

ardent' (p. 2); 'The whole of his career may well seem to be a failure to those who do not value chamber music and song. Where are the successful operas, the symphonies, and the vast choral works which are the mark of an important figure?' (p. 4); and 'Fauré's own opera *Pénélope* (1907–1912) embraced a phlegmatic Hellenism' (p. 32) – which remind of the mid-century English-language writing on Fauré that patronized as it praised. Assertions that Fauré had 'relatively limited success in French musical politics' and 'never cared to master the Parisian networks as well as other aspiring composers' (p. 2) are not true. And phrases such as 'The composer, already merciless in terms of adapting poetry to his musical needs, cuts the second and fourth of Gautier's strophes' or 'shamelessly cuts Gautier's text' (pp. 12 and 14) communicate inaccurate views of Fauré's art and creative process. Myths and misconceptions – however innocent or innocuous – in a project of such obvious pedagogical value diminish its impact ever so slightly. In all fairness, however, few such instances may be found in the notes for Volumes 2–4 of *Gabriel Fauré: The Complete Songs*, which feature greater objectivity and genuine enthusiasm.

The music of Fauré's late manner, written during the first quarter of the twentieth century, may be the most intriguing of his *œuvre*, but remains the most infrequently heard.¹⁷ Jennifer Smith's reading of 'La chanson d'éve' (1910; Vol. 4), a cycle that re-imagines the first woman alone in the Garden, and Christopher Maltman's rendition of *L'horizon chimérique* (1919; Vol. 1), which metaphorically explores advancing age and the unknown beyond, provide persuasive evidence of the expressive potential within this segment of the composer's repertoire and suggest that singers in search of new challenges may wish to start there. In this way, *Gabriel Fauré: The Complete Songs* offers a vital contribution to the ongoing re-imagining of Fauré, as well as a splendid opportunity to become acquainted with his allusive art.

James William Sobaskie
Hofstra University

Moscheles

Piano Concerto No. 4 in E Major op. 64
Piano Concerto No. 5 in C Major op. 87
Recollections of Ireland op. 69

Howard Shelley *pf/cond*
Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

Hyperion CDA67430 (72 minutes: DDD)
Notes and translations included. £13.99

With this recording, Howard Shelley and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra have finished a three-volume project for the Hyperion Romantic Concerto Series that makes available for the first time all but one of the piano concertos by Ignaz

¹⁷ James William Sobaskie, 'The Emergence of Gabriel Fauré's Late Musical Style and Technique', *Journal of Musicological Research* 22/3 (2003): 223–75.

Moscheles. (The last concerto, No. 8, will be recorded, the producers maintain, once the orchestral material can be found.) The performance of 'Recollections of Ireland' marks the sole availability of this work on disc. Fortunately, the current recording maintains the same high standard of performance as its companions (Concertos No. 1, No. 6 and No. 7 on Hyperion CDA67385 and Concertos No. 2 and No. 3 with 'Anticipations of Scotland' on Hyperion CDA67276).

Ignaz Moscheles (1794–1870) belonged to the era of composer-pianists that included J.N. Hummel, J.B. Cramer, Friedrich Kalkbrenner, John Field and C.M. von Weber, who chiefly performed their own concertos, a genre that functioned as a kind of calling card for soloists. We know that on the occasions when Moscheles did perform a concerto by another composer, he selected those by Bach, Beethoven or the very popular *Konzertstück* by Weber. When other musicians played his concertos, the pianist was most often a woman soloist or a student. Moscheles composed his eight concertos between 1819 and 1838. The first five appeared for the most part after those by Hummel, Field and Weber and before those by Chopin and Schumann. His final three concertos were written in between Mendelssohn's Piano Concertos No. 1 and No. 2 and after those by Chopin.

A native of Prague, Moscheles studied piano with B.D. Weber, director of the Prague Conservatory, where he learned the music of Bach and Mozart, influences that become evident later in his compositions. Moscheles continued his training in composition with Antonio Salieri in Vienna, where he also enjoyed an association with Beethoven. He knew many of the most important musicians of the day. After a short time as a piano teacher to Mendelssohn, he developed a lifelong friendship with him and was acquainted with Chopin, Meyerbeer, and Robert and Clara Schumann. After a period of touring, Moscheles settled in London for 21 years (1825–46), where he taught pianists Henry Litolf and Sigismund Thalberg and helped prepare a generation of British pianists. At the invitation of Mendelssohn, Moscheles settled in Leipzig in 1846 to become the principal professor of piano at the newly formed conservatory and trained such illustrious musicians as Edvard Grieg and Arthur Sullivan. Overall, Moscheles was a well-liked and respected professional with wide-ranging musical interests.

We know Chopin and Schumann performed music by Moscheles and the listener cannot help but hear foreshadowings in the concertos on this recording of things to come in the concertos by those composers. The useful booklet notes written by Henry Roche, co-author of the *New Grove Dictionary* entry on Moscheles, suggest his fourth concerto is a specific inspiration for the E-minor concerto by Chopin, an interesting notion but one that requires further investigation. The attitude of Moscheles towards Chopin's music demonstrates his ability to remain open to new styles. He initially considered Chopin's music 'charming' and 'original', providing pianists with some of the most attractive features of new music. Yet he was critical of the harmonic language and modulations that made his fingers 'stumble'. However, once he heard Chopin play, in 1839 in Paris, Moscheles reported he understood this music for the first time.

Robert Schumann, who considered Moscheles to be an excellent pianist, described the latter's Concerto No. 5 as inclining to the romantic school, not the more advanced romanticism of Berlioz and Chopin but a broader romantic spirit that was evident in works from Bach to Mendelssohn. I believe the same could be said of Concerto No. 4 so that the pairing of these two for this recording is especially instructive. They exhibit a mixture of classical treatment of concerto structure and expected thematic statements with more adventuresome harmonic language and expanded virtuosic figuration that presage later romantic concertos.

For example, the first movement of Concerto No. 4 features a straightforward opening theme from the orchestra followed by a lyrical second theme introduced by clarinets and flutes. The repetition of these themes by the pianist is extended with embellishments and displays of technical virtuosity. A cadenza passage, which could function as an independent study, features a twelve-bar trill combined with statements of the first theme. The development that follows travels through intriguing harmonic territory, making much use of third relationships. The restatement of thematic materials by the orchestra and soloist contains an impressive display of virtuosity including rapid repeated notes for which Moscheles was especially known.

The second movement opens with a horn solo reminiscent of Weber, leading to a movement of lyrical material decorated with soloistic filigree reminding the listener that Chopin cannot be far away. The use of trills in this movement led one reviewer in 1825 to observe that the trill in instrumental music had undergone as great a change as it had in vocal music of the period, that is, it had transformed from a device for 'legitimate' expression to a display for technical prowess. The concerto was written for one of the composer's early trips to London, which accounts for the use of the 'British Grenadier's March' as the main theme of the third movement.

Concerto No. 5 shares with the fourth concerto a reliance on wind instruments for introductions and transitions, modulations to a wide range of keys and technical difficulties that some contemporary reviewers deemed excessive, as they had no other function than for virtuosic display. At the same time, the concerto contains some darker moments and a greater use of minor keys, for instance, in the development section of movement one and in the E-minor second movement. In addition, the restatement of themes after the development in movement one features more soloistic display and increased frequency of harmonic changes than are found in earlier first movements by Moscheles, which results in more weight being given to this section than in his previous concertos.

The second-movement *adagio* opens with a plaintive cello melody against a gentle accompaniment of pizzicato strings and presents us with a more brooding and improvisatory-sounding piece than heard before in Moscheles's concertos. Horns punctuate important connections as when they introduce the contrasting section in major mode and perform a final passage over a rumble of timpani that could have been lifted from a *bel canto* opera.

Like the concertos, *Recollections of Ireland* was written by Moscheles for his own concert performances after a visit to that country in 1826. Such travel fantasias provided music with popular appeal by incorporating folk or patriotic tunes. Nearly six minutes, more than one-third of the work, features an opening fantasia whose main characteristic is the expected soloistic virtuosity together with suggestions of the three Irish tunes to come. The first, 'The Groves of Blarney', better known as 'The Last Rose of Summer', receives elegant treatment in this solo-dominated section and contains the most lyrical portion of the work. The following two tunes, 'Garry Owen' and 'St Patrick's Day', are energetic, bright melodies that offer opportunities for embellishment, arpeggios and octave displays as well as numerous key changes. A cadenza-like section for the soloist presents a layering of the three themes for their final statement before the customary spirited conclusion. One can imagine the sheer fun this aural postcard held for contemporary audiences.

The works on this disc illustrate an important slice of piano concerto history, a point on the continuum from Mozart to Chopin. Soloistic sections had become

more independent and foreshadow the eventual dispensing of the opening orchestral statement, while increased figuration and virtuosic display made the improvisatory cadenza obsolete. This recording thus sheds light on the influence exercised by lesser-known composers of the early nineteenth century upon more famous later romantic writers of concertos.

Pianist-conductor Howard Shelley has recorded concertos by Mozart, Hummel, J.B. Cramer, Herz and Mendelssohn and is well acquainted with early romantic style and its antecedents. He delivers very fine and sensitive performances on a Steinway piano. This recording is a valuable addition for listeners interested in building their collection of nineteenth-century concertos or in tracing the history and development of the genre.

Thérèse Ellsworth
Brussels

Rachmaninov

Prelude op. 2 no. 1
Oriental Dance op. 2 no. 2
Sonata for Cello and Piano in G Minor op. 19

Franck

Le Sylphe M73
Sonata for Cello and Piano in A Major M8
Panis Angelicus

Steven Isserlis *vc*, Stephen Hough *pf*
with Rebecca Evans *sop*
Hyperion CDA67376 (78 minutes: DDD)
Notes and translations included. £13.99

The cello sonatas of Rachmaninov and Franck make an interesting coupling. Only fifteen years separate their composition: Franck wrote his in 1886 at the age of 64, whereas in 1901 Rachmaninov was only 28. Franck was enjoying a youthful Indian summer of success and mastery as a composer, following years of struggle and lack of recognition. Rachmaninov had recently recovered his self-confidence after the breakdown following the disastrous premiere of his First Symphony, and had just completed his Second Piano Concerto. The Franck is, of course, the Violin Sonata in a transcription – or more accurately an adaptation – made by the cellist Jules Delsart in 1888; the composer was impressed with it and was planning an original Cello Sonata at the time of his death in 1890. And the input of the cellist Anatoly Brandukov into the Rachmaninov was considerable. Both works show unmistakable signs of their composers' own orientations as virtuoso pianists. For considerable stretches, the piano parts carry the main musical substance: the autograph of the second movement of the Franck, for instance, shows that most