

DT501: History of Music

Classical/Romantic

Dr Adrian Smith
Paganini and Liszt

Niccolò Paganini (1782–1840)

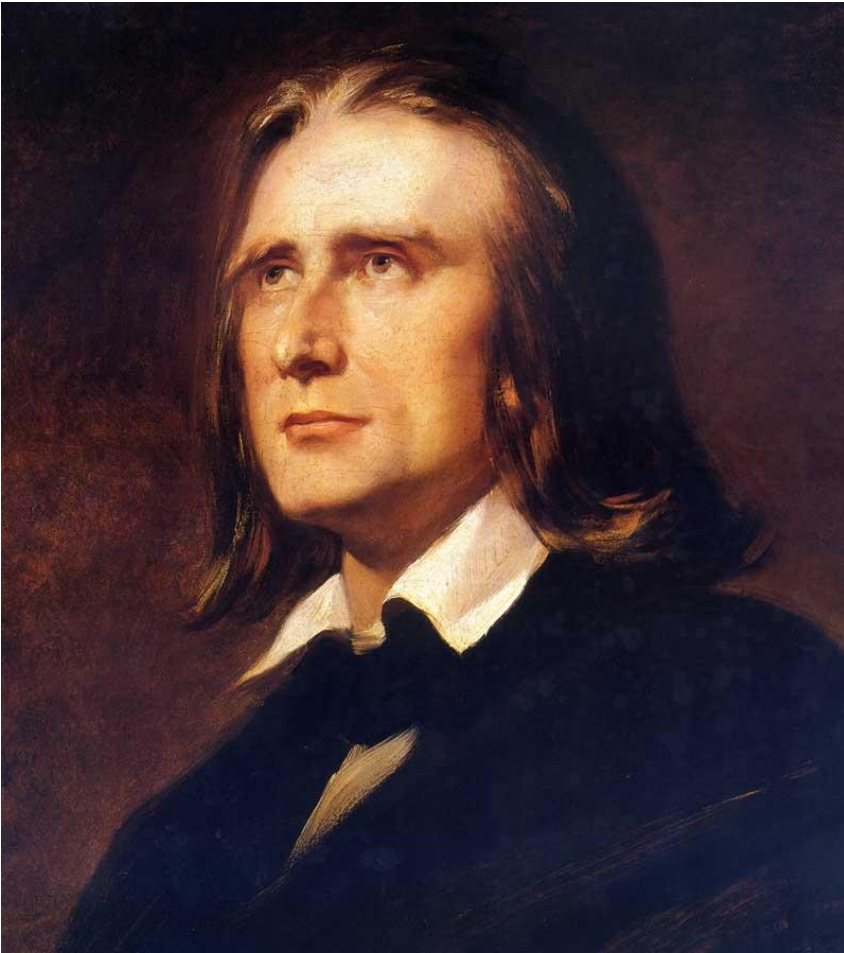


- Born in Genoa.
- 1805–9 serves as soloist at the court of Princess Elisa Baciocchi (Napoleon's sister) in Lucca.
- 1809 – commences career as a travelling virtuoso but stays confined to Italy
- The publication of the 24 Caprices in 1820 constitute a milestone in the history of virtuosity and violin technique.
- 1828 – begins sensational tour of Europe.



Paganini, *Master-Magician* (1819) by Lyser

Franz Liszt (1811–86)

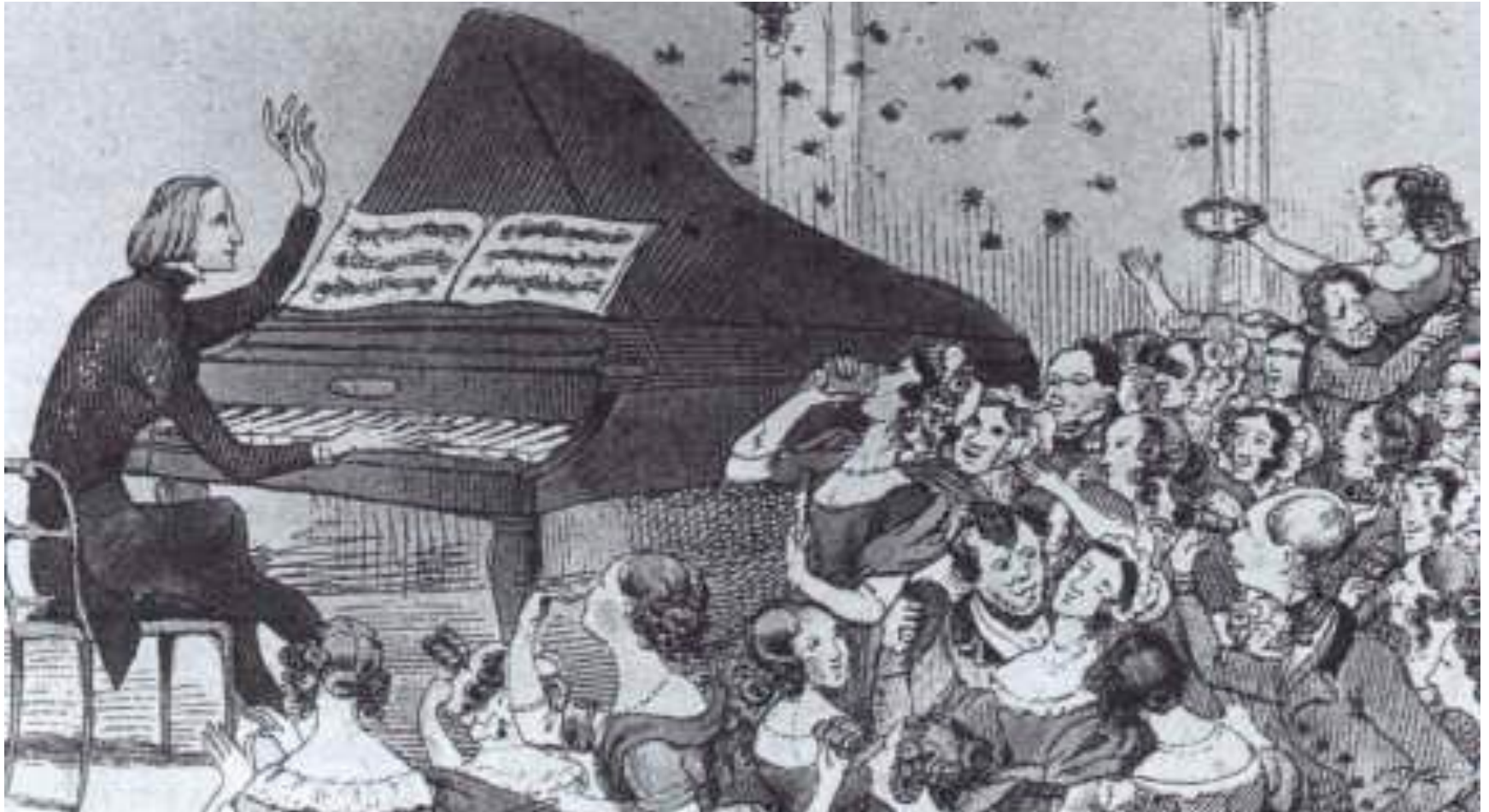


- Born in Raiding (now Dobójan) in Hungary.
- Move to Vienna in 1821 and begins lessons with Carl Czerny.
- Witnesses Paganini in concert in 1831 and embarks on a mission to reinvent his piano technique.
- 1833: begins relationship with Countess Marie d'Agoult
- 1838–48: tours Europe
- 1848: settles in Weimar

Liszt's Piano Innovations

- Cultivates a piano technique and expressive range to rival Paganini's violin virtuosity:
 - *Études d'exécution transcendante*
 - *Études d'exécution transcendante d'après Paganini*
 - *Réminiscences de Don Juan*
- The quasi-improvisatory character of many of Liszt's virtuosic piano pieces are often quite experimental in terms of their form and tonal plan.
- Liszt was the first pianist to appear solo for an entire evening thus establishing the solo concert piano recital as we know it today.
- Liszt's Piano Concerto No 1
 - musical argument dictated by the soloist
 - chromatic harmonic language, each movement linked by transitions.
 - unity provided by the transformation of themes rather than tonal design.

Lisztomania



War of the Romantics

- The late 1840s and 50s were a period of intense debate over fate of sonata form. There appeared to be two chief alternatives:
 - 1) either to perpetuate the forms handed down by the Viennese Classics;
 - 2) or to modify and develop them.
- Broadly speaking, Mendelssohn and Brahms chose the former; Liszt chose the latter. His work shows three distinct departures:
 - 1) following the example of Schubert he evolved a single-movement cyclic sonata structure which rolled the separate movements of a sonata into one large form.
 - 2) evolved the technique of thematic transformation.
 - 3) believed that the language of music could be enriched by other arts such as painting and poetry.
- Receives support from Karl Franz Brendel, the editor of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. Liszt founds the Neu-Weimar-Verein, a progressive group of musicians later known as the New German School.

Liszt: B Minor Sonata

- Double Structure: four movements which together resemble the sections of one large-scale sonata form but each with their own internal forms:
 - 1) Introduction (bar 1) (descending scale idea) – structural signpost marking transitions between sections)
 - 2) First movement/Exposition [of One movement form] (bar 8)
 - 3) Second ‘Slow’ Movement/Development (bar 331)
 - 4) Third Movement ‘Scherzo, Fugato’/Preparation for Recap (bar 460)
 - 5) Fourth Movement/Recapitulation and Coda (bar 533)

Thematic transformation in Liszt's B Minor Sonata

(a)–(c) main thematic cells

(a) **Lento assai**



(b) Allegro energico



(c)



(d) bars 32–3

sempre **f** al agitato

b

marcato

c

Detailed description: This musical score for bars 32-3 is written for piano and bass. The piano staff (top) begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 3/4 time signature. It contains a series of chords and single notes, with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. The bass staff (bottom) starts with a bass clef, the same key signature, and a 3/4 time signature. It features a series of eighth notes, with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. The tempo marking 'sempre **f** al agitato' is placed between the staves. The articulation marking 'marcato' is placed below the bass staff. The tempo marking 'b' is placed above the piano staff, and 'c' is placed below the bass staff.

(e) bars 104–6

Grandioso

ff

Detailed description: This musical score for bars 104-6 is written for piano and bass. The piano staff (top) begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 3/4 time signature. It contains a series of chords and single notes, with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. The bass staff (bottom) starts with a bass clef, the same key signature, and a 3/4 time signature. It features a series of eighth notes, with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. The tempo marking 'Grandioso' is placed above the piano staff. The dynamic marking 'ff' is placed below the piano staff. The articulation marking 'ff' is placed below the bass staff.

(f) bars 152–5

cantando espressivo

l'accompagnamento piano

pp

Prescribed Listening

Liszt: B Minor Sonata

Recommended reading

Taruskin: *Music in the Nineteenth Century*: pp. 251–288 and 411–442.

For more detail see the chapter on Liszt in Charles Rosen's *The Romantic Generation*.