

Benjamin SCHROEN

Nothing is known of the facts of this composer's life. The name, *Schroen*, which is fairly common, is of Northwest German - Dutch origin and means a cloth-cutter. It is likely that he was one of many German musicians who moved to Russia in the late 19th century, and that records of him were lost in the chaos of the Russian Revolution in 1915.

The **Fantasy Sonata for Trombone** is listed in *Hofmeister Musikalisch-literarischer Monatsbericht (April 1900)*: *Schroen, B. Op. 40, Fantasie-Sonate f. Posaune u. Pfte. f. Vcello u. Pfte. Moskow, Jurgenson*. This is cited in entries for 'trombone' in a number of more recent standard reference works, but it has been out of print for many years and is not found in the searchable collections of several major reference libraries.

It would seem to have been Schroen's last work, or at least his last to make it into *Hofmeister*. A set of *Drei Salonstücke* for trumpet and piano, comprising *Heimkehr, Ljubotschka and Andante sostenuto*, was published by *Rahter (Hamburg)* in 1885 and is currently available from *Simrock/Benjamin*. These pieces currently appear in the syllabuses of several European conservatories. *6 Morceaux caracteristiques* for cornet and piano published in 1880, also by *Rahter*, comprise *Herbstlied, Mazurka, Romanze, Serenade, Polonaise and Elégie*. An excellent performance of *Elégie* is currently found on You-Tube.

The hybrid Sonata - Fantasy evolved from Beethoven's example during the 19th century, two of the most notable are by Joachim Raff, *Fantaisie - Sonata Op168 (1871)* and by Aleksandr Scriabin, *Sonate-fantaisie (1886)*. A significant feature of the 'Fantasy' genre is the appearance of 'interruptions' in which the formal structure of the sonata is mixed with elements of a more 'improvisatory' nature. Frequent use of diminished 7th chords is also common^[1], as in this work by Schroen, which is on an altogether smaller scale than the above examples. It is written in the same virtuoso style as compositions of that period by Joseph Serafin Alschausky, and though quite challenging, it is fully idiomatic for the trombone. There is a passing 'reference' to the *Concerto* by Rimsky-Korsakov, and it is just possible that Schroen might have been familiar with that work as a trombonist himself. There are also some stylistic similarities to the *Fantasia for Trombone and Organ Op.58* composed in the mid-19th century by Friedrich August Belcke (1795 – 1874).

This edition has been prepared from a transcription for tuba by John Spencer that was published in the USA in 1938. The B-flat tuba part and some of the piano part have been transposed up one octave, and I have corrected some obvious mistakes in the piano part.

Keith Davies Jones
Winnipeg, February 2016

[1]Hayashida, Mami, "FROM SONATA AND FANTASY TO SONATA-FANTASY: CHARTING A MUSICAL EVOLUTION" (2007). University of Kentucky Doctoral Dissertations. Paper 488.
http://uknowledge.uky.edu/gradschool_diss/488

Fantasy Sonata, Op. 40

for Trombone and Piano

Benjamin Schroen
edited by Keith Jones

Allegro con brio ♩ = 132

Trombone

Piano

mf *cresc.* *f*

5

Recit.

ff

cresc.

ff

Rec.

8

a Tempo

mf

*

Musical score for page 43, measures 43-45. The score is written for three staves: a single bass clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. Measure 43 shows a bass line starting with a whole rest, followed by a melodic line in the upper bass clef staff marked *p espress.* The grand staff features a complex texture with chords in the treble and bass clefs. Measure 44 includes a *p* dynamic marking and a *ped.* (pedal) marking with an asterisk. Measure 45 continues the melodic and harmonic development.

Musical score for page 46, measures 46-48. The score continues from page 43. Measure 46 shows the continuation of the melodic line in the upper bass clef staff and the chordal texture in the grand staff. Measure 47 features a change in the grand staff texture, with a treble clef staff appearing. Measure 48 concludes the section with a melodic line in the upper bass clef staff and a final chordal texture in the grand staff.

106

Musical score for measures 106-107. The system consists of three staves: a single bass staff at the top, a grand staff (treble and bass) in the middle, and a single bass staff at the bottom. Measure 106 features a triplet of eighth notes in the top bass staff, marked with a '3' and a 'V'. The grand staff shows a complex texture with sixteenth-note runs in the treble and chords in the bass. Measure 107 continues this texture. Performance markings include 'Ped.' at the beginning of each system, 'V' accents, and asterisks (*) at the end of measures 106 and 107.

108

Musical score for measures 108-110. The system consists of three staves: a single bass staff at the top, a grand staff (treble and bass) in the middle, and a single bass staff at the bottom. Measure 108 has a long note in the top bass staff and a 'V' accent. Measure 109 features a long slur over the top bass staff. Measure 110 continues the texture. Performance markings include 'Ped.' at the beginning of each system, 'V' accents, and asterisks (*) at the end of measures 108 and 110.

111

Musical score for measures 111-112. The system consists of three staves: a single bass staff at the top, a grand staff (treble and bass) in the middle, and a single bass staff at the bottom. Measure 111 has a long note in the top bass staff and a 'V' accent. Measure 112 features a long slur over the top bass staff. Performance markings include 'Ped.' at the beginning of each system, 'V' accents, and asterisks (*) at the end of measures 111 and 112.

113

Musical score for measures 113-116. The score is in 2/4 time and features a bass line with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a dense texture of chords and arpeggiated figures. The bass line starts with a melodic line and ends with a fermata.

117

Musical score for measures 117-120. The score is in 2/4 time and features a bass line with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a dense texture of chords and arpeggiated figures. The bass line starts with a melodic line and ends with a fermata. A dynamic marking of *ff* is present in measure 119.

Playing time c. 5min