PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS FOR FRANZ LISZT’S
OPERATIC ARRANGEMENTS ON DON JUAN (DON GIOVANNI),
LA SONNAMBULA, ROBERT LE DIABLE,
AND NORMA

BY

CHARLES JOSEPH SMITH

B.M., Roosevelt University (Chicago), 1994
M.M., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1995

TRANSCRIPTS OF THE TWO LECTURE-RECITALS

Submitted in partial fulfillment
for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance and Literature
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2002

Urbana, Illinois
WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE RESEARCH PROJECT BY

CHARLES JOSEPH SMITH

ENTITLED PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS FOR FRANZ LISZT’S OPERATICE ARRANGEMENTS ON DON JUAN (Don GIOVANNI), LA SONNAMBULA, ROBERT LE DIABLE, AND NORMA BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS IN PERFORMANCE AND LITERATURE.

Director of Research

Head of Department

Chairperson
ABSTRACT

The purpose of the dissertation is to find out how would a modern-day pianist of a new generation interpret the Liszt opera fantasies for piano—as Liszt wanted it to be done. The foci of the problem were in five interpretative areas of piano performance: tempo, dynamics, phrasing, pedal, and articulation.

The study focused on these Liszt opera fantasies: Don Juan (Mozart), La Sonnambula (Bellini), Robert le Diable (Meyerbeer), and Norma (Bellini). They not only give the best possible sample of Liszt’s opera fantasies, but also show the best of the piano transcriptions Liszt had in his repertoire.

Primary sources for this study included Dover’s Franz Liszt: Piano Transcriptions of French and Italian Operas, Diary Notes of August Gollerich, and past and present recordings of pianists playing the selected fantasies, including Leslie Howard, Ferruccio Busoni, Louis Kentner, Raymond Lewenthal, Ian Hobson, and Michele Campanella. Second-hand sources include doctoral dissertations of Charles Suttoni, Jesse Parker, and several others, plus books on Liszt in French and German, Liszt’s two major languages. Enumeration was used most of the time, with comparison/contrast used for the recordings of pianists and the transcriptions themselves, and the problem/solution method for how to interpret the fantasies in the five selected areas.

Franz Liszt’s life as pianist-composer blossomed when he was in his early adulthood, and with help from Paganini, Berlioz,
Chopin, Beethoven, and Thalberg—as well as constant listening to operas, composing one opera, and being an opera conductor, he ended up with the best overall operatic fantasies that he could write. Most amazingly, the four transcriptions covered were composed in 1841.

In the final analysis, Leslie Howard gave the best performance of the four selected fantasies than the other recording pianists, and Liszt’s Robert le Diable was the most difficult piece from the four selected transcriptions. In matters of interpretation: Don Juan focused more on pedal and accenting, Sonnambula on rubato and articulation, Robert le Diable on pedal, dynamics, and articulation, and Norma on tempo and articulation.
DEDICATION

To: Gustavo Romero, Joseph and Emma Smith,
Sarah Ruth Wiseman, Johnyce Joy Wright,
Sofia Zukerman, Charlotte Lehnhoff,
Emilio del Rosario, Mary Barford,
Pawel Checinski, Linda Berna, Earl Schub,
and Peter Amster
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I wish to thank research director Dr. John Hill for guiding my work in the paper, especially in the most difficult parts of it, and his hard work in reading the drafts.

Second, I wish to thank William Heiles, whose Music 434 class I attended inspired me to do this study.

Third, I wish to appreciate Heidi von Gunden, who was aware what my paper was going to be about.

I also wish to thank Gustavo Romero, a piano faculty representative, for helping me to not give up the thesis when things were not going my way.

Next, I wish to thank my mother, Emma Smith, a University of Illinois alumna, whose very strong expertise and experience in English grammar and composition helped me to put the thesis in the best form possible.

In addition, I wish to give regards to Joseph Smith, my father and a University of Illinois alumnus, who was willing to give up his time and money for me to complete the study.

Finally, I wish to appreciate my friend and University of Illinois visiting scholar Michèle Stoehr, whose strong work ethic through her experience as secretary help me to deal with the most complex of problems with my paper.
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LECTURE RECITAL ONE

Performance Suggestions for Franz Liszt’s Operatic Arrangements on Don Juan (Don Giovanni), La sonnambula, Robert le Diable, and Norma

Hello, everyone. I want to welcome you to the first of my two lecture-recitals involving some of the many operatic arrangements by Franz Liszt. I call this lecture, Performance Suggestions for Franz Liszt’s Operatic Arrangements on Don Juan (Don Giovanni), La sonnambula, Robert le Diable, and Norma.

From an historical background, the opera arrangements may have started with the flourishing of French opera in Paris around the 1680s, developed by Jean-Baptiste Lully.\(^1\) By that time, the keyboardist-composer Jean Henri d’Anglebert wrote his first opera arrangements, mainly on the tragédies lyriques of Lully, like Cadmus, Proserpine, and Alceste. By the start of the eighteenth century, there was the rise of operatic variations by Mozart and Beethoven, along with the mainly operatic and non-operatic variations of Abbé Joseph Gelinek,\(^2\) who almost changed the destiny of the operatic arrangement. Gelinek was a versatile composer whose compositional style was a mixture of Mozart’s and Beethoven’s.\(^3\)-\(^4\) Then the operatic variation reached its peak with composers like Beethoven and Chopin arranging either Paisiello’s “Nel cor più non mi sento” from La Molinara, or Mozart’s “Là ci
darem la mano" from Don Giovanni.5

By the Romantic era, the opera itself saw a trend. Instead of past stories about mythological beings and historical figures, Romantic operas turned to stories of fantasy, the macabre, war heroes and revolution. This caused a blossoming of the opera fantasy as early as 1820 with Muzio Clementi’s arrangement on "Batti, batti, o bel Masetto" from Mozart’s Don Giovanni.6 Also, during that time, the keyboard fantasy per se—its general term—branched into two different styles.7 One was the programmatic fantasy—such as Liszt’s Dante Fantasy; the other style was the multimovement fantasy, in which the movements were played by themselves, as in Robert Schumann’s C Major Fantasy, or Schubert’s Wanderer Fantasy. In the latter fantasy, the movements are played as if they presented a unified whole.

Operatic variations in the Romantic era were also in fashion among unsung composers, like Herz, Kalkbrenner, Hünten, and Pixis, who attempted to make their mark in music. For instance, Henri Herz’s variations on “Non piu mesta” from Rossini’s La Cenerentola had varying degrees of improvisation and rather well-done. Yet the climax of the operatic variations came when Liszt, Czerny, Pixis, Chopin, Thalberg, and Herz made their collaboration of the “Suoni la tromba” theme from Bellini’s I Puritani, in a
work called *Hexameron*, Greek for 'group of six'. Almost all composed operatic arrangements to show off their virtuosity. At the same time, Clara Wieck Schumann broke the barrier of gender in music with her variations on Bellini's *Il Pirata*. Furthermore, others did operatic arrangements for teaching purposes, such as Stephen Heller's *Four Studies on Weber's "Der Freischütz."*8

In the performance aspect of the transcriptions, listening to over ten pianists play at least one of the four selected arrangements in the study, there was room for improvisation. For instance, Marc-André Hamelin, who performed Liszt's *Don Juan* Fantasy, used more bass octaves than in the original score, especially in the Champagne aria.9-17 From these performances, this inspired me to give suggestions of my own that would fit the dramaticism of the operas in the Liszt arrangements studied.

I would like to conclude this introduction by using an opinion from Kathleen Dale. She says, quote, "the nineteenth century was the golden age of piano music".18 This lets us know that the Romantic era had one general idea of nineteenth-century pianism that culminated with Franz Liszt.

With that, the lecture's aim is two-fold. First, there will be suggestions that I would propose in interpretation in some
of the passages of the four selected operatic arrangements. Then, I will propose several variants to some passages in the same pieces.

The operatic arrangements on La sonnambula and Norma were chosen for this first of these two lectures because both operas were composed by Vincenzo Bellini with librettos by Felice Romani, and also because the operas were composed in the early Romantic era.\textsuperscript{19}

La sonnambula depicts a story of the sleepwalker, Amina, who is under her own somnambulism spell by a legend that a ghastly apparition will emerge somewhere in the Italian countryside. Elvino, the one who desires to betroth Amina, eventually catches her inattention during a sleepwalking spell. With the marriage contract already signed, Elvino is endangered because he interprets Amina’s trance as an infidel act because she slept in an bedroom of an inn where the Count usually lies. Elvino tries to break off the matrimony, yet Amina still says she loves him.

After several twists as the story continues, the trance is broken and both become reconciled.

Now I will show you the themes Liszt uses in the La sonnambula fantasy. Franz Liszt focuses on the middle and last
parts of Act I and almost all of act II.

The "Osservate" is the Act I chorus Liszt uses first in the fantasy. This is where the peasants realize that Amina—not the Count—is sleeping in the bedroom of an inn.

(Little demo: "Osservate" from Sonnambula fantasy.)

The second theme is "Tutto è sciolto," which comes from Act II of the opera. This is Liszt's second theme. Here, Elvino and Amina clash against each others thoughts in the hopes of reconciliation.

(Little demonstration: "Tutto" from Sonnambula fantasy.)

The third theme is "Ah, non giunge", coming from the finale of act II, depicts Amina's joy from the grips of the sleep trance as she celebrates reconciliation with Elvino.

(Little demostration: "Ah," from Sonnambula fantasy.)

The next theme is "Ah, perché non possa odiarti", coming from Act II, which tells of Amina's thought of not leaving the lover who says that she betrayed him.

(Little demostration: "Ah, perché" from Sonnambula fantasy.)

Liszt often combines those Act II themes together. This comes in the second half of the fantasy.

The final theme is "Voglia il ciel," which comes near the end of Act I. Here, Amina thinks of heaven and refers to this
environment as the way to beckon Elvino not to annul the marriage contract.

(Little demonstration: "Voglia" from Sonnambula fantasy.)

Now, we will get into the interpretation for La sonnambula.

(Overhead handout: mm. 1-8 of the La sonnambula fantasy.)

The march-like feel in the first part of the “Osservate” passage should have an indication of misurato, although it does not appear in the score.20 Yet the staccato notes indirectly tell the pianist that the march should be done tempo giusto—alla marcia. Take measures 1-6, for instance:

(Demonstration of part of the “Osservate”).

Obviously, the mysteriousness of the beginning measures would mean an accelerando leading to the fourth measure.

(Demonstration of part of the “Osservate”).

This would not work in that case because of the way the notes are separated from each other.

Barbara Allen Crockett realizes that this passage of the “Osservate” almost mimics the real operatic scene of the Bellini kind. The aspect of this passage was a, “stealthy, prophetic motive in the beginning which made it very aware that something ominous is going to happen.”21
Hence, the beginning of this fantasy refers almost exactly to the original operatic score. In this case, there is a depiction of the people waiting in a room in an inn where Amina is sleeping, but they try to keep quiet and not to disturb her.

(Overhead handout: mm. 51-62 of the La sonnambula fantasy.)

Let me go to another passage marking the middle section of the "Osservate" chorus. Here, in measures 51-58, there is the mediant relationship leading up to the key center of C-sharp minor. This upward harmonic trend, I believe, calls for a deviation of the tempo giusto and instead, an accelerando leading up to the climax on the V in C-sharp minor in measure 62. Let me show you what I mean. I will first play the passage tempo giusto.

(Demonstration of part with tempo giusto.)

Now I will do the same passage with the accelerando.

(Demonstration of part with accelerando.)

As you can see, the latter demonstration creates a more suspensful effect of the inn scene. Barbara Crockett says:

As the characters approach the climactic moments, we are aware even in the transcription there is action, for there are breaks, pauses, and bursts of forward motion...

Let me elaborate on Ms. Crockett's comment by going on to a new passage also from the "Osservate," moving to a new part. After the G-sharp chord in measure 62, there should be an
indication of a long pause, *lunga pausa*, that is, after the chord. The reason is to create the feeling of surprise—in this case, portraying that Amina, not the count, is in the room.

I will do that measure both times, which includes the added note on the fourth beat marking the reprise of the beginning of the “Osservate.” The first part is going to be without the long pause.

(Demonstration without long pause.)

Now I will do the opposite.

(Demonstration with long pause.)

The latter demonstration marks a clearer lead-in to the fragmented reprise of the beginning of the chorus.

(Overhead handout: m. 120 of the *La sonnambula* fantasy.)

Another instance is measure 120,\(^{25}\) just at the conclusion of the “Osservate.” A molto ritardando here is desirable because this precedes the “Tutto è sciolto,” which has a much different character. That is, the “Osservate”...

(Little demonstration of “Osservate”.)

...is mysterious and martial, while the “Tutto è sciolto”...

(Little demonstration of “Tutto è sciolto”.)

...is more sentimental and passionate.

I will first do the part without the *ritardando*. 
Now, I will do the part with the *ritardando*.

The latter demonstration makes a better transition from one section to another section of the opera.

Moreover, in almost the same part, I suggest a *piano* to counteract the *fortissimo* of the previous measures.

That is, doing measure 120 too forte would not be a good transition, and the indication *diminuendo* at the middle of the D-flat major arpeggio runs before measure 120 is only an invocation to lead the pianist to the *piano*. The demonstration is in two parts. With a lead-in in measures 118-119, I will first play the part too forte. This will be the first demonstration.

As you can see, there was no sense in the transition to the new passage of "Tutto è sciolto". Here is the second demo, this time with the *piano* indication.

Measure 121, the beginning of the "Tutto è sciolto", should be 60 beats per minute despite the *Andante* indication. This is because the *con molto sentimento* invokes a suggestion of a
slightly slower tempo than that of the usual Andante.

(Demonstration of "Tutto è sciolto" from La sonnambula.)

Of course, the word Andante means flowing and of course the tempo should move as a result. So I also suggest not to rule out playing it slightly faster as well. So I will do the same part with the slightly faster tempo.

(Demonstration of "Tutto è sciolto" from La sonnambula.)

I will go on to the indication of 'ritenuto il tempo' that happens in measure 138. This is, as you probably see, from the passage "Pasci il guardo". I suggest a substitute, 'meno mosso' for 'ritenuto il tempo', because the former indication may lead the pianist to slow down continuously. Let me demonstrate first what happens if one played this ritenuto in tempo.

(Demonstration of part with ritenuto in tempo.)

Obviously, one would have played it almost calando, meaning slowing down always in tempo. This would drag not only the whole section—but perhaps the whole fantasy as well. Now I will show what should happen with my suggestion of meno mosso in the same passage.

(Demonstration of part with meno mosso.)

In measure 145, the passage should have a molto rit. because this would be a good transition to the right hand embroidery over
the D-minor reprise of the “Pasci il guardo.”

(Demonstration of part with *molto ritardando.*)

Of course, in the same measure, only a slight *ritardando* would be all right also.

(Demonstration of the part with only a slight *ritardando.*)

The descending double notes in a fourteen-note sequence—eight thirty-seconds, and six sextuplets, in measure 150, 29 should have a *poco ritardando* indication to allow for the mood change from D minor to D major in the reprise of the “Pasci il guardo.”

(Demonstration of the part with the ritard.)

Now I will play it in the opposite way.

(Demonstration of the part without the ritard.)

Surely, Liszt himself may have also wanted it without holding back the tempo. But my priority is the change of mood, and I do not want it to happen too fast.

Another instance is measure 155, 30 the recitative-cadenza after the reprise of “Pasci il guardo”. I desired the B natural in the cadenza after the third beat to be more tenuto here because I could imagine an opera singer performing a cadenza at the end of one’s opera aria.

(Demonstration of the cadenza, with the tenuto.)

Without the tenuto, the little cadenza does not seem to go
where it suppose to go.

(Demonstration of the cadenza, without the tenuto.)

I will now move to my variants for the *La sonnambula*. A variant is something modified from the original version of the music, often done to for enhance or reduce the difficulty of the music. Moreover, variants sometimes affect the quality of the music.

(Overhead handout: mm. 70-76 of the *La sonnambula* fantasy.)

The first part I will show you involves the running sixteenth note figuration in the right hand in the “Osservate” passage. The original goes as follows.

(Demonstration of original.)

(Overhead handout: variant of mm. 70-76 of *La sonnambula*.)

The second part involves a demonstration of my variant to the figuration, by simply adding notes to almost every first eighth of the beat in the right hand. The end result is this modification.

(Demonstration of modified passage.)

There is much difference in the texture in the right hand but rather it is easier for the pianist.

(Overhead handout: m. 153 of the *La sonnambula* fantasy.)

I will next show you the variants from the passage of "Pasci
il guardo” in m. 153. The demonstration will be in three parts.
The original version is as follows.

(Demonstration of the original version.)

As you can see, the separated major seconds...

(Small demonstration of the major seconds)

...are the focus in the cadenza of the right hand.

But I wish for something Franz Liszt would replace in the original—the chromatic double thirds.

(Overhead handout: First variant in La sonnambula.)

The result is my first variant.

(Demonstration of first variant.)

For most pianists, descending double thirds would be easier than those ascending.

(Overhead handout; variant of m. 153 in La sonnambula.)

The second variant eliminates the need for the separation of the major seconds in the original passage but makes a more facile arrangement of the separated major seconds—replacing them into an outline of four series of minor thirds in the inner line of the cadenza figuration. All of these are shown in circles.

(Demonstration of second variant.)

As you can see, the first part of the cadenza is like the previous demonstration, and the outlined figurations of four
chromatic major seconds give a better finish to the cadenza like in the original, since both are faster than the demonstration involving the double thirds.

(Overhead handout: mm. 209-210 of the La sonnambula fantasy.)

Let us go on to the episode where the left hand has the reprise of "Ah! non giunge" and the right has triplet figuration. The triplet passage you see here, in the key center of G major, had no ossias.

(Overhead handout: mm. 209-210 of La sonnambula fantasy.)

Obviously, the passage is very difficult, so I am now showing you a modification with my own ossia.

(Overhead handout: variant of mm. 209-210 of La sonnambula.)

Notice that I have taken out the second inner notes of the triplet groupings in the right hand.

(Overhead handout: variant of mm. 209-210 of La sonnambula.)

Only a slight difference here, yet it is easier.

(Overhead handout: mm. 295-300 of the La sonnambula fantasy.)

Going on to measure 295, which is the conclusion of the "Ah, non giunge," I modified the octave passages in the bass in the four measures. But I will play the original version first.

(Overhead handout: mm. 295-297 of La sonnambula fantasy.)
The octaves in this case have too many leaps.

Now my modified passage, where I made the octaves more chordally audible and a little bit facile, with a slightly modified left-hand ending.

(Demonstration of modified passage)

This was the last of the suggestions I would discuss for the La sonnambula. For this performance I will perform with the variants that I recommended and the suggestions that I had proposed. I will now perform the Grand Concert Fantasy on "La Sonnambula".

(Performance of La sonnambula).

***

(Overhead handout: Plot of Norma.)

As we go to Franz Liszt's Reminiscences of Norma, let me give you the background of the story of the opera.

To summarize the plot, Norma tells of the Druid priestess who seemed to be ruler of the Gauls in the Gallic hills. At the time the opera's story took place, she already had two children. Breaking her strict vow of chastity, she fraternizes with the Roman proconsul, Pollione, at a time when the Romans were about to mobilize an attack against the Gauls. At that point, Norma realizes that only she herself broke the chastity covenant,
and decides to give her life in the pyre. Pollione, moved by Norma’s fate, decides that he should also go with her to die in the pyre, after Norma tells Oroveso, her father, to take care of the children. Now that I revealed the plot, I want to give you themes Liszt uses in the Norma fantasy. It basically breaks down the main features of the work.

(Overhead handout: Themes from Liszt’s Norma fantasy.)

These musical examples you see here are what Liszt borrows in his Reminiscences of Norma.

As you can see, Franz Liszt does not focus the work on the whole opera, but specifies the beginning scenes of Act I and the final scenes of Act II as his choice of themes. Three themes are borrowed from the first act, and another four themes are borrowed from the latter. Now let me give you a little more detail on the where the arias come from and their basic outcomes.

“Dell’ aura tua profetica” is heard in the opening of Act 1, Scene 1, in the opening measures. After the voices of the chorus stop, there is a musical passage that almost resembles Liszt’s Reminiscences of Norma. The scene here takes place at the sacred house of the Druids. This is where Norma prays to the Druid followers, numbering several.

(Little demonstration: “Dell’aura tua profetica” from Norma.)

In the second part of Act 1, the passage in E-flat minor/E-
flat major resembles the G minor opening measures of Liszt’s *Norma*, just before the Priestesses and the Warriors sing the chorus “Norma viene: le cinge la chioma.” As the chorus finishes the notes in the E-flat major passage, Norma appears as the first theme in Liszt’s Reminiscences, in the rhythm , and is heard again, just before Norma starts her first recitative—a very long recitative—before the great F major aria, “Casta diva,” comes in, which Liszt omits in his Reminiscences fantasy.

(Little demonstration: “Norma viene” from *Norma* fantasy.)

In Act 2, Scene 2, where the scene is the Open Court at the entrance of the Irminsul temple, as the Gauls assemble to demand anti-Roman revenge, the song “Guerra, Guerra!” takes shape. Liszt in the Reminiscences puts this fast, militant, and quasi-Verdian march a tritone higher than the original Bellini key of A minor—E-flat minor.

(Little demonstration: “Guerra! Guerra!” from *Norma* fantasy.)

“Qual cor tradisti” in the Bellini score does not sound like a march like Liszt does in his Reminiscences, but Bellini does this in a gentle 4/4 rhythm in G major in this duet. The aria depicts Norma’s recognition of her betrayal with Pollione. Liszt uses the key of B major for this passage instead of the original
G major.

(Little demonstration: "Qual cor tradisti" from Norma fantasy.)

In "Deh! non volerli vittime" Norma pleads for the last time to Oroveso to take care of her children on her way to perdition. Bellini starts this part in E minor, but Liszt starts this a perfect-fourth lower—in B minor, but with almost the same plaintive effect as in the Bellini original.

(Little demo: "Deh!" from Norma fantasy.)

In the final duet of the final scene of Act 2, "Padre, tu piangi?," coming before Norma and Pollione go to their deaths in fire to cleanse their sins, Bellini brings the key up one semitone higher—E major—and in a faster 4/4 tempo. However, Liszt treats it in greater grandeur, making it in E-flat major, interspersing the melody with grand up-and-down scales and arpeggios, and in the indication, Meno allegro. Liszt then repeats the quasi-Wagnerian musicality of the "Padre" by adding the "Dell' aura tua profetica" on top of that "Padre," which comes near the final measures of Reminiscences. It seems like the last two arias in Liszt’s Norma fantasy focuses on Norma’s destiny of dying willingly to sanctify herself rather than live with the tradicious ordeal of disobeying her mandate of celibacy.

(Little demo: "Padre, tu piangi?" from Norma fantasy.)
Okay, I will focus on the performance suggestions for the Norma fantasy.

(Overhead handout: m. 25 of Norma fantasy.)

In measure 25, just after Franz Liszt introduces the first theme, "Norma viene", do not hold the pedal down on the grace note B. It is best to wait after the note before holding down the pedal on the Neapolitan-chord tremolo. This is because the B is not part of the Neapolitan sixth chord, consisting of C, E-flat, and A-flat, so the B is the nonharmonic tone. I will first do the demonstration with no pedal on the B grace note.

(Demonstration of part with no pedal on B grace note.)

Obviously, I can guess that Liszt would have wanted the pedal down on the B for dramatic purposes. I guess this measure depicts Norma’s first confrontation with Pollione, although it is made of original material.

(Demonstration of part without pedal.)

(Overhead handout: mm. 40-46 of the Norma fantasy.)

And in measure 40-46, the repeat of the "Ite sul colle," should be done little bit louder, since this marks the repeat of the opening scene’s motive. Why? I am trying to picture the Gallic hills, where the congregation comes to await Norma’s calling and the congregation increases. For this
Another reason is that the melody is in a higher register. I will now do the same passage in the same dynamic level.

(Demonstration of part.)

As you can hear, the second demonstration does not tell where the melody in the chorus is going.

(Overhead handout: m. 48 of Norma fantasy.)

In measure 48, slow down, emphasizing the e: viio7-i progression only a little bit.

(Demonstration of part with slow down.)

Now I will do the same part without the slowing down. Notice that I believe that doing it giusto—that means in strict time—would be too mechanical.

(Demonstration of part without slow down.)

This is because almost all of Liszt’s cadenzas have a beginning (the slow start), a middle (the acceleration in speed), and an end (the slow down at the end of the cadenza).

(Overhead handout: mm. 22-28 of Liebestraum no. 3.)

I can demonstrate one cadenza in the Liszt’s Liebestraum no. 3 that shows this.
(Demonstration of *cadenza* in *Liebestraum* no. 3.)

Obviously you can see where the rises and falls of that *cadenza* were, and where the *cadenza* is going to.

(Overhead handout: m. 70 of *Norma* fantasy.)

In measure 70, there should be a slight rubato on the second beat of the measure on the right hand quintuplet of double thirds.

(Overhead handout: mm. 154-160 of *Norma* fantasy.)

In measures 154-160, where the reprise of the "*Norma viene*" takes place, there should be a *tempo giusto*--*Allegro* on the area of notes in the bass clef. In other words, lively, yet strict. However, in the area of notes in the treble, slow down the tempo to initiate the dramatic recitative.

(Overhead handout: mm. 154-160 of *Norma* fantasy.)

The reason is recitatives are often used to let the singer sing without the lessening of freedom of tempo that comes with an *aria*. Now let me do the part again, this time without the slow down for the right hand in the upper register.

You can see that the second demonstration is less dramatic because there was no tension between shadings of tempo.
In measure 175, in "Deh!, non volerli vittime," slow down on beats 1-2 of measure 175 to make a real portamento effect of the short fioritura involving the notes F#-G-B-A, and resume tempo on beat 3 (on the G). Also, this four-note fioritura should decrescendo on the last G. At this point, Norma knows that she is sad in her heart as she will put herself to death. The fioritura expresses this most of all than the rest of the passage.

Without this rubato, which I will play for you, the effect of playing colla la voce—or, with the voice—does not seem to be clear. One can picture the passage where the lower parts imitate the orchestra and the upper line represents the singer’s melody. Pretend that you are a conductor and you are trying to follow Norma’s voice.

The result is that the singer would rush on the fioritura and would not get all of the notes the conductor would hear.

In measures 184-187, just at the end of "Deh! non volerli vittime," make a gradual crescendo and emphasize all of the G’s in the right hand in measure m. 187, since this marks the summation of the aria; that is, the end of the aria.
becomes more and more passionate. I will demonstrate this two ways: one without the crescendo and emphasis on the G’s in m. 187, and the other in the opposite way.

(Demonstration of part without the crescendo and emphasis.)

(Demonstration of part with the crescendo and emphasis.)

You see then that the latter demonstration represents the effect of the Romantic era since Norma was written in the Romantic period. The latter demonstration also shows a more expressive effect as it leads to the "Qual cor tradisti".

(Overhead handout: mm. 239-248 of the Norma fantasy.)

In measure 239,43 you can see that the theme of "Guerra! Guerra!" is brought out from a motive of two notes, interspersed by chromatic scales. Here, this tempestuoso passage should start around 72 beats per minute to the quarter note, and begin accelerating gradually, and in measure 243, hold the pedal down and crescendo even more until measure 245. At 245, hold back in sound to meno f briefly and hold pedal down with a quick crescendo until measure 248. Finally, hold back the tempo on measure 248 a little bit to allow a transition to the full version of "Guerra! Guerra!"

(Demonstration of the entire section.)

I will now demonstrate what would happen without any...
several degrees of crescendo—just one big crescendo at the beginning of the tempestuoso section until the "Guerra!, Guerra!". Seems effective enough, but it does not work as well as several shadings of crescendo in the previous demonstration. (Overhead handout: variant of mm. 265-268 of the Norma fantasy.)

Let me go on to my variants for the Norma fantasy.

We move to the passage from the full version of "Guerra! Guerra!" itself.

At measures 265-268, Liszt did not do an facilitation of the tenths in the left hand, so I decided to change them in a way as if one were Liszt. I added the ossia pattern, eliminating the tenths and replacing them with octaves. This would be good for pianists with small hands. Let me show you the original passage. (Demonstration of the original passage.)

Did you hear the tenths in the left hand? It is difficult. Now, I will play the same passage with my modified ossia. (Demonstration of the modified passage.)

The result is that I keep the tempo more giusto with my ossia, maintaining the martial character of the war chorus. (Overhead handout: mm. 298-312 of the Norma fantasy).

At measure 298, where the second variation of the "Guerra!
Guerra!" took place, I composed another ossia which would have been done by Liszt. Instead of the original cross-over displacement, I used a leaping displacement ossia that would be slightly easier, attempting to follow the displacing thirds in the original pattern and modifying the accompaniment. I will now play the original passage from measure 299-314.

(Demonstration of original passage.)

The original is effective in its ostentatious virtuosity but the displacements are still very difficult to do.

Now I will play the modified version as you see here.

(Demonstration of modified passage (Charles' ossia)).

Some piano teachers would go against that pattern for it would be contrary to Liszt's ideas. But this modified version, nevertheless, represents a sort of octave displacement—a Lisztian technique often used in some of his Hungarian Rhapsodies.

(Overhead handout: mm. 345-353 of La sonnambula.)

Next, we go to measures 345-353. In this multithematic aria passage—"Padre, tu piangi?" in the right hand, and the "Dell'aura tua profetica" in the left hand, give priority to the right hand melody. The stredda indication should be in a style almost similar to a doppio movimento—or a tempo twice as fast, and it should be about 120 beats per minute.
Now, I will do the same passage without the intended doppio movimento effect.

You can see clearly why the faster tempo would lead the audience to expect that this fantasy is reaching its denouement, since Liszt's uses both themes together marking a new way for the usual outcome of the original opera.

Now I will go on to two of my variants in the Liszt's Norma fantasy, where Liszt does not use the ossias. One of them occurs in measures 109-111, on the section of "Dell'aura tua profetica." Both of these are side-by-side so you can see the difference. I am talking about the chordal triplet figure in the right hand. I will first play the original version.

Now I will do my variant. Notice the different pattern I made in the triads.

The result is that you still have the same three-note figures but it is in a più facile arrangement.

Another of my variants happens in measures 135-136, in the passage marking the continuation of "Dell'aura". Like the
former passage already discussed, this latter passage has only a slight difference in the arrangement of the two-note groupings. So both of these passages—Liszt’s and my variant—are also juxtaposed. I will first play the original version.

(Demonstration of part.)

As you can see, Liszt deviates from using the outlining of octaves in the two-note groupings that precede measures 135-136 by using tenths in measures 137-138. I want to keep the outlining of the octave intact, hence, here is my version with slight differences of notes.

(Demonstration of part.)

To reinforce the idea, I will perform the pattern not only on measures 135 to 136, but also the two measures preceding it.

(Demonstration of part.)

That concludes the lecture; later on, I will perform the Reminiscences of Norma. For this performance I will perform with the variants that I recommended and the suggestions that I had proposed. I hope that this lecture helped you to take advantage of the ideas and thoughts of piano interpretation within Franz Liszt and the Romantic era. In the next lecture, we will focus on the performance suggestions on two more of Liszt’s operatic arrangements. They are Reminiscences of
Don Juan and Reminiscences of Robert le Diable. Thank you.

(Performance of Norma fantasy.)
ENDNOTES


Cross-references:

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For research of the variation arrangements of Mozart’s “Là ci darem la mano” from Mozart’s Don Giovanni, also see:


For research into the original score of Mozart’s Don Giovanni, also see:

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27. Franz Liszt. *Grand Concert Fantasy on La sonnambula.* Ibid.: 136
Hello, everyone.

This second lecture-recital continues with two more of the famous operatic arrangements composed by Liszt during the important years of the Glanzperiod—perhaps 1839-1841. Previously, we looked into his two operatic arrangements of La sonnambula and Norma. These were considered together in the first lecture not only because they were both operas by Bellini, but also because they were the most-often performed Bellini arrangements in his day, except perhaps for Liszt’s famous collaboration with five other composers in the arrangement of Bellini’s “Suoni la tromba” from I Puritani, in a work called Hexameron.

Now we continue with the next two arrangements—Reminiscences of Don Juan and the Robert le Diable—Valse Infernale, often called Reminiscences of Robert le Diable. We will consider them together in this lecture-recital because, although the operas were composed in different periods, both operas focus on the macabre—part of the reason for this is Liszt’s adoration of Dante’s Inferno and Goethe’s Faust.
Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* was written in 1787, with the libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte. Other opera composers and librettists composed versions of *Don Giovanni* at that time, including Giuseppe Gazzaniga and Giovanni Bertati, yet the Mozart/Da Ponte version is the only one still popular in the modern operatic repertoire. Also, several poets and novelists, such as Lord Byron, Molière, Tirso da Molina, and even Bernard Shaw, wrote their own versions of *Don Juan*.

*Don Giovanni* is the story of the famous Spanish libertine who does not care about right and wrong and swears not to do so even during his confrontation with the stone guest. The guest eventually leads the Don to damnation when he fails to heed his admonitions of penitence.

To begin the Don Juan, I would like to give you handouts containing the themes Liszt borrows from the Don Juan. Generally Liszt borrows three major scenes in the opera. One is the confrontation with the stone guest in Act II.

(Little demonstration: “Di rider finirai” from *Don Juan.*)

The other is the Don’s fraternization with Masetto’s wife, Zerlina, in the well-known *duettino* of Act I...

(Little demonstration: “Là ci darem la mano” from *Don Juan.*)

...and the Don’s drinking song of Act I.
Actually, there are seven themes listed. Five deal with the Don's confrontation with the stone guest, not ruling out the section of the Act I overture...

...which is the foreboding theme that recurs later in Act II as the Don heads toward his downfall. The other two themes, however, have separate purposes in character and mood in the opera. One is the introduction to "Don Giovanni, in cenar teco" in Act II, which is the reprise of the opening notes of the overture. This is where the stone guest bursts into the Don's banquet in Act II and starts avenging the Don.

The other theme, also from Act II, is "Tu m'invitasti a cena," which is a continuation of "Don Giovanni in cenar teco." At this point, the stone guest beckons the Don to meet with him face-to-face, as the guest's thirst for revenge becomes more and more pronounced.

Liszt focuses on three sections of the opera in the fantasy. He starts with the "Di rider finirai," and then to "Là ci darem la
mano," and then to the "Finch'han dal vino"—also known as the Champagne aria, using the additional sections—the Act I overture and the Don’s descent to hell in the Act III banquet scene—as fillers or transitions between the three major sections. The latter section—which depicts the Don’s descent to hell itself—is an additional theme which will be discussed as one of the variants in the fantasy.

Now I would like to go on to some of the suggestions in interpretation which I wanted in the Don Juan fantasy.

(Overhead handout: Measures 65-66 of Don Juan fantasy.)

In measures 65-66, in the transition to the "Là ci darem la mano," the chromatic chord changes in the sextuplet passage suggests a cadenza-like feel, so I recommend an accelerando on the second beat of measure 65 to about the second beat of measure 66 on the ii6 of A major. I will first play the part without the accelerando.

(Demonstration of part.)

Now I will do the same part with the accelerando. I would call this technique tempo shaping. Just as you shape a musical phrase dynamically, you can shape it by modifying the tempo.

(Demonstration of part.)

The second demonstration is better because the
accelerando enhances the tension created by the very quick changes in chords, and the release of tension from it comes from the ii6 chord in measure 66.

(Overhead handout: Measures 224-226 of Don Juan fantasy.)

At the a piacere indication in Variation I of “Là ci darem la mano,” on measures 224 to 226, my opinion is that the cadenza should be played almost in the style of André Watts.

André Watts was known in the classical piano world as one of the pianists who almost specialized in Liszt and, like Vladimir Horowitz, wanted to experiment in classical piano improvisation and take some calculated risks that sometimes took away from piano technique in place of pianistic showmanship.

(Overhead handout: mm. 80-87 of La campanella.)

Remember when Watts made the trill on D#-E very long in the middle part of Franz Liszt’s La campanella? This came from a 1998 recording of the collection called Great Pianists of the Twentieth Century.6

(Demonstration of excerpt.)

The F#-E trill figuration in the Don Juan, like the former piece, should be extended to about 1-2 measures and then slow down to a little slower than Allegretto tempo which already
appeared in the pastorale of the theme to “Là ci darem.”

I will first play the passage exactly as the score indicates.

(Demonstration of excerpt.)

I can speculate that Liszt adored trills and wanted them to continue for extra measures. Normally, in some of the Liszt piano pieces, cadenzas extend for extra beats at their endings, so why not do the same thing for the trills? I will now play the same passage with the extra measures for the F♯-E trill.

(Demonstration of excerpt.)

The extended trill seems to show one of those techniques of musical suspense characteristic of the Romantic period.

In measures 298, 300, and 302, near the transition to the Champagne aria, I suggest that even with the indicated rinforzando, it would be better to start piano on the second beat and crescendo to the rinforzando on the sixth beat.

(Demonstration of excerpt.)

Alfred Cortot describes this passage saying, in the following words: “It is in this fatal rhythm, announced by the imperious sonorities of the trombones, that the statue of the Commandant, descending from his [grave], advances, in the scenic version, to heavy and solemn steps towards the sacrilegious
impostor, vowing to him eternal damnation.\textsuperscript{8}

This passage gives an example of Liszt’s effective use of the damper pedal.

In measures 441-448 in the Champagne aria,\textsuperscript{9} I suggest a slight pause between the wide leaps on the second eighths of the first beat and the quarter notes of the second beat. But a more risky, yet better idea is to go to those leaps without delay, only stopping in a very slight Luftpause after the four two-bar phrases. The first demonstration is with the Luftpause.

(Demonstration of passage.)

The second part virtually eliminates the Luftpause by an attempt to keep the passage in tempo, quasi giusto, or, as if it is almost in strict time.

(Demonstration of passage.)

(Overhead handout: mm. 486-497 of Don Juan fantasy.)

Also in the Champagne aria, on measures 486-499,\textsuperscript{10} where the a capriccio indication is present, I suggest the tempo first be held back as if stentato and making a large accelerando reaching its peak on measures 496-497.

I thought of this holding back and accelerating creates tension; the rising diminished chords resolving to their tonic keys in chromatic fashion need some musical shading in
tempo. I will first play the passage without the suggestions, as if it was mainly in tempo.

(Demonstration of excerpt without suggestions.)

Now I will demonstrate the same part with the suggestions I am talking about.

(Demonstration of excerpt.)

You can hear that in the second demonstration, all of this tension leads up to the E flats on m. 497. The reason for the a capriccio was that Alfred Cortot said that Liszt did not use any tempo settings like Beethoven does.11 Also, Charles Suttoni notes this passage represents an example of Liszt use of the sequential progression in harmony as a transcription technique.12

Now I will go on to discuss my proposed variants for the Don Juan fantasy. Most of them focus on the transition to the Champagne aria, and one of them focuses on the second variation of "Là ci darem la mano." A variant is something modified from the original version of the music, often done to enhance or reduce the difficulty of the music. Moreover, variants sometimes affect the quality of the music.

(Overhead handout: mm. 204-209 of Don Juan fantasy.)

The passage here focuses on Liszt’s adoration of the virtuoso violinist, Niccolò Paganini, with plenty of leaps
in both the double notes and single notes. This will be done slowly.

(Demonstration of the original passage.)

This is very difficult indeed.

(Overhead handout: mm. 204-209 of Don Juan fantasy; variant.)

In my variant I have taken out some of the leaps but at the end I have used the leaps in the left hand in the double octaves. The arpeggi in the left hand in tenths in the original have been replaced with full-octave chords in the beginning of the passage.

(Demonstration of the variant.)

The result is that my variant is a little bit fuller in sound in addition to being easier.

(Overhead handout; mm. 323-328 of Don Juan fantasy.)

Before I discuss the next variant, I want to play the original version of measures 323-328, which is marked by Liszt's technique of the false octave, which is an attempt to make one octave sound like double octaves or triple octaves by use of alternating hands.

(Demonstration of the original.)

However, the changing chromaticism makes the false octave pattern here difficult.

(Overhead handout: mm. 323-328 of Don Juan fantasy; variant.)
The first variant focuses on the transition to the Champagne aria. It recounts the scene where the Don is sent to a fatal damnation by the guest, which is marked in Liszt’s and Mozart’s versions, by the running scales. Notice that I used the regular chromatic scales in both hands in place of Liszt’s false octaves. I believe that this creates a more laid-out effect of Don’s damnation, which would almost resemble that of Liszt’s arrangement of Robert le Diable.

(Demonstration of the variant.)

(Second handout of mm. 323-328 of the Don Juan fantasy.)

The next variant I did keeps the previous variant in place in the number of notes but uses different dynamic shaping. Hence, you see a series of sforzando-piano indications as well as crescendo signs. With this variant, I believe that the full chords are highly important and need to be emphasized; the crescendos would be done in spurts to react to the sforzando-piano indications.

(Demonstration of the next variant.)

(Third handout of mm. 323-328 of the Don Juan fantasy.)

Without the sforzando-piano indications, I could also make the full chords in the same passage important by borrowing a compositional technique Liszt loved—putting important notes in
regular size and the lesser ones in cue notes. The result for this variant is almost the same as in the variant with the \textit{sforzando-piano} indications.

(Demonstration of the next variant.)

Now I will perform the Don Juan fantasy. For this performance I will perform with the variants that I recommended and the suggestions that I proposed.

(Performance of \textit{Don Juan} fantasy)

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Meyerbeer's \textit{Robert le Diable} is an example of French grand opera in the Romantic era.\textsuperscript{17} It is a fantastic story of love, treachery, deception, and devil worship, with a plot so complex that it would be impossible to summarize it in just a few words.

Let me attempt to explain the plot of Liszt's version of \textit{Robert le Diable}. About the fourteenth century in Sicily, Robert, a knight, encounters another knight, Bertram, who wants to befriend him. Bertram's real objective is to sell Robert's soul to the devil. Bertram's deceit becomes obvious when he beckons Robert to gamble during a game of cards, and Bertram wins the bets every time. Once Bertram sees that Robert has lost his money, he tells him that at the statue of St. Rosalie, near a cloister, is the talisman, an evergreen branch. Breaking off the branch would
give Robert magical powers; including gaining money and armor for the tournament. He does not tell Robert that breaking the branch will condemn him.

The knights' tournament approaches, and only one of them can win the hand of the Sicilian princess, Queen Isabella. Liszt uses Meyerbeer's tournament march, the chorus called "Sonnez, clairons."

(Little demonstration of the tournament theme.)

Now Bertram enters a devilish pit containing invisible demons and fire. There he beckons the spirits to condemn Robert so that he, Bertram, can win the hand of Queen Isabella. Meyerbeer set this to the cavern chorus, "O, demons." Its introduction features the F sharps in the horns, where Liszt starts off the Reminiscences of Robert le Diable.

(Demonstration of the first part of the cavern chorus.)

In the cavern chorus at "O, mon fils," Bertram tells the demons that he alone will adore Robert with all of his heart--this in the act of treachery.

(Little demonstration of the "O, mon fils" theme.)

The next plot involves a cloister scene, featuring nuns from the after-life. Bertram motions the nuns to deceive Robert in three seductions, including the séduction de jeu, or play of
seduction, whose object is to get him to break off the branch. The theme is as follows.

(Little demonstration of the séduction de jeu).

The nuns tempt Robert through dream hallucinations of inebriation, gambling, and love. He is beckoned to pull off the branch, but his inner instinct repulses Robert from the branch. This 'morbid dread' is what I call 'Robert’s fear motive'. The theme of this is as follows.

(Little demonstration of the Robert fear motive.)

Liszt’s Reminiscences cover only these acts, II and III. In Acts IV and V, however, Robert, with the help of the nun Helena, finally breaks off the talisman and manages to escape the demons and monsters. His ultimate test of survival to win Isabella’s hand has begun. He eventually meets her; the encounter turns nice and then very ugly. But, as Bertram sinks to hell at the end of the opera, Robert finally marries Isabella.

As you might guess, all this action would better fit two different operatic arrangements. So Liszt wisely confined himself to Acts II and III. Charles Rosen notes that most of Liszt’s operatic arrangements are more an evocation than invocation when it comes to depicting the story of the opera. He says further that especially in the Robert le Diable
arrangement, the opera paraphrase of Liszt seems to focus its novelties by use of extensions, modulations, and thematic recurrences.\textsuperscript{18}

I shall go on to discuss my suggestions for performance in Liszt’s \textit{Reminiscences of Robert le Diable}.

The first section, in measures 1-16, is an introduction to the cavern chorus.\textsuperscript{19}

(Overhead handout: mm. 1-16 of \textit{Robert le Diable}).

I suggest using the damper pedal especially in measures 5-8 and measures 9-12 because this will bring out the crescendos quite well. The pedal can be held throughout measures 5-8 and 9-12 since these measures remain in the same harmony. The non-harmonic flourishes in the left hand can still be played under the pedal, to create a mysterious musical effect. Lina Ramann, a journalist, had said in an article from the 1837 issue of the \textit{Revue et gazette musicale}, that the piano’s great ability to imitate the excitement of a symphony concert in one instrument is virtually unmatched.\textsuperscript{20}

(Demonstration of part.)

Now let me play the same measure without the pedal but with the crescendo. Notice that the crescendo in this case is a little less pronounced, since the pedal generally enriches the sound.\textsuperscript{21}
The next section I want to discuss is still in the introduction of the piece, where the first strains of the cavern chorus are heard.

(Overhead handout: mm. 21-36 of Robert le Diable.)

In measures 21-36, the agitato indication demands an accelerando, because this produce a more dramatic punch to measures 33-36 and brings the curtain up on the scary aspects of Robert le Diable.

(Demonstration of part.)

Now I will play the same section without the accelerando. Notice that without the accelerando, the effect of the passage is less impetuous.

(Demonstration of part.)

Although almost equally effective, the lack of acceleration does not lead as strongly to the four chords on measures 33 to 36.

(Overhead handout: mm. 496-499 of Robert le Diable.)

Now I want to discuss measure 496 to 499. The passage here depicts two themes: Robert’s fear motive, delineated by two full chords spread apart, and a very fast reprise of a fragment from the “O demons”.

This false octave passage near the end of the fantasy, as
in a 1998 recording by Leslie Howard in the collection called *Liszt at the Opera*, was played like this.

(Demonstration of the part.)

He played it with pedal, as you may have heard, making the Robert’s fear motive....

(Little demonstration of fear motive.)

....have more priority than the other one. I disagree with this pedaling because I believe more separation is needed between the two themes.

(Demonstration of the part without pedal.)

You can see the significant effect of silence to create the suspense in this part of the Act III ballet.

(Overhead handout: mm. 85-94 of Robert le Diable.)

I now want to discuss the passage from measure 85 to measure 94. The triplet passages in the bass line depict the rising and the falling of flames in the inferno as depicted in the Act III chorus. I call them “inferno triplets.”

You can also see that there is a *sotto voce* indication in the beginning of the passage. This might mean the whole passage should be played softly....But I have a different opinion.

The way the accents are placed in Liszt’s version of Bertram’s response in the cavern chorus shows that it cannot be
sotto voce all the way. To imitate the rise and fall of the cavern flames, there should be some dynamic shaping. I will first demonstrate the passage without any shading.

(Demonstration of part.)

Virtually no suspense, as you may have heard. Now I will do the same thing with shaping.

(Demonstration of part with shading.)

In addition, you noticed that I played the passage with lots of pedal. This helps to enhance the depiction of the inferno even further. Some musicians will think that the pedal should be used less to bring out the clarity of the triplets. But I believe that if the whole passage is played with less pedal, it will sound a little too mechanical--more like an exercise than a dramatic depiction of this opera. I will do this part without pedal and see for yourself:

(Demonstration of part.)

In general in this case, I chose for more pedal than less. Surely, Liszt focused often on piano technique but in my opinion he put greater priority on pianistic dramaticism than on technique alone. Part of this dramaticism is the innovative use of pedal.

(Overhead handout of mm. 338-355 of Robert le Diable.)
Now let me take you to measure 338,28 in the passage marked _sempre piú agitato_. I think the _sempre piú agitato_ indication is rather misleading. Perhaps Liszt intends to create the illusion of the 'unending accelerando,'29 but it is hard to accelerate in this tempestuous passage, since it already starts in an _agitato_ tempo. A pianist who thinks in literal terms would play the passage, starting from 338 to 355, this way.

(Demonstration of part.)

I believe, the solution in this case is to not think of the 'unending accelerando' but simply play the passage in a tempo faster than that of the _doppio movimento_ without accelerating.

(Demonstration of part.)

Charles Suttoni states that this passage presents an example of "simple extension by passage work and figuration."29 In other words, this middle part of the _séduction de jeu_ is an extension of the previously light-hearted ballet waltz, but now featuring what I call "alternating textural passagework" in a tempestuous play of displacement in range.

In the few measures after the climax of the passage, at measure 322,30 I suggest a very big _ritardando_ for the change of mood to the reprise of the _séduction de jeu_ in B major. To explain this, I will go back to measure 319 and play to
measure 323. I will first play the passage without the big ritard, as follows...

(Demonstration of part.)

Of course, you want to keep the waltz going in tempo, but sometimes you need a slackening of tempo in one area to make a big difference in dramaticism.

(Demonstration of part with the big ritard.)

Now let's go to measures 493-509. Here, there should be more priority on the right hand's top melody and the sixteenth triplets in the left hand. The middle part, the "Gloire au maitre" theme, would be clearer if the pedal is not used in the passage.

(Demonstration of part without pedal.)

Of course, there is a trade-off. You lose the dramaticism of the reprise of the inferno triplets heard earlier. I will demonstrate the same passage with the pedal.

(Demonstration of part with the pedal.)

There is no single solution for pedaling in this passage. Yet a possible approach is to compromise; put some pedal but not too much. That is, use one pedal in one measure, and in the following measures, don't use it.

(Demonstration of part with less pedal.)

Let me discuss the final bars of the fantasy, in the
Prestissimo section starting on m. 600. The rising chromatic scale at the B pedal point can be thought of as a depiction of a big rise in flames in the inferno. I will play do that passage without pedal.

(Demonstration of part.)

Too mechanical, isn’t it. I suggest measures 600 to 601 be held down in one pedal to better show this inferno effect.

(Demonstration of part.)

It is almost as if Don Giovanni is enveloped in fire, if he were to be the main character in Robert le Diable.

Let me now discuss my several variants of the Robert le Diable arrangement.

(Overhead handout: mm. 195-211 of Robert le Diable; variant.)

My first variant is to the passage in measures 195-211. Going to the original version of it...

(Overhead handout: mm. 195-211 of Robert le Diable.)

Liszt focused more on displaced octaves than on added notes. The displaced octaves are virtuosic and difficult to play. This will be done slowly due to the great displacement of the octaves. I will play the original passage first.

(Demonstration of passage.)

The variant I set up in the same passage pacifies the
difficulty of the displacements by eliminating some of the
cross-overs in the octaves.

(Demonstration of variant.)

My second variant deals with the Séduction de jeu, which made up the Act III ballet.

(Overhead handout: mm. 311-338 of Robert le Diable.)

This is in measures 311-338. Liszt’s version goes like this.

(Demonstration of original.)

The leaping double octaves tend to be difficult. Perhaps Liszt wanted the leaping octaves because it makes the pianist’s right hand seem like it was part of the Act III ballet. But I made an easier variant here.

(Overhead handout: mm. 368-376 of Robert le Diable.)

Although the leaping double octaves are taken out, the regular octaves still remain.

(Demonstration of variant.)

I have proposed two variants to the continuation of the séduction de jeu of Act III, in measures 368-376.

(Overhead handout: mm. 368-376 of Robert le Diable)

The original version is as follows.

(Demonstration of the original version.)
With my first variant on the passage, I focus more on the structure of the G#-B-D-F diminished chord and less on facilitation. This represents the climax of the whole transcription and I wanted a more reinforced sound in the right hand by adding one note—and modifying the notes in the last four measures to outline four series of minor thirds.

(Demonstration of the first variant.)

My second variant to this passage, however, focused more on facilitation and greater use of the minor-third/major sixth pattern in the right hand. The left hand in the whole section has the octaves omitted but follows the original Liszt pattern of diminished chords.

(Demonstration of the second variant.)

My final variant is on the conclusion of the séduction de jeu in measures 388 to 408. Here, the main theme is played by the left hand and, concurrently, the right hand plays the reprise of “O, mon fils,” in measures 388-408.36

(Overhead handout: mm. 388-408 of Robert le Diable).

Liszt’s version goes like this.

(Demonstration of original passage.)

There is a lot of activity in the left hand, so I will discuss only the left-hand part.
In Liszt's original, the left hand here is similar to the right hand in the previous section with the leaping octaves.

(Demonstration of original.)

My variant, like the one mentioned earlier, omits the double octave and replaces it with the single octave.

(Demonstration of variant.)

This brings me to the conclusion of this lecture. Let me restate that these opera arrangements were very famous during the height of the Parisian salon recitals—from 1830 to 1845. Charles Suttoni, a music scholar, said this: "The nineteenth century was truly the heyday of the piano. The question remains, however, as to what effect the popularity of the instrument had upon the music written for it. The high quality of Liszt's opera fantasies—both in a musical and a dramatic sense—makes me wonder why they are not as famous today as they used to be. I will now perform the Reminiscences of Robert le Diable. For this performance I will perform with the variants that I recommended and the suggestions that I had proposed."
ENDNOTES


10. Franz Liszt. Ibid: 38


Cross-references:


27. Franz Liszt. Ibid.: 53


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------------------------Queen of Prussia’s Waltz with Variations for the Pianoforte. Boston: G.P. Fred, 1810?.

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Note: Marston’s entry (*Schumann: Fantaisie, op. 17*) and Hinson’s entry (*Guide to the Pianist’s Repertoire*) are cross-references.


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Note: Rabel’s entry appears in a collection of a transcript taken from a symposium.


APPENDIX: MUSICAL EXCERPTS AND EXAMPLES
APPENDIX: MUSICAL EXCERPTS AND EXAMPLES

Main Themes Liszt Uses in His 'La sonnambula' Fantasy

1. "Osservate"—Act I (excerpt of first section of chorus)

2. "Osservate"—Act I (excerpt of second section of chorus)

3. "Tutto è sciolto"—Act II (Pardoning aria of lament, sung by Elvino)

4. "Pasci il guardo e appaga l'alma"—Act II (Continuation of "Tutto è sciolto", sung by Elvino)

5. "Ah, non giunge"—Act II finale (sung by Amina)

6. "Ah, perché non possa odiarti"—Act II (sung by Amina)

7. "Voglia il cielo"—Act I Ensemble (sung by Amina)
"Osservate" (mm. 55-62)
"Osservate" and "Tutto è sciolto" (mm. 117-124)

Andante con molto sentimento

il canto fed espress. assai
"Pasci il guardo" (mm. 138-142)
"Pasci il guardo" (mm. 145-146)
"Pasci il guardo" (mm. 150-153)
"Pasci il guardo" (m. 155)
"Osservate"--Original version (mm. 70-76)
"Osservate"—Charles' variant (mm. 70-76)
"Pasci il guardo"--Original version (m. 153)
"Pasci il guardo"—Charles' variant (m. 153)
"Pasci il guardo"—Charles' second variant (m. 153)
"Ah, non giunge"—Original version and Charles' variant (mm. 209-210)
Charles' variant
"Ah, non giunge"—Original version (mm. 290-295)
"Ah, non giunge"—Charles’ variant (mm. 290-295)
Themes Used in Liszt's Norma Fantasy

1. "Norma viene, le cinge la chioma"—Act I (Norma's Calling to the Gauls' Congregation)

2. "Ite sul colle"—Act I (The First Appearance of the Gauls in the Opening Scene of Act I)

3. "Dell'aura tua profectica"—Act I (Famous operatic chorus—Continuation of "Ite sul colle")

4. "Deh! non volerli vittime"—Act II (Lament aria sung by Norma in Final Scene of Act II)

5. "Qual cor tradisti"—Act II (Aria, sung by Norma)

6. "Padre, tu pìangi"—Act II (Finale--Trio of Pollione, Norma, and Oroveso)

7. "Guerra! Guerra!"—Act II (War Chorus calling the Gauls to arms against the opposing Romans)
"Norma viene" (mm. 25-26)
"Ite sul colle" (mm. 40-48)

espressivo
crescendo agitato
"Ite sul colle" (mm. 69-70)
Recitative agitato assai (mm. 154-161)
"Deh! non volerli vittime" (mm. 184-189)
Tempestuoso section (mm. 239-248)
"Padre, tu piangi"--Coda (mm. 345-353)
"Guerra! Guerra!" (mm. 265-268), the original version and Charles' variant

Original version

Charles Smith's Variant

...
"Guerra, Guerra!", Var. 2--Original version (mm. 299-314)
"Guerra! Guerra!" (mm. 299-314) -- Var. 2 (Charles' variant)
"Dell'aura tua profetica"—Original version (mm. 110-113)
"Dell'aura tua profetica"--Charles' variant (mm. 110-113)
"Dell' aura tua profetica"--Original version (mm. 135-138)
"Dell' aura tua profetica"--Charles' variant (mm. 135-138)
Themes Used in Liszt's Don Juan Fantasy

1. "Di rider finirai"—Act II (Graveyard Scene);

2. "Don Giovanni, in cenar teco"—Act II (Confrontation Scene between Don and the Stone Guest)

3. "Alta brama più grave di queste"—Act II (Confrontation Scene between Don and the Stone Guest)
   (Note: This passage also appears in the beginning of the orchestral overture to Act I of the opera.)

4. "Chi si pasce di cibo mortale"—Act II (Confrontation Scene between Don and the Stone Guest)

5. "La ci darem la mano"—Act I (Duet of Don Giovanni and Zerlina)

6. "Tu m'invitasti a cena"—Act II (Continuation of Confrontation Scene between Don and the Stone Guest)

7. "Finch'han dal vino"—Act I (Champagne Aria, sung by Don Giovanni)
Transition to the "Là ci darem la mano" (mm. 65-70)
Var. 1 of "Là ci darem la mano" (mm. 215-229)

\[ \text{poco rallent.} \]

\[ \text{a piacere} \]

\[ \text{in tempo} \]

\[ \text{dolce} \]
Transition to the Champagne Aria (mm. 309-314)
Transition to the Champagne
Aria--Original version (mm. 317-328)
Transition to the Champagne Aria—Charles' first variant
(mm. 321-338)
Transition to Champagne Aria--Charles' second variant (mm. 317-332)
Transition to the Champagne Aria—Charles' third variant (mm. 333-338)
"Là ci darem la mano," Var. 1--Original version (mm. 204-209)
"là ci darem la mano," Var. 1--Charles' variant (mm. 204-209)
Themes Used in Liszt's Reminiscences of Robert le Diable

1. Recitative Lead-in to the Cavern Chorus, "O demons"--Act III (The Demons' Response to Bertram)

2. "O, demons, fantômes"--Act III (Beginning of the Cavern Chorus of the Demons)

3. Continuation of "O, demons, fantômes"--Act III (The Fluctuating Flames of the Inferno)

4. Continuation of "O, demons, fantômes"--Act III (Bertram's Response to the Demons of the Inferno)

5. "Séduction de jeu"--Ballet--Act III (Beginning, depicting Robert's temptation of gambling)

6. Continuation of the "Séduction de jeu"--Ballet --Act III (Ending, depicting Robert's recluse from the temptation of snatching the talisman at the cloister near St. Rosalie statue on pain of condemnation)

7. "Sonnez, clairons"--Act II and Act IV (March of the Knights to the Tournament. The full chorus is depicted in its entirety in Act II; the reprise is in Act IV, started in the solo timpani, which is shown below)
Continuation of introduction (mm. 21-36)

Fragments of "O demons" theme
Robert's Fear Motive and "O, demons" (mm. 503-510)

Robert's Fear Motive

Fragment of "O, demons"
Inferno Triplets from the "O, demons" (mm. 85-95)

\[ \text{\textit{marcato}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{leggiero}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{sotto voce}} \]
Séduction de jeu--Original version (mm. 340-358)

piu agitato
Séduction de jeu--Original version (mm. 369-377)
Séduction de jeu--Charles' first variant (mm. 369-377)
Séduction de jeu--Charles' second variant (mm. 369-377)
Séduction de jeu—Original version and Charles' variant
(mm. 389-409)

Original version

Charles' Variant of Version
Charles Joseph Smith was born in Chicago on October 22, 1970. He started playing the piano when he was eight and began composing when he was ten. His piano teachers were James Williams, Sofia Zukerman, Emilio del Rosario, Pawel Checinski, Kenneth Drake, Gustavo Romero, and Timothy Ehlen. His composition-theory teachers included Charlotte Lehnhoff, Lucia Santini, Rudy Marcozzi, Sever Tipei, Zack Browning, and Heinrich Taube.

He earned a B.M. in Piano at Roosevelt University in Chicago in 1994, cum laude, and then earned a M.M. in Piano at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1995.

Besides being a pianist, he has a strong interest in opera. At the time he was at Roosevelt University, he was active as a freelance accompanist, often being asked by student singers to accompany operatic arias. He also sang in the opera chorus in Roosevelt University’s Opera Theatre in 1994 in the production of Bizet’s Carmen.

He received an honorable mention at the French Piano Institute festival in Paris in July 2000. Also, he earned an honorable mention at the IBLA Grand Prize music competition in Ibla-Ragusa, Italy, in June 2001.