

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctorate of Musical Arts
2006

Advisory Committee:
Prof. Santiago Rodriguez, chair
Prof. Cleveland Page
Prof. Larissa Dedova
Prof. Mikhail Volchok
Prof. Peter Beicken

Table of Contents

CD1

- [1] Alban Berg: Sonata Op.1
- [2]-[4] Maurice Ravel: Sonatine
- [5]-[7] Franz Liszt: Sonata in b minor

CD2

- [1]-[3] Claude Debussy: Sonata for Violin and Piano
- [4]-[7] Gabriel Fauré: Sonata for Violin and Piano in A, Op.13
Joanna Whang, violin
- [8]-[11] César Franck: Sonata for Violin and Piano in A
Tao-Chang Yu, violin

CD3

- [1]-[3] Igor Stravinsky: Sonata
- [4]-[6] Sergei Prokofieff: Sonata No. 3
- [7]-[9] Claude Debussy: Estampes
- [10]-[11] Alexander Scriabin: Sonata No. 4, Op.30